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Profile of Christina Paape

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Christina Paape is the Vice President of Space Explorers, Inc. (www.space-explorers.com). Prior to this role, she served as the Public Relations and Business Development Manager with Space Explorers. Mrs. Paape is an Institutional Representative and Technical Advisory Panel for Aerospace Outreach with the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium. She sits on the Great Lakes Spaceport Education Foundation's Rockets for Schools planning committee. Additionally, she was part of the Great Lakes Aerospace and Science Education Center Curriculum development team, and is a member of the Advisory Committee for UW Fox Valley's Girls in Engineering, Math and Science event for middle school aged girls.

Mrs. Paape has conducted numerous space related presentations to school aged children as part of the YMCA after-school program and EAA's Space Week. She has also organized and presented at youth and educator workshops throughout the country. An active member in her church, she also enjoys hiking, fishing, and spending time with her family.

1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

I started working for Space Explorers as an intern while earning a double major at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. I enjoyed working here so much, I've continued working for Space Explorers, Inc. ever since.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

I've been involved in a number of changes including reorganizing the educational programs our company offers online, updating our Space Library, adding short video help segments throughout the website. We are constantly monitoring the status of schools and following trends to deliver the best services to the teachers we serve.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

Aside from the arrival of my husband and my firstborn, I've had many great experiences, including taking an introductory flight lesson, planning the Mars Explorer, organizing special events, setting up press conferences, conducting presentations to students, launching rockets up to 4000 ft, to assisting in the

creation of the Wisconsin Aerospace Authority - there have been many exciting moments.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

The greatest obstacle I've had to work through was organizing a special event to take place over a thousand miles away! The event went over very well, complete with over 400 students and their teachers in attendance. We introduced the students to a new space simulation, a variety of activities and demonstrations, and facilitated an astronaut keynote presentation.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

I see the aerospace industry changing significantly in the next five years. I hope to see civilian suborbital flights occurring on a regular basis. In five years, the space shuttle will be retired and we will be closer to having the new ARES launch vehicles in operation. I also see virtual learning and digital media playing a larger role in education.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

While aerospace careers appear to be predominately filled with male professionals, this should not be reason for women to shy away from these careers. In fact, it should be reason for more young women to consider fields in aerospace as new opportunities are emerging every day. My advice to women considering entering the industry is to study and excel in related coursework. I'd also suggest consulting with your state's Space Grant Consortium for higher education institutions with programs in you desired field, researching NASA field and industry internship opportunities while still in school.