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**Spaceward Foundation and NASA Announce the First Beam Power and Tether Competitions**

**$100,000 Prize Purse Furnished by the NASA Centennial Challenges Program**

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif - The Spaceward Foundation, in partnership with NASA, today announced the venue and timing for the first Beam Power and Tether competitions. The event will be held at the NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, Calif., on Oct. 21 – 23, 2005, with prize money furnished by the NASA Centennial Challenges program.

The Tether Challenge centers on the creation of a material that combines light weight and incredible strength. Under this challenge, teams will develop high strength materials that will be stretched in a head-to-head competition to see which tether is strongest.

The Beam Power challenge focuses on the development of wireless power technologies for a wide range of exploration purposes, such as human lunar exploration and long-duration Mars reconnaissance. In this challenge, teams will develop wireless power transmission systems, including transmitters and receivers, to power robotic climbers to lift the greatest weight possible to the top of a 50-meter cable in under three minutes.

The prizes for the event will total $400,000 for four prize competitions over two years, the first under NASA's Centennial Challenges program. The winners of each initial 2005 challenge will receive $50,000. A second set of Tether and Beam Power challenges in 2006 are more technically challenging. Each challenge will award purses of $100,000, $40,000, and $10,000 for first, second, and third place.

NASA's Centennial Challenges program promotes technical innovation through a novel program of prize competitions. It is designed to tap the nation's ingenuity to make revolutionary advances to support the Vision for Space Exploration and NASA goals.

"This is an exciting start for the Centennial Challenges program," said Brant Sponberg, program manager for Centennial Challenges. "The innovations from these competitions will help support advances in aerospace materials and structures, new approaches to

robotic and human planetary surface operations, and even futuristic concepts like space elevators and solar power satellites," he said.

"We are thrilled with our partnership with NASA and we're excited to take the Tether and Beam Power challenges to the next level," said Meekk Shelef, president of the Spaceward Foundation. “These two competitions focus on the development of lightweight yet strong tether materials and wireless power transmission technologies, two of the key technologies required for future space applications such as the space elevator.”

The space elevator concept was first introduced in the 1960s and has only recently garnered serious attention due to advances in materials and power transfer technologies. If built, a space elevator would provide a safe, low cost, way to launch payloads such as satellites into orbit.

The Centennial Challenges program is managed by NASA's Exploration Systems Mission Directorate.

The Spaceward Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization dedicated to furthering the cause of space access in educational curriculums and the public.

For more information about the Centennial Challenges program, visit:
http://centennialchallenges.nasa.gov

For more information on the competitions, visit:
http://www.elevator2010.org

For information about NASA and agency programs, visit:
http://www.nasa.gov

For more information on the Spaceward Foundation, visit:
http://www.spaceward.org