



THE LEGENDARY SKY PROJECT

ASTRONOMY NORTH · NORTHWEST TERRITORIES · CANADA

The Legendary Sky **INFORMATION SHEET**

The Legendary Sky Project is a multi-year education and outreach initiative dedicated to the collection and preservation of northern sky knowledge and heritage in the Northwest Territories.

The objectives of the project are to raise awareness of the nature, culture and wonder of Canada's northern sky, to enhance knowledge of the sky at the community level, and to improve public access to northern sky knowledge and heritage in the Northwest Territories and across Canada.

Through the implementation of key project activities that includes community engagement, curriculum development and development of an online resource centre, The Legendary Sky Project will leave a legacy of education and awareness for generations to come. Activities announced for 2009 include:

TLS CONTEST

The Legendary Sky Project launched in February with *The Legendary Sky Contest*, a territory-wide writing contest that invited Grade 6 students to explain why the sky above their community is legendary. Kelsi Taylor of Deline and Raven Firth of Inuvik won the Grand Prize, an unforgettable summer Space Camp adventure at Cosmodome in Montreal this July.

TLS DIAMOND

The Legendary Sky Diamond is a rough diamond from the Northwest Territories that will be used to tell the story of diamonds on Earth and diamonds elsewhere in the Universe. To raise awareness of the project, the diamond was selected to be part of the Official Flight Kit of Canadian Space Agency Astronaut Julie Payette for Space Shuttle Mission STS-127, scheduled for launch in June, 2009. Upon its return to Earth *The Legendary Sky Diamond* will be donated by Astronomy North to the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife to serve as a symbol of northern sky education and outreach.

TLS EXHIBIT

The Legendary Sky Exhibit is a travelling exhibit that will celebrate the nature and culture of Canada's northern sky and will showcase The Legendary Sky Project. The exhibit will begin its national tour in late fall of 2009 at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre with the official donation of *The Legendary Sky Diamond* to the Centre.

TLS RESOURCES

The Legendary Sky Online Resource Centre will include community-specific resources and educational tools to help northern students build a lifelong connection to the sky above their communities.



For More Information:
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The Legendary Sky **DIAMOND BACKGROUNDER**

TIMELINE

In December of 2008 Astronomy North submitted a unique request to the Canadian Space Agency to include a symbolic diamond from the Northwest Territories in the Official Flight Kit of Canadian Space Agency Astronaut Julie Payette aboard Space Shuttle Mission STS-127. The request received preliminary approval in early January.

A rough diamond discovered at Snap Lake Mine near Yellowknife was donated to Astronomy North by De Beers Canada in support of The Legendary Sky Project and the society's commitment to education and outreach in the Northwest Territories. The diamond was transported from Snap Lake Mine to Yellowknife to London, England for sorting and certification, followed by a flight to Gem Labs in Toronto for engraving. The stone was then flown to the Canadian Space Agency in Montreal where it passed preliminary Official Flight Kit screening in early February. In March, the diamond was delivered to NASA in Houston for final inspection. Clearance has now been issued and the diamond will be transported to the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida for the launch of STS-127.

Following the mission, Astronomy North will donate *The Legendary Sky Diamond* to the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife where it will be part of *The Legendary Sky Exhibit* and will serve as a symbol of northern sky education and outreach for generations to come.

DIAMOND FACTS

Diamonds formed on Earth between 990 million and 4.25 billion years ago, with some stones pre-dating life on the planet. Diamonds form at pressures of 45-60 kilobars, which corresponds to a depth of 125-200 kilometres below the Earth's surface where the pressure is approximately 50,000 times that of atmospheric pressure at the surface.

(Source: De Beers Group)

Diamonds are common in space, and have even been discovered in meteorites that have landed in Canada. Meteorite fragments recovered at Tagish Lake, Yukon in 2000 were found to contain nanodiamonds, tiny diamond grains no more than a few micrometres in size. In 2002 scientists proclaimed the Tagish Lake specimen contains more nanodiamonds than any other meteorite.



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