

**For Immediate Release:**

**SOUTH CENTRAL ALASKA CHILDREN TO BENEFIT FROM  
"ACADEMY OF FUTURE SPACE EXPLORERS"**

*The Mad Science Group and NASA Sign Space Act Agreement*

**Mat-Su/Anchorage, Alaska — September 5, 2007** — What makes the stars twinkle? How does a lunar eclipse happen? Mat-Su and Anchorage elementary school children will soon find out, thanks to a new partnership between Mad Science Group and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The two organizations recently announced the signing of a Space Act Agreement, officially launching the development of the "Academy of Future Space Explorers."

The Mad Science Group, the world's leading science enrichment provider, has teamed up with NASA in an effort to spark the imagination of millions of children and encourage more youth to pursue science-, technology-, engineering- and math-related careers.

The organizations have leveraged NASA research, missions and initiatives to jointly develop fun and engaging space-themed activities for elementary school-aged children. The unique space-inspired curriculum has been integrated into Mad Science's various enrichment initiatives, including after-school programs, birthday parties, summer camps and community events organized by franchises across the United States and Canada.

"More than ever before, we must encourage children's interest and enthusiasm for the sciences early in life. Unfortunately, interest in the sciences seems to be declining throughout the country, posing serious consequences to our future economy and society," said Ariel Shlien, CEO, Mad Science Group. "The Mad Science Group is thrilled to partner with NASA on this unique initiative, to help change children's perceptions about the sciences, and inspire the next generation of astronauts, physicists, engineers and scientists."

The "Academy of Future Space Explorers" will encourage children's curiosity about Earth, the moon, Mars and beyond through creative hands-on experiments and engaging demonstrations. Participants will explore compelling topics including: Planets and Moons; Atmosphere and Beyond; Space Phenomena; Sun and Stars; Rocket Science; Space Travel; Space Technology; and Living in Space.

"Our Mad Science franchise helps cultivate enthusiasm and a sense of wonder in the children of South Central Alaska. Through our distinctive 'edu-tainment' philosophy, participants enjoy their experience so much, they don't even realize they are learning," said Jeff Mitchell, Chief Mad Scientist, Mad Science of South Central Alaska. "We are thrilled to offer area children the opportunity to explore the world of space without leaving the neighborhood."

Mad Science of South Central Alaska arrived here in April of this year and has been developing their community relationships with various organizations, including The Boys and Girls Clubs and The Alaska Museum of Natural History. They are working with local companies for educational scholarships as well.

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"Children are born scientists. They are naturally curious about the world around them, and space is still a mysterious, exciting frontier. We look forward to working with NASA to harness that curiosity and help foster a life-long love of science, math and learning," explained Shlien.

The world's leading science enrichment provider, the Mad Science Group is a family of education, entertainment and production companies serving children, parents and communities around the globe. The organization's mission is to spark the imagination and curiosity of children through fun, interactive and educational programs that showcase what science is really about and how it affects the world. Mad Science also works hand-in-hand with partner organizations to provide health awareness programs on various topics including the importance of getting enough calcium, and the dangers of tobacco use.

Mad Science franchises operate in 206 markets around the world, across four continents, and reach more than 4.8 million children annually. The Mad Science Group's recent strategic partnerships include an educational toy licensing deal with ToyQuest, a series of books published by Scholastic, and a permanent theatrical show installation at the Kennedy Space Center.

With this program, NASA continues the Agency's tradition of investing in education programs across the United States. It is directly tied to the Agency's major education goal of engaging Americans in NASA's mission. NASA is committed to building strategic partnerships and linkages between STEM formal and informal education providers. Through hands-on, interactive educational activities, NASA is engaging students, educators, families, the general public, and all Agency stakeholders to increase Americans' science and technology literacy.

For more information about Mad Science on the Internet, visit: **[www.madscience.org](http://www.madscience.org)**. For more information about NASA's education programs, visit: **[www.nasa.gov/education](http://www.nasa.gov/education)**.

To download high-resolution images and a corporate b-roll, please visit the following site <ftp://207.139.180.250/press>; username: ftpress, password: M@d07.

To coordinate an interview with an Alaska Mad Science representative, please contact

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