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Mike Adkins
Communications Officer
Date September 11, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ECISD student experiment returns from International Space Station, harvesting and analysis to be conducted

After approximately a month of flying on the International Space Station, the student experiment from Falcon Early College High School has returned safely to Earth. The student team, Atlas XIII, competed in the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program, which gave them the opportunity to design an experiment with a protocol that would be carried out by astronauts aboard the ISS. Today, the student researchers will complete their harvesting and analysis at the UT Permian Basin science lab, under the direction of Dr. Michael Zavada, Dean of Arts and Science. They will make observations and conclusions on the comparison of the efficacy of the bacterium, *Ideonella Sakaiensis*, in a microgravity environment to that on Earth. PET can be found in many products that are non-biodegradable which means it can spend a significant amount of years in our environment. The student researchers believe this will provide a greater understanding of how to dispose of plastics such as PET while in space as well as on Earth.

SSEP was an opportunity brought forth by ECISD's Innovation Department and funding was provided by a grant from the Texas Space Grant Consortium, Chevron and Education Foundation of Odessa.

The Student Spaceflight Experiments Program [or SSEP] is a program of the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education (NCESSSE) in the U.S. and the Arthur C. Clarke Institute for Space Education internationally. It is enabled through a strategic partnership with DreamUp PBC and NanoRacks LLC, which are working with NASA under a Space Act Agreement as part of the utilization of the International Space Station as a National Laboratory.

Student Spaceflight Experiments Program Harvesting & Analysis
Tuesday, September 11
5:15PM-7:15PM
UTPB Science and Technology Building
Science Lab
Room #2201

For more information about this press release, contact ECISD Innovation Department at 432-456-9507.