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Sally K. Ride Papers - KidSat Publicity Articles

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RELEASE:

KIDSAT: A NEW WAY TO TEACH FROM SPACE

Sets of remote-sensing instruments placed aboard space shuttles and orbiting space stations will one day bring the frontiers of space exploration into children's classrooms as a new pilot study gets under way at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

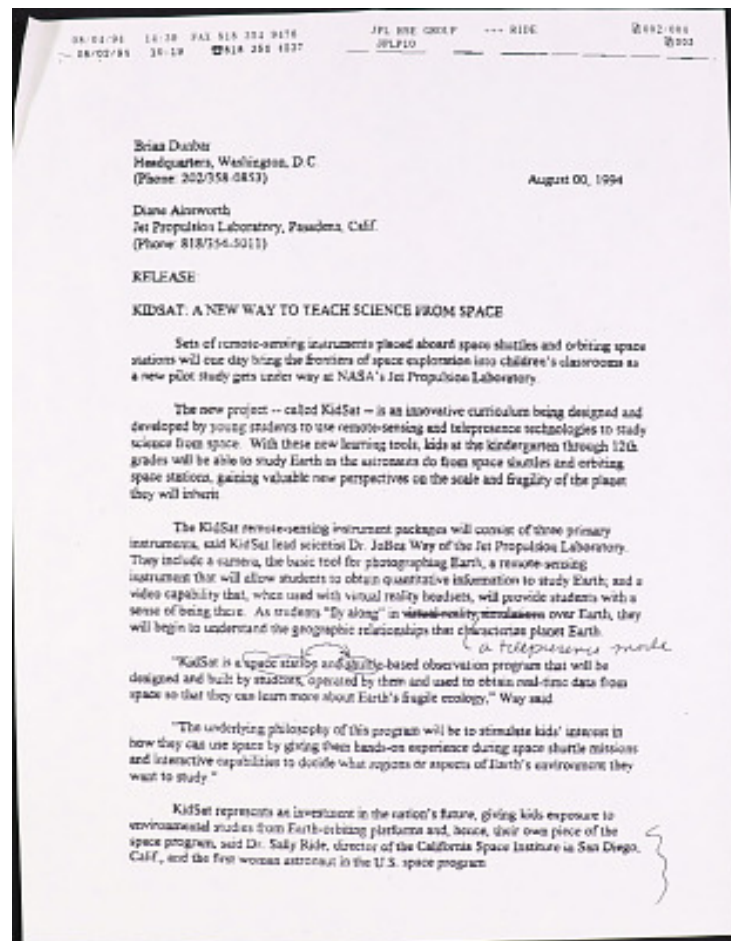
The new project -- called Kidsat -- is an innovative curriculum being designed and developed by young students to use remote-sensing and telepresence technologies to study science from space. With these new learning tools, kids at the kindergarten through 12th graders will be able to study Earth as the astronauts do from space shuttles and orbiting space stations, gaining valuable new perspectives on the scale and fragility of the planet they will inherit.

The Kidsat remote-sensing instrument packages will consist of three primary instruments, said Kidsat lead scientist Dr. JoBea Way of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. They include a camera, the basic tool for photographing Earth, a remote-sensing instrument that will allow students to obtain quantitative information to study Earth; and a video capability that, when used with virtual reality headsets, will provide students with a sense of being there. As students "fly along" in ~~virtual reality simulations~~ a telepresence media over Earth, they will begin to understand the geographic relationships that characterize planet Earth.

"Kidsat is a shuttle and space station-based observation program that will be designed and built by students, operated by them and used to obtain real-time data from space so that they can learn more about Earth's fragile ecology," Way said.

"The underlying philosophy of this program will be to stimulate kids' interest in how they can use space by giving them hands-on experience during space shuttle missions and interactive capabilities to decide what regions or aspects of Earth's environment they want to study."

Kidsat represents an investment in the nation's future, giving kids exposure to environmental studies from Earth-orbiting platforms and, hence, their own piece of the space program, said Dr. Sally Ride, director of the California Space Institute in San Diego, Calif., and the first woman astronaut in the U.S. space program.



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