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Photo Release -- Northrop Grumman-built LCROSS Satellite Wins 2009 Aviation Week Program Excellence Award

REDONDO BEACH, Calif., Nov. 5, 2009 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE:NOC)-built Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) has been awarded the 2009 Aviation Week Program Excellence Award in the System Level Production/Sustainment category.

A photo accompanying this release is available at <http://media.globenewswire.com/noc/mediagallery.html?pkgid=6804>

The award is presented annually to recognize and promote best practices in program leadership, encompassing the full range of responsibility and commitment necessary to develop and execute the program. LCROSS was evaluated against award criteria that includes risk management, budget and schedule management, and performance and also addresses value creation, best practices in organizational processes, leadership development, complexity and metrics.

"We are gratified to win this award," said Steve Hixson, vice president of Advanced Concepts - Space and Directed Energy Systems for Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems. "It is a significant acknowledgement of the high caliber of our engineering skills and our close partnership with NASA Ames Research Center. It also validates our ability to build small, inexpensive spacecraft with high science value very quickly, awakening the industry and the nation to the viability of this mission class."

"This award is a reflection of the dedicated effort of the entire program team working in close partnership with our customer," said John Chino, Northrop Grumman corporate vice president of programs, quality and engineering. "We strongly emphasize program performance across the company, and we understand that strong program management, which includes an inherent focus on quality, results in achievements such as recognized here."

Northrop Grumman worked closely with NASA Ames Research Center to utilize sophisticated management processes that enabled it to design, fabricate, test and make the LCROSS spacecraft available for launch in just 27 months for \$57 million. The LCROSS spacecraft was built using an off-the-shelf structure called the Expendable Launch Vehicle Secondary Payload Adaptor (ESPA ring) and commercial, off-the-shelf (COTS) sensors and components.

The best practices consistently applied to make LCROSS an outstanding program include:

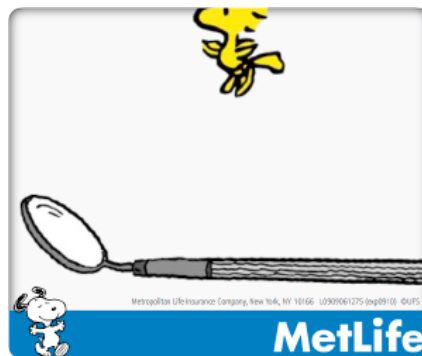
- A close government-industry partnership that emphasized frequent, open, honest communication in all program areas, intensive attention to detail and involvement of all team members in identifying risks and opportunities.
- Innovative management processes that took the company's successful model in managing technical and schedule risk to a new level of effectiveness. Rigorous risk management minimized the impact of potential issues.
- Extensive re-use of Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) hardware and other mature hardware designs to minimize integration and test time.
- Use of proven schedule acceleration methods developed on earlier programs to save costs and documenting lessons learned into a manual for other rapid development projects.

LCROSS was launched as a secondary mission along with NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter last June, as part of a larger mission to enable NASA to search for water ice on the moon. LCROSS successfully concluded its mission to search for water ice when it impacted the Moon's South Pole on Oct. 9. Scientists are currently studying the data produced by the impact and plan to report their findings soon.

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Two other Northrop Grumman programs, the Airborne Signals Intelligence Payload (ASIP) and the Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) program developed for the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy respectively, were also selected as finalists for the award.

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a leading global security company whose 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products, and solutions in aerospace, electronics, information systems, shipbuilding and technical services to government and commercial customers worldwide.

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