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Hawthorne Students Enjoy Tour and Overnight Stay at CSUDH



A group of students from the Hawthorne as well as Inglewood Unified and Torrance Unified school districts participated in the sixth annual "A Day in the Life of a College Student" at California State University, Dominguez Hills that included a campus tour, workshops and overnight stay from July 9-10. The ongoing event is part of the South Bay Promise program made possible through partnerships of the Hawthorne and Inglewood Teen Centers, South Bay Workforce Investment Board and CSUDH. Photo: SBWIB

Exploring Local Aerospace's Role in Putting Men on the Moon

By Rob McCarthy

Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin made history 50 years ago this week landing on the moon. The perilous 239,000-mile journey to explore the lunar surface is being celebrated this week in the South Bay, where the lunar module and other critical contributions to the Apollo 11 mission happened.

The Columbia Memorial Space Center in Downey is commemorating the historic moon landing and safe return to Earth by the trio of astronauts, including Michael Collins, who flew the command module and rendezvoused with the lunar module carrying Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin plus 48 pounds of moon rocks and particles they collected. Reminiscing about the historic mission to the moon, Collins recently gave a thumbs up to the 300,000 people who worked in support of Apollo 11 leading up to the July 20, 1969 exploration of the moon's surface. "They all did their jobs so properly," Collins said in an interview.

A 50th anniversary celebration is underway at the Space Center, off the 105 freeway in Downey. Admission is free this week to view the newest exhibit about the Apollo 11 program. The exhibit highlights the important contributions that Southern California made in getting the U.S. space program and its astronauts to the moon. The story and photos of the mission can be viewed Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., through October.

Tonight is a chance to rub shoulders with the former engineers on whose shoulders the

success of the Apollo 11 mission rested. The Lunar Pub night offers the public a chance to explore some of Downey's historical "watering holes that many of the Apollo engineers frequented after long days," the center promises. Plus, at each stop there will be former engineers waiting to "share a pint regaling what working on the Apollo program was really like." Meet from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Stardust Club, 7643 Firestone Blvd., and from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at Stox Bakery and Bar, 9518 Imperial Highway. Both are in the city of Downey.

A recent article in the New York Times identified the property that houses the Space Center as an important contributor to the Apollo voyage. The Apollo capsules "rolled off the assembly line" in Downey, on a 160-acre parcel that was twice the size of Disneyland. The bustling space was home to factories, offices and test facilities for mission-critical systems that NASA depended on for flight, guidance and re-entry of its Apollo 11 crew.

Gerald Blackburn, who was one of the more than 25,000 people who worked at the Downey property at the height of Apollo program in the mid-1960s, called it "a magical place."

He recalled, "We worked at the spaceship factory. We were all part of a team -- Team Apollo." The property since has been redeveloped into stores, movie theaters and restaurants.

Friday is NASA Day at the center, which will broadcast segments from the Space Center on NASA TV and Discovery Science channel. The day will feature hands-on activities, original performances from the Chalk Rep theater

company, projects from the Space Center's young Apollo Summer campers and girls in STEM Club. Historical Apollo artifacts and Apollo alumni will be available to talk and answer questions. Admission to this one-day event is free.

Saturday is Apollo 11 Landing Day at the center. Visitors can revel in the far-reaching feat achieved 50 years ago when the first men reached the moon. Astronauts Armstrong and Aldrin made good on President John Kennedy's promise that America's space program would put men on the moon and return them home safely before the end of the decade. Raytheon has provided Apollo-themed activities, and guests will be treated to dramatic performances portraying life in the Apollo Program while watching "live" as Neil Armstrong takes his first "giant leap for mankind."

Visitors on Saturday can snap a photo of themselves jumping on the moon, and share the image with family and friends on social media to commemorate the first successful voyage to the moon -- 239,900 miles away. The movie *Apollo 11* will be screened outdoors on Saturday. Filmmaker Todd Douglas Miller calls it "a cinematic event 50 years in the making."

The festivities continue on Tuesday for Splashdown Day, with the center opening its doors at 10 a.m. to recognize the return of the Apollo 11 capsule carrying the three U.S. heroes aboard with moon rocks, which are on display at the Smithsonian Museum

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Weekend Forecast

Friday

Partly Cloudy
67°/62°



Saturday

Partly Cloudy
68°/62°



Sunday

Partly Cloudy
70°/63°

