

# Avicenna Academy

## Science Community Collaboration

Avicenna Academy ♦ Forest Ridge Academy ♦ Highland Christian School  
*Crown Point Schererville Highland*

October 6, 2011

Dear Students and Parents,

I am writing to share a little more information about the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP) with you. SSEP is the brainchild of Dr. Jeff Goldstein, Director of the National Earth and Space Science Education (NCESSSE). He is one of the most energetic and passionate science educators I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. This is the second time I have had the opportunity to lead students in the SSEP. It is a commitment of time and substantial effort on not only my part but on the students, teacher-leaders, parent volunteers and professional scientists that aided us. The reward was so great, however, that I jumped at the chance to participate again.

SSEP is intended to be a community effort to engage students in an experimental design competition. The students will work to propose an experiment that will test the effect of microgravity on some biological, chemical or physical system. The winning experimental design will be turned into an actual experiment that we will prepare and send to the International Space Station (ISS) during the spring of 2012. There are limitations to this experiment that will be described in more detail at the SSEP Kick-Off Event at the Merrillville Community Planetarium next week. The event will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (October 11-13<sup>th</sup>). Please choose just one night to attend as the program will be repeated each night to accommodate various student and parent schedules. The event begins at 4:30 PM and will end at 7:00 PM. I strongly urge students and parents to attend. The students will have the opportunity to learn more about microgravity, the ISS and meet students within the Avicenna Academy's Science Community Collaboration (AASCC) that attend different schools. I will meet with the parents to further introduce SSEP and answer any questions you may have at that time.

In the meanwhile, I urge you to please contact your school's program Co-Director. They are able to answer some of your questions and are just as eager as I am to bring this wonderful opportunity to our community's students. And, we are always looking for parent volunteers and partnership with professional scientists. If you are interested in assisting us in our participation, please contact me. I hope that I will see you next week!!!

Warm Regards,



**Amanda Arceo, M.S.,M.Ed.**

Community Program Director

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