



ILAN RAMON SPACE TEAM OPENING EVENT December 3, 2009

Q: What happens when an Excellence 2000 school truly exudes excellence and is ready to reach the next level?

A: They are invited to join the Space Team!



A collaboration of the Israel Center for Excellence through Education and the Technion's Asher Space Research Institute, this highly selective program provides E2K students with an additional 2 hours of enrichment study per week, on fascinating topics such as astronomy and astrophysics.

The Space Team program began in 2002 with just 5 schools and grew to 13 schools in the 2008/9 school year. This year, participation has doubled - and a whopping 26 schools will participate in the Ilan Ramon Space Team program. This unprecedented growth

demonstrates the high level of commitment among current E2K schools, and the great desire students have to increase their learning opportunities.

Space Team teachers receive 30 hours of training over the course of the school year, on topics such as: the solar system, electromagnetism, measuring the speed of light, measuring a planet's diameter, pressure and atmospheres, Olbers' paradox, etc.

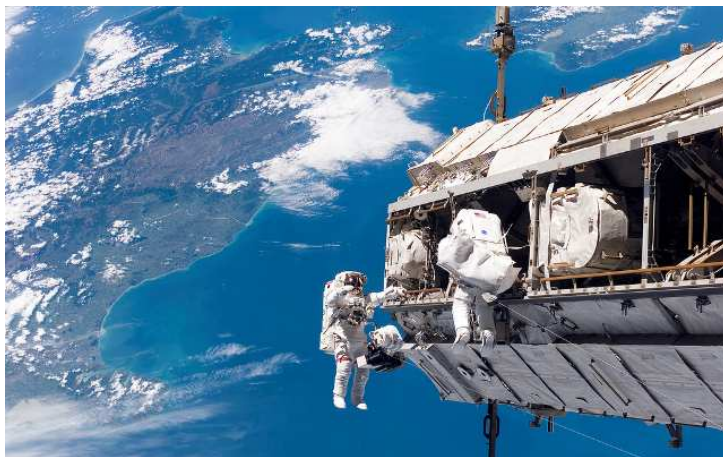
Due to the new, expanded size of the program – and the fact that Space Team schools can now be found as far North as Tiberias and as far South as Beer Sheva – the opening event for the 2009/10 school year was held virtually.

On December 3rd, 2009, nearly 400 hundred students in classrooms all over the country came together to mark the beginning of this year's Space Team programming – via the internet. Students heard welcoming words from Israel Center for Excellence through Education CEO, Mr. Nir Hacoen. Mr. Hacoen, former Commander of the Israeli Air Force Flight Academy, spoke



about his own fascination with the study of space – an expanse human beings will never fully understand.

Opening remarks and an update on the Space Team program were provided by Mr. Shayke Shafir, the Center for Excellence's Director of Educational Initiatives. The virtual encounter's main event was a lecture on "Will Man ever Walk on Mars?", by



Israeli astronaut, Dr. Ilan Manolis. Accompanied by mesmerizing photographs of life inside a space ship, Dr. Manolis outlined the medical, technological and psychological difficulties with lengthy space travel. This has a direct bearing on the likelihood of man ever walking on Mars – as

this journey would take 1-2 years to complete. From the effect of microgravity on medications to the difficulty of brushing one's teeth with a limited water supply - there are a great number of barriers that currently prevent humans from strolling on our neighboring planet. Dr. Manolis summed up his presentation with his personal conclusion that man will not walk on Mars until 2039, if ever.



2009/10 Space Team schools:

Ronson School – Ashkelon
Makif Gimmel - Beer Sheva
Makif Het – Beer Sheva
Remez School – Bnai Brak
Kuftan Halabi - Daliat al Carmel
Mevo'ot Iron – Ein Shemer
Nofei HaBesor – Eshkol Region
6-Year High School – Gadera
Yavneh High School Yeshiva - Haifa
Ben Gurion – Herzliya
Shmuel HaNagid – Herzliya
Smadar – Herzliya
Eylon H.S. – Holon
Makif Julius – Julius
ORT Dafna School - Kiryat Bialik
Makif General – Kiryat Malachi
Yonatan Middle School - Kiryat Motzkin
Shazar – Kiryat Ono
Ben Zvi M.S. – Kiryat Ono
The Baptist School - Nazareth
Aleph Middle School - Nesher
Brenner M.S. – Petach Tikvah
Feinstein M.S. – Petach Tikvah
Kiryat Ganim – Rishon LeZion
Achva School – Taibeh
Nofrim School - Tiberias