

Science In Our Lives

Lab May Produce Out Of This World Results

(NAPSA)—Experts agree even the sky is not the limit for the possible benefits of a one-of-a-kind, high-flying scientific endeavor.

The U.S. Space Laboratory Destiny—centerpiece of scientific research aboard the International Space Station (ISS)—recently lifted-off aboard the Space Shuttle Atlantis to serve as a tool for new scientific discovery.

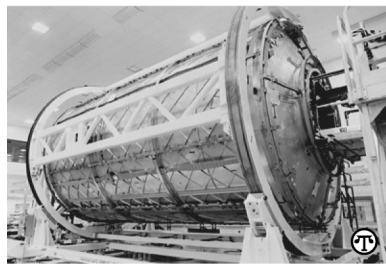
The lab is the first of six research modules planned for the Station and will also serve as the command and control center of the ISS.

The 28-foot-long, 31,000-pound unit is being called the most sophisticated and versatile space laboratory ever built. The module's adaptability will let it be used for a variety of experiments 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by scientists from around the world.

"As an orbiting-laboratory, Destiny will turn days of research opportunity a year into years of research over the next decade," says Ken Cockrell, veteran NASA commander.

The lab's capabilities will lead to new ground-breaking work which will be enhanced by studies already underway on the International Space Station.

Currently, in a micro-gravity environment, scientists are studying the formation of protein crystals—which may aid in the devel-



A U.S. sponsored space-research facility may help scientists find a cure for a number of different diseases.

opment of new drugs. Studies underway on the adaptation of humans to the space environment may provide valuable information on diseases, such as osteoporosis, that are related to the aging process.

"The down-to-earth benefits of space exploration become more apparent with every mission," says Cockrell. "Destiny will serve as an efficient and relatively fast way for us to expand on the valuable knowledge that space travel has already given us."

While there is no way to predict discoveries, NASA expects the combination of Destiny's unique attributes—a cadre of highly qualified researchers, world-class technology and long term exposure to a micro-gravity environment—to be the "right stuff" to advance science and technology and enhance the quality of life on earth.