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### **CCAT-Sponsored Rocket Launch Program Sends Science Education to New Heights**

EAST HARTFORD, CT - This weekend, middle and high school science students from the Greater Hartford area, as well as NASA Explorer schools from across the country and The Netherlands will send small payload experiments into space as part of LaunchQuest - a major aerospace education program created by The Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc. (CCAT).

A 20-foot tall, 700-pound rocket provided by launch partner UP Aerospace will blast the student scientists' experiments nearly 70 miles into the atmosphere when it lifts off from a launch pad at Spaceport America in the New Mexico desert, near White Sands Missile Range. The rocket will cruise for roughly 15 minutes, reaching speeds of almost a mile per minute. It will fly high enough to provide approximately five minutes of near-zero gravity - a period of time during which students' experiments and hypotheses about the effects of weightlessness will be tested. The experiments are returned to the students for post-launch analysis.

The launch, which is scheduled for Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00 a.m., includes student experiment payloads from New Mexico's educational program as well as CCAT's payloads. The upcoming launch will be the third for CCAT, which collaborates with industry and academia to find innovative methods for improving the quality and variety of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

"LaunchQuest represents an innovative, cutting-edge approach to STEM education," said Elliot A. Ginsberg, President and Chief Executive Officer of CCAT. "Students participating in the program have the chance to conduct research in the upper reaches of the atmosphere - an opportunity that is unparalleled in traditional educational programs. CCAT believes very strongly that LaunchQuest and similar programs are keys to creating students' interest in science education while at the same time building the high-tech workforce of the future."

Since its inception in 2006, over 1,000 students from more than 50 schools have participated in the LaunchQuest program. Those interested in learning more about the program can visit [www.ccat.us/education](http://www.ccat.us/education)

**NOTE TO CONNECTICUT MEDIA**

Five Connecticut schools are among those participating in the program. The upcoming launch includes experiments from students at East Hartford High School, The Greater Hartford Academy of Mathematics and Science, East Hartford-Glastonbury Elementary Magnet School, Two Rivers Magnet Middle School and William H. Hall High School.

**ABOUT CCAT**

The Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc. is a non-stock, tax exempt corporation that provides services and resources to entrepreneurs and businesses, and through collaboration with industry, academia, and government, helps companies innovate and compete, thereby strengthening our nation in the global market.