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ATTENTION: News/Science/Education/Family Section Reporters

ASTRONAUT LANDS IN VANCOUVER TO TALK ABOUT EARTH, SUSTAINABILITY

Vancouver, BC, July 25, 2007 – Canada’s first female astronaut, Dr. Roberta Bondar, will be bringing her big picture perspective of Earth from her travels in space to talk about the closer-to-home issues of sustainability and the environment at the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre.

Committed to creating awareness of this planet and the implications of the human footprint, Dr. Bondar believes humanity could benefit from learning about the planet’s natural evolution.

“You rarely find dead birds on the ground; trees take things from the soil. That’s because nature does its own recycling. We have to develop in humans the ability to do what the environment does naturally. This isn’t finger-pointing. It’s about being smarter,” said Dr. Bondar.

Dr. Bondar recently commented on the demise of the Ward Hunt Ice Shelf. “At 10 per cent of the size it was 100 years ago, the Ward Hunt Ice Shelf continues to shrink in size. Three years after I photographed it, a crack developed across the ice shelf. With warming of the Arctic Ocean, this historic ice shelf will eventually vanish.”

Dr. Bondar’s intimate understanding of space, her passion for education, and her interest in blending science and the arts make her presentations lively, engaging and thought-provoking for audiences of all ages. The FREE presentation takes place Wednesday, Aug. 1 at the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre. Doors open at 7 a.m. with a continental breakfast. Dr. Bondar’s presentation begins at 8:30 a.m. in the Planetarium Theatre. Registration is required by calling 604-738-7827, ext. 221.

Aboard the space shuttle Discovery in 1992, Dr. Bondar became the world’s first astronaut-neurologist. For more than a decade, she researched new connections between recovery from unusual environments and neurological illnesses. Time Magazine named her as one of Canada’s Best Explorers in 2003. Numerous commendations include the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame, the NASA Space Medal and the International Women’s Forum Hall of Fame. Respected for her expertise and animated commentary, she has appeared on television networks such as CNN, BBC, PBS and CBC.

The H.R. MacMillan Space Centre is a non-profit community resource that brings the wonders of space to Earth, while providing a personal sense of ongoing discovery. Through innovative programming, exhibits and activities, our goal is to inspire sustained interest in the fields of Earth science, space science and astronomy from a Canadian perspective.

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