

Contact: Debi-Lee Wilkinson
E-mail: LtL@openluna.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMALL PAYLOAD, BIG SPLASH
OpenLuna asks supporters to "Launch the Launch"

Thornton, Colo. -- The OpenLuna Foundation proudly announces a \$15,000 fundraising effort on FundaGeek, the crowdfunding site for technical innovation. The purpose of this effort, called "Launch the Launch," is to acquire start-up funds for the organization's entry into NASA's Nano-Satellite Launch Challenge. The NASA contest requires participants to deliver a one- to ten-kilogram payload into Earth orbit at least two times in a single week.

Private companies are becoming more and more active in space exploration. Even government space efforts, such as the successful landing of the *Curiosity* rover on the surface of Mars, depend a great deal on innovation from private-sector contractors. Contests such as the Nano-Satellite Challenge are part of an effort by NASA to increase collaboration with the private sector on space activities.

OpenLuna's leaders are high-tech engineers and scientists with a passion for space flight. Launch team leader Debi-Lee Wilkinson manages promotional and technical teams with an extensive range of skills. These teams work in concert with rocket builders with decades of experience.

OpenLuna's nano-satellites, currently in the design phase, are slated for launch in early February 2014. The technical team will demonstrate proof of concept with a suborbital launch in 2013.

The publicity from this mission will launch OpenLuna on its greater goal: the construction of a publicly accessible base on the surface of the moon.

Contributors to the "Launch the Launch" campaign are eligible for a number of incentives. Instead of transmitting a series of beeps back to Earth to indicate their location, the OpenLuna satellites will broadcast voice-recorded "shout-outs" from contributors at the \$100 level and above. Higher dollar amounts will be rewarded with longer "shout-outs."

Being able to address humanity from orbit is a rare and exciting opportunity, says Wilkinson. "What message to the world will you send?" she asks.

Contributors at more modest levels will be rewarded, too. For example, backers at the \$25 to \$49.99 level will be listed as Gold Contributors, will receive a pin, and will receive a one-year promotional membership to OpenLuna (a \$50 value).

"OpenLuna is dedicated to making its first launch a high-profile event that will be hard to miss and that will be celebrated by all," says Wilkinson. "We're going to blow the doors off the nano-satellite launch contest."

The fundraising campaign will remain live until November 4, 2012. Learn more at <http://www.fundageek.com/project/detail/554/Launch-the-Launch>.

OpenLuna Foundation, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) privately funded organization whose mission is to extend humanity's reach into space.

###

Keywords: nano-satellite, "small satellite", satellite, "space exploration", rocket