



In Association with the Smithsonian Institution

Challenger Space Center Media Kit

The Challenger Space Center is place where learning just for the sheer joy of it is celebrated each and every day. It is a place that shows Arizona's schoolchildren that the sky really is NOT the limit when it comes to career choices. It is a place where young eyes grow wide, active imaginations soar, where families ponder the "what if's" of the future and where the possibilities of tomorrow seem endless.

Our Mission

The mission of the Challenger Space Center is to inspire, excite and educate people of all ages about the mysteries and wonders of space, science and the universe in which we live.

Who We Are, What We Do, Why We Do It

The Challenger Space Center is an exciting space-based learning environment where students, families and other participants fly simulated space flight missions involving flight crews, mission controllers and scientists.

Flight missions, led by experienced Flight Directors, seamlessly integrate the concepts of teamwork, communications and leadership, along with math, science and technology skills to help crew members work together to overcome obstacles and complete a successful mission. Equal to education missions designed for students and their teachers, the Challenger Space Center also features numerous public programming opportunities, including stargazing, solar gazing, space camps, lectures, telescope classes, space storytelling and more, to enable children, families, community members, corporate teams, senior citizens and others to experience the awe-inspiring Center and all that she has to offer.



Awards

The Challenger Space Center is proud to have earned these prestigious awards:

- Best Science Lesson from the Arizona Republic
- Best Place to See Stars from the New Times
- West Valley Treasure, WESTMARC
- First Place Best of the West Award for K-12 Education for the Smithsonian Educators' Conference



We Make an Impact

The Challenger Space Center's 29 employees and 100+ volunteers currently serve children across a full range of socioeconomic classes and ethnicities. The breadth and depth of our programs is unparalleled. Most Challenger Centers fly



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a maximum of 150 education missions per year, while the Challenger Space Center flew nearly 500 just last year alone. Most Centers fly one public mission per month. We fly up to four per week. In our first three years of operation, we accomplished the following:

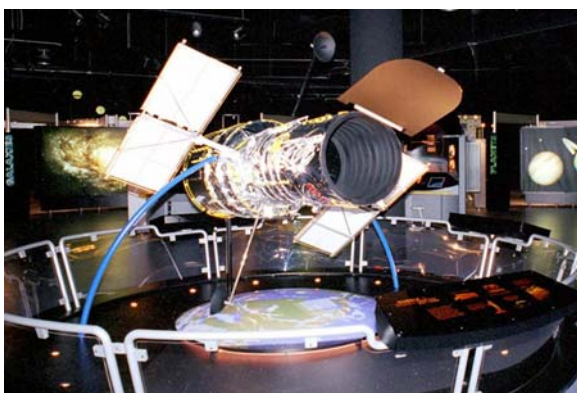
- Trained 878 teachers using latest education theories in math, science, technology & communication
- Flew over 272 public missions for over 8,100 families, senior citizens, youth groups and tourists
- Over 1,300 children attended our Summer Camps in topics as diverse as rocketry, robotics and the history of flight.
- Hosted nearly 100,000 visitors
- Flew 878 education missions for over 23,300 students
- Hosted annually the "Honeywell Fiesta Bowl Aerospace Challenge" by collaborating with three sponsoring community partners to bring 122 student teams from across the state together to design and build the next generation of the International Space Station.

Dedicated Volunteers Complete the Picture

The Challenger Space Center is fortunate to have 100+ enthusiastic volunteers, who donated 12,881 hours last year, with an estimated labor value of \$178,391. Our volunteers' varied backgrounds include fields as diverse as the military, high tech companies, education and NASA. They sincerely believe in passing on their vast knowledge to the next generation and we are truly in their debt. Without them, the Center would not be able to serve the metropolitan Phoenix community.

Smithsonian Institution Affiliation

In 2001, the Challenger Space Center signed a historic affiliation agreement with the Smithsonian Institution, making it the first and only Challenger Center in the nation to become an affiliate of American's greatest museum. This unique affiliation provides us with access to the treasures and antiquities of the Smithsonian and gives us the ability to bring these national quality museum exhibits to people of all ages who may never have the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. Through this



unique partnership, the Challenger Space Center has played host to a series of Smithsonian exhibits, not only from the Smithsonian's vast air and space collection, but also artwork and traveling exhibits that represent the range of the Institution's collectables. These exhibits, many of which come with educational programs, enrich the arts and sciences curriculum studies of not only younger students, but also those at the university level. While the Center has hosted a variety of world-class exhibits in the past, July 1942: United We Stand and the Hubble Space Telescope: New Views of the Universe will be on display in 2004.



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Education is our Heart and Soul

Educational programs continue to be the backbone of the Challenger Space Center. All of our programs are designed to meet or exceed Arizona state educational standards set for Math, Science, Technology and Workplace Skills.

Space Missions

Our simulated space missions launch an interest in learning within a unique environment that focuses on math, science, technology and communication skills. Featuring authentic replicas of Mission Control and the International Space Station, these award-winning missions include teacher training and six weeks of curriculum. This curriculum then becomes part of the students' "pre-flight" daily lessons, which have been aligned with the Arizona State Standards. The importance of this curriculum is emphasized throughout the students' pre-flight education. The following are missions that are offered:



Rendezvous with a Comet: Students build and launch a probe, take part in a daring exploration to rendezvous with Comet Encke, and work with million-dollar technology as Mission Control staff and scientists on board the International Space Station.

Voyage to Mars: Students collect and analyze planetary data and become part of the first colony of humans living on a permanent base on Mars, as well as the relief crew en route to the hauntingly barren Red Planet.

Return to the Moon: Students recover and repair a stranded probe, build and launch a lunar rover, and plan a return trip to the Moon and colonization of this celestial body.

e-Mission: Operation Montserrat (Distance Learning Scenario) 5th-12th grades: Students download satellite weather data, form emergency response teams and plan evacuation of island residents when a devastating hurricane hits just as molten lava begins to flow from an angry volcano. Based on real-life events, this distance learning scenario connects a classroom to the Challenger Space Center via the Internet and web cams.

Field Trips

Destination: Space Station 3-5 year olds & 1st-2nd grades: Age-appropriate space-themed activities, songs and centers. Includes making own space helmets and a gentle launch in the Center's on-site simulator.

To Be An Astronaut 3rd-12th grades: Astronaut teambuilding exercises, space-themed educational activities. Older students discuss career options surrounding space exploration.



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Activities for the General Public

In addition to classroom education, the Challenger Space Center features many opportunities for the public to enjoy our exhibits, activities, special events, tours and guest speakers. Every month, the most unique indoor planetarium in Arizona comes to the Center through our partnership with Stargazing for Everyone. Inside the StarLab Indoor Planetarium, stargazers are transported into a night sky environment perfect for studying the stars, moon, constellations, planets and more.

The Challenger Space Center also hosts monthly Family Fun Nights featuring Stargazing. After several space-themed family activities and a slide presentation, high-powered telescopes are set up so kids and adults alike can learn about the night sky with a professional Stargazer.

Other special activities at the Challenger Space Center include Summer Space Science Camps, Holiday Camps, Santa's Science Workshops, Senior "early bird special" Missions and more!

The Challenger Space Center also provides private facility rental for birthday parties, weddings, reunions, science fairs and other special events.

Teambuilding Activities for Corporations

In addition to classroom education, the Challenger Space Center hosts a variety of teambuilding activities for companies. Program offerings include:

- Corporate Simulated Mission
- Sense Olympics
- Space Probe
- e-Mission: Operation Montserrat

Each program is designed to focus on communication, problem solving, decision-making and the skills necessary to succeed in today's marketplace. These teambuilding experiences take employees out of the normal work environment and places them in an unusual situation. It is in this environment that peoples' natural habits and methods become apparent. After the mission, the Challenger Space Center Flight Directors debrief the team and analyze how the mission went, pointing to the challenges and successes of overall team performance.

General Center Information

Public Hours

Monday - Friday	9a - 4p
Guided Tours	10a, 11a, 12p, 1p, 2p, 3p
Saturday	10a - 4p
Guided Tours	11a, 12p, 1p, 2p, 3p

Admission

Children & Seniors	\$4 (children under age 6 are free)
Adults	\$6
Challenger Space Center Members	Free



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Experience our "Space"

- Space Flight
- Stargazing, Solar Gazing and Sky Programs
- Simulated Shuttle Launch
- Permanent Exhibits
- Traveling Smithsonian and NASA Exhibits
- Speakers
- Space Movies
- Tours

Space Flight Missions for the General Public (by reservation only)

Saturdays 1030a and 1p

Space Flight Missions Price

Adults \$17.50

Students \$15

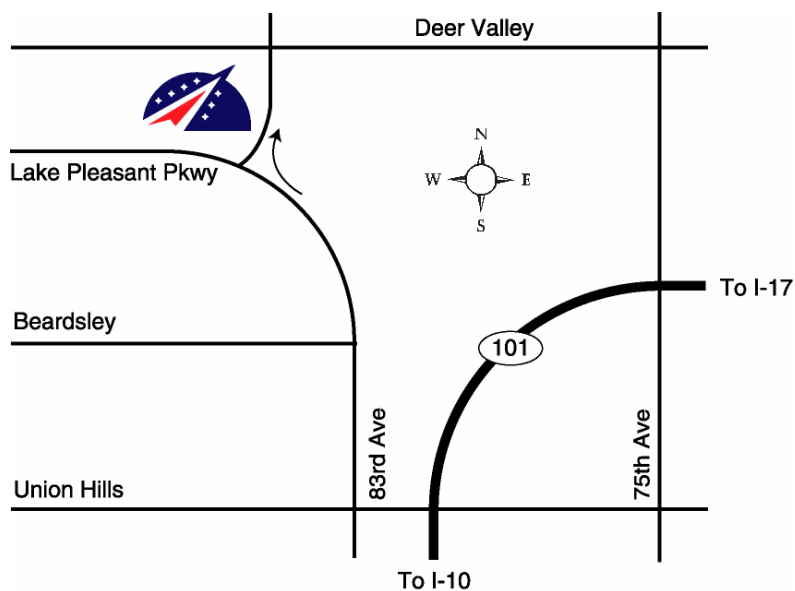
Seniors \$15

Please note:

Children ages 7-10 must participate with a paid, ticketed adult. Not recommended for under age 7.

Location

The Challenger Space Center is located at 21170 North 83rd Avenue in Peoria, Arizona, and is easily accessible just off the 101 & Union Hills in the Northwest Valley.





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The History

In 1996, the late U.S. Congressman Bob Stump approached the Peoria Unified School District (PUSD) and asked the district to provide the leadership to build a world-class space science education complex to serve students across the state. District officials and the PUSD Governing Board enthusiastically accepted this exciting and unique challenge: to host the first stand-alone Challenger Center in Arizona and the Southwest.



Just as it is often said that it takes a village to raise a child, it has taken an entire community to build this one-of-a-kind facility. With an incredible outpouring of community support, from the students who helped

design the 21,433 square-foot Center, to major corporations and local businesses, to the many members of the construction community who came together to build the \$7.3 million facility for \$3.5 million, the Challenger Space Center is an outstanding example of a public/private partnership.

Design Process

In 1995, architect Paul Winslow brought together a group of fifth and sixth graders and asked them one important question: "What kind of experience do you want to have at the Challenger Space Center?" This creative focus group spent a day talking about the look and feel of the building; how it would function and what the experience would entail. It is because of these innovative youngsters that the Challenger Space Center features assets such as the interior glass elevator ("We want to feel like we're going up in space!"), as well as significant amounts of color, light and glass ("if we're going into space, we want to feel like we're someplace that's really high tech!") The designers of this unique facility, one of only two stand-alone Challenger Centers in the world, have used subtle space metaphors to subliminally remind visitors that they are visiting a place like no other on planet Earth. From sleek, silver, multi-story canisters representing booster rockets that grace the sides of the interior glass elevator, to the ten galaxy-lit columns representing countdown to liftoff, the Challenger Space Center represents the highest standards of architecture as art.

Building Highlights

[International Space Station Simulator and Mission Control](#)

"Roger that, Mission Control..." So extraordinary, so visual, and so real that some wonder if they have actually left Earth, the Challenger Space Center's International Space Station Simulator is designed to simulate a room on board a far-away space station. Inside this hands-on laboratory, experiments are performed, data is analyzed and probes are "launched" into outer space. Everything reminds excited 'astronauts' of their mission...computer consoles, communication headsets, continuous messages on the loudspeakers and teammates they can only see on video monitors. Modeled after the Johnson Space Center in Houston, the Mission Control room features \$750,000 of cutting edge technology and is the nerve center for the entire mission. It is here that the mission is monitored and orders are given directing and helping the space adventurers to successfully complete their mission.



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The Space Rotunda and McCall Mural

As earth-bound visitors cross the elevated gantry bridge into the Center and enter the world of the future, the first awe-inspiring site they see is the rotunda-wrapping mural entitled Tour of the Universe. The six-story mural, painted by world-famous space artist, Robert McCall, encircles the entire interior rotunda of the main floor. Utilizing 27,000 square feet of canvas, this phenomenal piece of artistry took six months to complete.



COX Communications Interactive Exhibit

This high-tech, high touch exhibit, provided by Cox Communications, features interactive, fingertips-controllers kiosks. Visitors can literally 'let their fingers do the walking' as they explore the universe via Internet links to current NASA missions and web sites.

Orientation Room, Theatre, Training and Meeting Rooms

From a theater-style rear projection to a lecture hall for guest speaker presentations, this versatile multipurpose room, seating approximately 60 attendees, fulfills a wide variety of needs. The Challenger Space Center features three-breakout rooms, each seating approximately 60 people. In addition, the rotunda can be used for a general session type meeting, and has a capacity of 200.



Galaxy Gift Shop

No trip to the Challenger Space Center is truly complete until visitors explore our out-of-this-world collection of space-related educational games, toys, books and posters. And don't forget the astronaut ice cream!

The Cosmic Café

Guests can relax during their visit at the Cosmic Café, where vending machines are located. The Café also serves as a food staging area for catered events and school groups, and extends outside onto an intimate patio courtyard, perfect for an al fresco cup of cosmic coffee during one of Arizona's beautiful spring days or on a mild winter evening.

McCall Museum of Art

In April of 2002, plans were unveiled for a spectacular new museum to be built adjacent to the Challenger Center. The 80,000 square-foot McCall Museum of Art will house Mr. Robert McCall's lifetime body of work, valued at more than \$3 million. Mr. McCall is best known as America's visual space historian and is also widely known for his visual documentation of the NASA space program. The Museum is expected to be completed in late 2005/early 2006.

