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Haskin honored with named feature on the Moon

By Tony Fitzpatrick

Feb. 3, 2009 -- The home pages of the Washington University in St. Louis Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences and the Lunar and Planetary Institute feature a picture of the late Larry Haskin, Ph.D., and the Moon with this caption: Welcome home, Larry.

Haskin, who devoted much of his distinguished career studying the Moon, has joined cosmological luminaries such as Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo with the naming of a crater in his honor.

Haskin (1934-2005) was professor of earth and planetary sciences in Arts & Sciences from 1976-2005, and department chair from 1976-1990, and a member of Washington University's McDonnell Center for the Space Sciences throughout his WUSTL career.

Haskin Crater is a 58- kilometer (approximately 35 miles) wide feature, about 10 degrees from the Moon's north pole.

Months after his death in March 2005, the Athena science and engineering team for the Mars Exploration Rover (MER) mission named a prominent ridge on the east side of the Husband Hill summit on the Red Planet "Haskin Ridge" in his honor and memory.

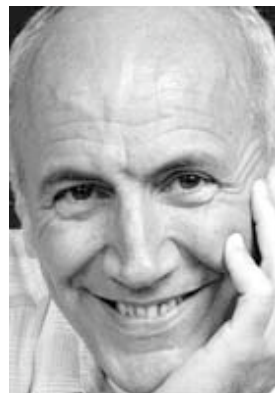
The International Astronomical Union (IAU) officially gave his name to a far side crater on January 22, 2009, along with 18 other scientists, most Nobel Prize winners with no association with the Moon. Haskin, one of the first space scientists to analyze Moon rocks brought back from the Apollo missions, made numerous important discoveries, with the recognition of the Procellarum KREEP Terrane one of his final contributions. That part of the Moon is rich in a special material called KREEP that is high in potassium (K), rare earth elements (REE) and phosphorus (P).

WUSTL colleagues nominated Haskin for the honor.

Names of deceased scientists, scholars, artists and explorers, including Russian cosmonauts and American astronauts, who have made outstanding or fundamental contributions to their field can be submitted to the IAU nomenclature committee, according to Bradley Jolliff, Ph.D., research professor of earth and planetary sciences. Then, when there is a scientific need, for example, to refer to a specific crater for research or charting purposes, a name is drawn from the list of approved names and given to the crater.

"We submitted Larry Haskin's name because of his life-long dedication to the scientific investigation of the Moon and service to NASA in promoting lunar exploration," said Jolliff.

"The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter is planned to launch in the late spring or early summer of this year. One of its objectives is to map in great detail the poles of the Moon because of the potential for deposits of water-ice and other



Haskin

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resources in those locations. Many of the Moon's polar craters are still unnamed, so we — the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) Camera Team, of which I am a member — requested several of the key unnamed craters be given names. And so one of them was named Haskin Crater."

Jolliff said that naming a prominent feature on the Moon for Haskin is very fitting because during Haskin's career, he studied and wrote about the potential for resources on the Moon. His paper, "Toward a Spartan Scenario for Use of Lunar Resources," in *Lunar Bases and Space Activities for the 21st Century*, W. Mendell, Editor, Lunar and Planetary Institute, Houston, 1985, is often cited.

"Toward the end of his career, he became very interested in the process of impact cratering, especially the effects of large impact craters," Jolliff said. "We will of course target this crater for high-resolution imaging during the LRO mission."

In addition to Jolliff, Haskin collaborated with Robert F. Dymek, Ph.D., professor of earth and planetary sciences; Randy Korotev, research associate professor and Alian Wang, Ph.D., senior research scientist on Moon and Moon-related research.

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