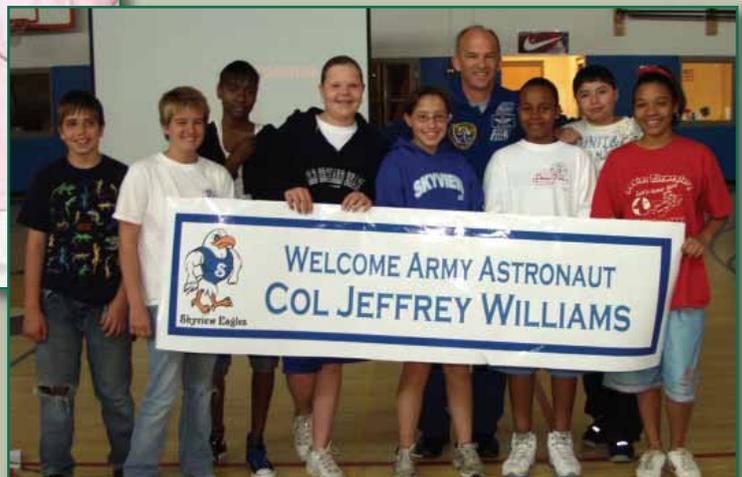


Tip of the Sphere



Above, Army Astronaut, COL Jeffrey Williams spoke to students at Skyview Middle School in Colorado Springs, Colo., April 27; left, Williams answers a question from Skyview Middle School World Languages Teacher, Rosie Adair; below, Skyview Middle School students hold a banner welcoming COL Williams to their school. Williams, the Flight Engineer and Science Officer for Expedition 13, narrated a video presentation of his six month mission onboard the International Space Station. Williams and crewmate Russian Cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov were onboard the ISS from March 30 –Sept. 28 of last year. German Astronaut Thomas Reiter joined them in July returning the ISS to a three person crew. *Photographs taken by Sharon L. Hartman*



“Visitor” from Space

By Sharon L. Hartman

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Are we alone in the universe? That question remains to be answered, but students at Skyview Middle School here received a special “visitor” from space last week, as Army Astronaut, COL Jeffrey N. Williams dropped in to give two presentations to the students April 27.

Williams was part of last year’s successful and historic mission, Expedition 13, which had a six month stay on the International Space Station from March 30 - Sept. 28. He is the first active-duty Soldier to stay onboard the ISS and was part of a three-person crew, which included Russian Cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov and German Astronaut Thomas Reiter.

During the presentations at Skyview, Williams narrated a video overview of his trip, to include experiments and space walks, and then displayed an array of photos taken from space. Some of the pictures were of events that took place on Earth during his mission, to include volcanic eruptions and hurricanes. Others were of natural and man-made forms on Earth that left the students, ranging from sixth to eighth grade, in wonder at the stunning, dreamlike images.

After the presentations, Williams fielded questions from the students and staff, with the answer to one particular question receiving the loudest response. The question: “How do you take showers in space?” The answer: “You don’t!” After a resounding “EEEEWWWWW,” Williams explained that because of the zero gravity environment, it’s impossible for them to use water to shower, as it will not drop the way it does on Earth, but he assured the students that astronauts keep clean in space using wet wipes and rinseless shampoo designed for hospital patients who cannot bathe.

Williams also related to the students how his career came

about. “I never thought it would be possible to be an astronaut,” said Williams, a 49-year-old graduate of West Point and former experimental test pilot. Williams was actually turned down several times before being accepted into the astronaut program. His words of wisdom to the students: “Study hard, reach for goals higher than you can imagine achieving and persevere.”

Before he left, Williams gave special recognition to one of Skyview’s science teachers. Lura Moore, the head of Skyview Middle School’s Challenger program, received a mission patch from Williams for her dedication to teaching students about space. As part of the program, students learn about space and space objects, and perform mission simulations for a grade. Students have “Rendezvoused with a Comet” and gone on a “Mission to Mars,” to name a couple. When asked how many students had participated in the Challenger program, a sea of arms rose over the audience, giving testament to the lives that Moore has touched.

“This is so exciting to get a mission patch,” said Moore. “That’s what we’re working on now in our class. Designing our mission patches to put on our shirts.”

Later in the afternoon, Williams also conducted a presentation at Building 3 on Peterson Air Force Base, for the Soldiers, civilians and their families, and signed autographs. The following day, Williams spoke at the “Back to Genesis” conference at Rocky Mountain Calvary Chapel to close out his trip to Colorado.

Sharon L. Hartman is a Department of Defense Contractor with COLSA Corporation and has served U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command Public Affairs Office at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., for more than seven years. She is the senior editor and technical director of **the Army Space Journal** and the managing editor of SMDC/ARSTRAT’s worldwide stringer program.