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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS ADDED TO LIST OF ASTRONAUT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Students now eligible for \$10,000 scholarships partly funded by living astronauts

ORLANDO – University of Massachusetts will join 35 other top research universities nationwide, including MIT and Georgia Tech, as the newest participant in the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation’s prestigious, merit-based scholarship worth \$10,000 each to outstanding college juniors and seniors and partially supported by living astronauts of America’s storied space programs, officials announced Wednesday.

Established in 1984 by six surviving members of Project Mercury astronauts who partook in the first human spaceflight program of the United States from 1958 through 1963, the scholarships intend to reward top college students with majors in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

“We are pleased to welcome University of Massachusetts into the Astronaut Scholarship Program,” said ASF Board Chairman Curt Brown, an astronaut and veteran of six space flights. “Its commitment to leadership in science and technology is in keeping with the vision of American’s space pioneers who blazed a trail for the United States and captured the imagination of the world. By participating in this effort, University of Massachusetts will help the U.S. maintain its leading edge by recognizing and rewarding their best STEM students.”

University of Massachusetts was one of five universities that were vetted and added to the program in August due to the significant research opportunities available for undergraduate students. The other universities included the University of Mississippi, Colorado State University, University of California, Berkeley, and Auburn University.

Next month, astronaut Mike Collins, who served as pilot for the Gemini X mission in 1966 and command module pilot for Apollo 11 in 1969, will be the keynote speaker at the Innovators Gala to be held Sept. 16 in Washington DC. The event will introduce the 45 members of the 2017-2018 Astronaut Scholar class and the first recipient of the Neil Armstrong™ Award of Excellence. Armstrong passed away in December 2016.

Based in Orlando, the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation annually funds up to \$10,000 scholarships for 50 students, as well as has a life-long relationship with each recipient providing them with many programs and opportunities. The foundation has the support of astronauts from the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab, Space Shuttle and Space Station programs who participate in this educational effort. ASF also accepts other contributions.