

## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

#### **Ballston Spa Student Experiments Selected for Spaceflight**

BALLSTON SPA – November 19, 2010 - Students from Ballston Spa researched, designed and proposed over 70 complete applications for submission to the Student Spaceflight Experiment Program (SSEP) for a chance to have their experiment launched on the space shuttle flight in February. All of the proposals went through an initial screening process that looked at completeness, appropriateness of materials, and which was the best proposal on similar topics. The top 26 proposals identified included a variety of grade level proposals from all of the participating schools. The seven-member SSEP Local Review Team, including consulting engineers as well as representatives from GLOBALFOUNDRIES and the Children's Museum of Science and Technology, were then asked to rank the proposals based on a complete review of the information put forth by the students.

Proposals that received the top rankings included two from the High School entitled "*The Effect of Gravity on Bacterial Reproduction*" and "*Affect of Penicillin in Microgravity*" and one from Milton Terrace South Elementary School called "*The Development of Minnow Fish Eggs in Space*". Two alternates were also identified including High School proposals focusing on "*Yeast Reproduction Rate in Zero Gravity*" and "*The Effect of Microgravity on the Ability of Antibiotics Against E. Coli Bacteria*".

The Local Review Team was very impressed with the proposals designed by the Ballston Spa students and was pleased to help promote the interest in STEM in our community. The final three experiments from Ballston Spa students will now be submitted to the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education (NCESSSE) for review. A national review team will then select one of the three experiments to be included on the final flight of the Space Shuttle Endeavour on February 27, 2011. The district's STEM partners, including corporate sponsor GLOBALFOUNDRIES, are providing the necessary support for participation in this program.

Superintendent of Schools Joseph P. Dragone, Ph.D. stated that "This type of project-based enrichment activity is a specific example of the learning that needs to take place in our classrooms, to engage students in the learning process and to help them develop the skills necessary to be successful in their future education and the workplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Ballston Spa is one of sixteen communities in the nation participating in the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP) launched by the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education and NanoRacks LLC. The program is a national Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education initiative that provides middle and high school classes the ability to propose experiments to fly on the Space Shuttle Endeavour on February 27, 2011. This on-orbit educational research opportunity is

enabled through NanoRacks LLC, which is working in partnership with NASA under a Space Act Agreement as part of the utilization of the International Space Station as a National Laboratory.

Additional information about the program can be obtained by visiting the SSEP Community Profiles page at <http://ssep.ncesse.org/communities/community-directory/>, <http://ssep.ncesse.org/> or by contacting Diane Irwin, K-12 Science Coordinator, at [dirwin@bscsd.org](mailto:dirwin@bscsd.org), or 884-7150 ext. 2317.