

New Campaign Encourages Youngsters to Reach for the Stars

PRESTWICK, AYRSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, May 16, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A NEW CAMPAIGN which

aims to educate thousands of young people across Ayrshire and beyond about careers in the UK's growing space sector is to be launched by Prestwick Spaceport and affiliated aerospace businesses.

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Dr. Philippa Whitford, MP for Central Ayrshire

Running throughout 2022, 'A New Hope' campaign, linked to South Ayrshire Council's 'Skypath' initiative, will include an educational outreach video for students and teachers featuring local heroes from Ayrshire and across Scotland. The campaign will target high school children initially, while a competition to design a 'Mission Patch' to mark the inaugural launch of small satellites from Prestwick will be focused on primary schools. The initiative seeks to break down perceived barriers to accessing space careers and inspire young people to follow their dreams. It will highlight the increasing need for future generations to

consider a career in space to reduce skills gaps that could hinder growth of the sector, an industry that is amongst the fastest growing in the UK and provides a host of benefits to the economy, environment and wider society.

The campaign will showcase advice from well-known Scots who have aimed high and succeeded in various inspirational career paths, along with a selection of young people already working in aerospace, alerting them to emerging space opportunities right on their doorstep. Key messages will focus on encouraging young people to reach for the stars and include information on the array of employment opportunities within the space sector. These include both technical and non-technical jobs, meaning logistics personnel, creative designers, architects, lawyers and marketing professionals will be as 'in demand' as the scientists and engineers.

The spaceport, which is being developed alongside Scotland's largest aerospace cluster, aims to become Europe's premier space hub and has already secured multi-million-pound funding through the Ayrshire Growth Deal. It is expected that the educational outreach campaign will play an important role in showcasing growing space activity at Prestwick, as well as a multitude of supply chain opportunities beyond launch, creating 4,000 new jobs.

Mick O'Connor, Programme Director of Prestwick Spaceport stated, "We want to inspire young people to follow their dreams, whatever they may be. We have asked local heroes who have achieved success in different fields to help us by telling their own story explaining how they achieved their goals to help young people realise that with the right desire, belief and commitment they can achieve their own dreams."

"Many of us on the spaceport team never imagined working in space, so we are passionate about making the youth of Ayrshire aware of the possibilities. At the same time, we want to highlight other routes to a career in space, particularly around using space technology to combat climate change, prevent illegal fishing, predict the spread of forest fires or monitor soil moisture levels to stop landslides, to name a few."

As well as Prestwick's efforts to inspire young people locally, the spaceport team recently worked alongside industry-led group Space Scotland and partners AstroAgency to deliver a study tracking various educational outreach activities happening throughout Scotland and the UK. The report, carried out as part of a UK Space Agency funded Regional Space Development project, focused on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics), exploring the range of initiatives being carried out by space companies and providing recommendations on ways to draw activities together in order to have a greater impact.

Matt Archer, Director of Commercial Spaceflight at the UK Space Agency, said: "Launch is already creating highly skilled jobs in communities across the UK and developing the future talent pipeline is vital to ensure its ongoing success. Scotland is home to around one fifth of all space jobs in the UK, and this campaign from Prestwick Spaceport is a great example of the types of initiatives we need to help inspire the next generation to reach for the stars and consider careers in the UK's thriving space sector."

'A New Hope' campaign is supported by the £251.5m Ayrshire Growth Deal investment, a partnership between North, East and South Ayrshire Councils, together with Scottish and UK Governments. A portion of that funding is allocated to aerospace development within the region, including the build of a spaceport, and places importance on the future skills pipeline within Ayrshire. Prestwick Spaceport will partner on the campaign with Skypath, an existing initiative from South Ayrshire Council's Economy and Regeneration service that aims to inspire people to



Viktoryia Parkhamovich, former Aircraft Maintenance Apprentice, now Skilled Aircraft Mechanic at GE Caledonian

consider a career in aerospace.

Dr. Philippa Whitford, MP for Central Ayrshire and member of the UK Parliamentary Space Committee, commented "Having become a consultant surgeon, despite being told that I couldn't do surgery because I was a woman, I am always keen to encourage ALL young people to ignore the naysayers and go for careers in whatever interests them.

"To develop to its full potential, the Scottish Aero-Space sector needs to attract the brightest and best, so it is vital we are not ignoring the talents of half of our young people but encouraging more girls to study STEM subjects and consider careers in science and engineering."

Prestwick is already home to major aerospace industry players such as BAE Systems, GE Caledonian, Spirit AeroSystems, Woodward and Collins Aerospace. The Ayrshire Growth Deal will help position Prestwick as a European leader in the spaceflight and space technology arena.

Lara Zaroni
AstroAgency
[email us here](#)

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