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AMERICA'S FIRST PLANETARIUM

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For Immediate Release

EILEEN COLLINS – AMERICA'S FIRST FEMALE SHUTTLE COMMANDER HONORED BY AMERICA'S FIRST PLANETARIUM

Adler Women's Board Hosts 2006 Women in Space Science Celebration on June 7

CHICAGO (March 13, 2006) – On June 7, 2006, the Women's Board of the Adler Planetarium will honor **NASA Astronaut Commander Eileen Collins** with the **2006 Women in Space Science Award**. A veteran of four space flights, Commander Collins is the first woman space shuttle pilot, and the first and only woman ever to command a shuttle mission. She made history again last summer when she commanded NASA's *Return to Flight* mission of the space shuttle Discovery.

"We are thrilled to honor Commander Eileen Collins as this year's recipient of the Women in Space Science Award," said Pamela Cramer, Chair of the 2006 Women in Space Science Award. "The award was created to inspire young people, particularly women, and as the first female space shuttle pilot and commander, Commander Collins is an inspiration to all of us – young and old alike."

Collins graduated in 1979 from Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance AFB, Oklahoma. She has logged more than 6,751 hours in 30 different types of aircraft. Selected by NASA in January 1990, Collins became an astronaut in July 1991. Collins served as the first woman pilot of a Space Shuttle in 1995, on STS-63 *Discovery*. She became the first woman Shuttle Commander in 1999 on STS-93 *Columbia*. Most recently, Collins was Commander of NASA's 2005 *Return to Flight* mission on STS-114 *Discovery*. Collins has logged more than 872 hours in space.

For photos or additional information on Commander Collins, please visit:

<http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/collins.html>

Each year the Adler's Women's Board presents the Women in Space Science Award to a leading female in the science or technology communities who has made a lasting impact on space exploration. Past award recipients include the Mercury 13 (2005) - 13 pilots tested to become NASA's first class of female astronauts in the 1960's; Dr. Kathy Sullivan (2004) - the first American woman to walk in space; and Dr. Jill Cornel Tarter (2003) - Director of the Center for SETI Research at the SETI institute. Funds raised at the Women in Space Science Award Celebration will support the Adler's education and outreach programs.

For tickets, contact Jessica Braun 312-322-0523 or jbrown@adlerplanetarium.org.

The Women's Board is the Adler's Lead Partner in Education. Through its support of the museum's education, research and advocacy missions, the Women's Board of the Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum helps young people reach for the stars. Founded in 2002, the Adler Women's Board has raised more than \$650,000 in the past three years.

The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum – America's First Planetarium – was founded in 1930 by Chicago business leader Max Adler. The museum is home to two full-size planetarium theaters and one of the world's most important antique instrument collections. The Adler is a recognized leader in science education, with a focus on inspiring young people, particularly women and minorities, to pursue careers in science.

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