

Education Grants

Alert

Vol. 19, No. 8
March 12, 2009

Economic stimulus spurs grants for cafeterias

If the kitchens in your school cafeterias could use some new equipment, a \$100 million grant program that's part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act could be the answer.

Money for food service equipment once was included in reauthorizations of the School Lunch program, said Alexis Steines, public affairs associate at the School Nutrition Association's Child Nutrition and Policy Center. However, it was cut five years ago, leaving cash-strapped food service departments to find resources to replace equipment on their own.

The school lunch program comes up for reauthorization this year, Steines noted, but whether equipment funding will be included is not known. The stimulus provided an immediate opportunity, and SNA pushed hard to convince Congress of the need, sending almost 5,000 messages since the beginning of the year to make the case.

(See **STIMULUS** on page 7)

EPA to provide funding for clean school buses

With more than \$300 million slated for clean diesel activities in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act — in addition to any Environmental Protection Agency FY 2009 National Diesel Emissions Reduction Program appropriations — school districts across the nation are gearing up to submit proposals this month.

"Clean school buses are not earmarked per se, but 50 percent of the funding over all must go to benefiting public fleets and school buses are included in here," said Pamela Emerson, EPA Region 10 Lead, in a teleconference hosted by the West Coast Collaborative on March 3.

Each state has already been allotted \$1.73 billion across the board to divvy up how they see fit,

(See **EPA** on page 7)

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Federal Grants Alert

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (NEA) — Urgent deadline

Scope: The National Endowment for the Arts seeks to fund arts projects and activities that preserve jobs in the nonprofit arts sector threatened by declines in philanthropic and other support during the current economic downturn.

Deadline: April 2.

Funds: Grants range for direct funds from \$25,000 to \$50,000; Organizations may request \$100,000 or \$250,000 for subgranting programs. Of these amounts, up to \$50,000 of the NEA grant funds may be used for their own jobs and/or the administration of subgranting programs. Priority will be given to cost-effective programs that maximize the amount of funds distributed.

Eligibility: All applicants must be previous NEA award recipients from the past four years.

Areas: Projects are limited to salary support, full or partial, for one or more positions that are critical to an organization's artistic mission and that are in jeopardy or have been eliminated as a result of the current economic climate; or fees for previously engaged artists or contractual personnel to maintain or expand the period during which

(See **FEDERAL** on page 3)

Grants.gov provides tips for ARRA grant proposal submission

With a deluge of grant proposals starting to come in a short period of time due to tight deadlines from initiatives developing out of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, *Education Grants Alert* asked Michael Pellegrino, communications lead for Grants.gov, to answer some questions that have frustrated organizations in the past.

Q: Since you last spoke with *EGA* (vol.18, iss.41), people report that they are still having problems and receiving error messages when uploading their proposals. Can you explain why?

A: There are several possible scenarios for error messages, one of which is applicant error in filling out the necessary forms properly. The No. 1 reason for submissions being rejected is improper Data Universal Number System — which means the DUNS in the application package is not the same as the DUNS used to register as an Authorized Organization Representative.

Another common error is called “Virus detect.” While this error message is for viruses, it also appears when people don’t follow the

proper naming convention on file attachments. (See www07.grants.gov/applicants/submit_application_faqs.jsp#12.)

We currently have a system change request, our formal tracking process when we need to make enhancements in the system, to separate this error message and identify when people have an incorrect file attachment name. When we receive error messages from applicants, we review to see if it is on the applicant’s side. If we deem it to be related to the system, we create a system change request and then correct in the system as needed.

Q: What should people do if they receive an error message or unsuccessful upload?

A: They should capture screenshots of the error messages and then call the Grants.gov Contact Center to create a customer service ticket number, which documents in detail the issue they experienced. They will also forward screenshots of the error messages. If our Tier 1 support cannot answer the inquiry we then forwarded to the next tier, which brings our IT team in to answer the inquiry.

Q: What has Grants.gov done in preparation for the influx of RFPs that will go through its system as the money is broken down from the ARRA?

A: Grants.gov is currently working with the Office of Management and Budget and all federal agencies to determine the road ahead on the details to increase system capacity to meet the anticipated grant volume that will be posted on Grants.gov. A final decision has not been made on which path to take, but, ultimately, Grants.gov will be increasing system capacity and speed to meet the influx of grants from the ARRA. We have additional resources dedicated to Grants.gov right now to map out the next steps.

Q: What challenges, if any, do you see people experiencing during submittal?

A: People submit the day of the grant closings. We always strongly recommend 72 hours prior to the closing date/time so that if an applicant experiences issues, Grants.gov and the federal agency can work with the applicant to ensure their issues are resolved so they can successfully submit their opportunity. One of the issues is that if people submit the afternoon of a large closing day it may take longer than normal for their application to upload to the system, which, at times, causes their submission to arrive late. Grants.gov is currently analyzing our existing architecture to identify possible areas for improvement to increase processing time and capacity.

For more information, visit www.Grants.gov. ■

Education Grants Alert

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Federal Grants Alert (Cont. from p. 1)

such people would be engaged.

Contact: National Endowment for the Arts, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20506-0001; (202) 682-5400

Web: www.arts.gov/grants/apply/recovery/index.html

Early Reading First Program (ED) — Urgent

Scope: The Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education invites applications to support local efforts to enhance the oral language, cognitive, and early reading skills of preschool-aged children, especially those from low income families.

Deadline: April 2 for pre-applications; June 16 for full applications.

Funds: Estimated funds: \$111.4 million.

Eligibility: One or more LEAs, including charter schools that are considered LEAs under state law, that are eligible to receive a subgrant under the Reading First program; one or more public or private organizations or agencies located in a community served by an eligible LEA; or one or more eligible LEAs, applying in collaboration with one or more eligible organizations or agencies

Areas: Priority is given to: (a) preschool programs that operate full-time, full-year, early childhood educational programs and that serve children for the two consecutive years prior to their entry into kindergarten; (b) plans for the development of English language proficiency for children (with limited English proficiency) from the start of their preschool experience; (c) plans to transition preschool-aged children to kindergarten; and (d) applications that propose to engage community-based organizations in the delivery of services under this program.

E-mail: Pilla.Parker@ed.gov

Web: www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&flag2006=false&oppld=45578

Recovery Act Limited Competition (NIH)

Scope: As part of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the National Institutes of Health requests proposals under a new initiative called the NIH Challenge Grants in Health and Science Research. The education portion, 12-OD-101: Efficacy of educational approaches toward promoting STEM competencies, calls for research

on efficacy testing of educational pedagogy, tools and curricula (both classroom and non-classroom approaches) that are targeted at improving student understanding of science, technology, engineering and math concepts.

Deadline: April 27 (with proposal submission opening on March 27).

Funds: Grants up to \$500,000.

Eligibility: State, county, city, township, and special governments; independent school districts; nonprofit organizations; public and state controlled institutions of higher education; private institutions of higher education; and Native American tribal governments.

E-mail: fuchsb@mail.nih.gov

Web: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-OD-09-003.html#SectionI>

Research, Evaluation on Education (NSF)

Scope: The National Science Foundation requests proposals for initiatives that aim at advancing research at the frontiers of STEM learning, education and evaluation, and at providing the foundational knowledge necessary to improve STEM teaching and learning at all educational levels and in all settings.

Deadline: Oct. 9, for (optional) letters of intent; Nov. 12 for proposals.

Funds: Knowledge diffusion projects: up to \$250,000; empirical research: up to \$1 million; and large empirical research: up to \$2 million.

Eligibility: Unrestricted.

Areas: This solicitation calls for three types of proposals:

- Knowledge Diffusion — synthesis of existing knowledge on a topic of critical importance to STEM learning, education and/or evaluation, or for the diffusion of research-based knowledge.
- Empirical Research — identifies areas that have the potential for advancing discovery and innovation in STEM learning.
- Large Empirical Research — involves teams of multi-disciplinary experts working on conceptually related STEM projects.

E-mail: DRLREESE@nsf.gov

Web: www.nsf.gov/pubs/2008/nsf08585/nsf08585.htm#elig ■

Private Grants Alert

Tony Hawk Foundation

Scope: The Tony Hawk Foundation provides grants to encourage and facilitate the design, development, construction and operation of new skateboard parks and facilities in low-income communities in the United States.

Deadline: Oct. 1.

Funds: Grants range from \$1,000 to \$25,000.

Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations and state or local agencies, including public school systems or public projects.

Areas: The foundation primarily considers skate park projects that:

- Are designed and built by qualified and experienced skate park contractors and include local skaters in the design process, in areas that currently have no skateboarding facilities.
- Are in low-income areas or areas with a high population of at-risk youth.
- Can demonstrate a strong grassroots commitment to the project.
- Don't require skaters or their parents to sign waivers and don't charge an entrance fee.
- Are open during daylight hours, 365 days a year.

Contact: Tony Hawk Foundation, 1611-A, S. Melrose Drive #360, Vista, CA 92081; (760) 477-2479

E-mail: contact@tonyhawkfoundation.org

Web: www.tonyhawkfoundation.org/grant_application.asp

Genentech Inc.

Scope: The Genentech Inc. Corporate Giving Program supports health science education, patient education and advocacy, and community projects.

Deadline: Rolling for online applications.

Funds: Grant amounts vary by organization and need.

Eligibility: 501(c)(3) organizations, public elementary and secondary schools, as well as public colleges and universities and public hospitals.

Contact: Genentech, Inc. Corporate Giving Program, c/o Mgr., Contributions, 1 DNA Way,

South San Francisco, CA 94080-4918.

E-mail: give@gene.com

Web: www.gene.com/gene/about/community/overview.html#restrictions

CIGNA

Scope: CIGNA provides grants to organizations working in five core areas: the health of women, children and families; obesity awareness and prevention; patient-doctor communications and health literacy; elimination of gender and ethnic disparities in health care; and the connection between a healthy mind and a healthy body.

Deadline: Ongoing for Targeted Grant Introductory Applications. To receive an application, send a request to the email address listed below.

Funds: In 2007, the foundation awarded almost \$3 million for 129 grants.

Eligibility: 501(c)(3) organizations.

Areas: Projects or programs should: involve a health-related area of key concern; exhibit thought leadership; and positively impact a diverse community.

Contact: CIGNA Foundation, 1601 Chestnut St., TL06B, Philadelphia, PA 19192-1540; (215) 761-4661

E-mail: FoundationGrants@cigna.com

Web: www.cigna.com/about_us/community/grant_application_details.html

IGT

Scope: IGT supports the following:

- Children and Family — programs or organizations that provide assistance, that support prevention or intervention, and that empower young people to achieve personal development.
- Civic — Community service organizations, programs and activities that benefit a broad range of citizens and civic improvement interests.
- Arts and Multi-Cultural — Activities which broaden public exposure to the arts and multi-cultural events and ideas.
- Health and Wellness — Support for programs that address needs unmet by human services agencies.

Private Grants Alert (Cont.)

• Education — Support of higher education institutions, educational development, and economic and business education programs.

Deadline: Rolling for online letters of inquiry, but a minimum of 90 days before the funds are needed.

Funds: Vary by scope and nature of project.

Eligibility: 501(c)(3) organizations.

Contact: Direct all inquiries to the e-mail address listed below,

E-mail: CharitableContributions@IGT.com

Web: www.igt.com/Corporate/Contributions.asp?pid=60.345

Power in Numbers

Scope: Mountain Dew Voltage and DoSomething.org are asking teens, in groups of three to 10, to develop projects in their communities that ignite change.

Deadline: April 6.

Funds: \$10,000 grants.

Eligibility: Entrants must be between the ages of 13 and 25. The grants will be directly awarded to a 501(c)(3) organization on behalf of the winning team's name.

Areas: Projects will be based on whether they were youth led and driven; measurable change; community focus; long-term problem solving action; creativity; and diversity.

Contact: (800) 317-1350

Web: www.energizeyourcommunity.com/

Wal-Mart Foundation

Scope: The Wal-Mart Foundation requests proposals for the State Giving Program, which supports organizations that create opportunities so people can live better. The foundation has four areas of focus: education, health and wellness, environmental sustainability and workforce development/economic opportunity.

Deadline: April 17 and Sept. 18, for online applications.

Funds: In 2007, the foundation gave more than \$80 million in charitable grants.

Eligibility: 501(c)(3) organizations.

Areas: In regards to education, the foundation seeks to fund initiatives that address the educational needs of underserved young people ages 12-30; drop-out prevention; college access and retention; and job skills training.

Contact: Wal-Mart Foundation, 702 S.W. 8th St., Dept. 8687, # 0555, Bentonville, AR 72716-0150; (800) 530-9925

Web: <http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/8169.aspx?p=8168%20>

The Mind Trust

Scope: The Mind Trust solicits applications for Education Entrepreneur Fellowships, a national incubator for transformative education ventures, which offers promising education entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop and launch their break-the-mold education ventures and the support necessary for success.

Deadline: July 31 for statements of intent.

Funds: Fellows receive an annual salary of \$90,000 for two years, benefits, and a \$20,000 stipend for travel and professional development.

Eligibility: Unrestricted.

Tip: *The fellowship is a full-time responsibility; fellows may not have additional employment, consulting contracts, or other professional responsibilities.*

Contact: The Mind Trust, (317)822-8102

E-mail: fellowship@themindtrust.org

Web: www.themindtrust.org/

Christopher D. Smithers Foundation

Scope: The Christopher D. Smithers Foundation supports prevention, educational service, and treatment and research programs in the field of alcoholism.

Deadline: Ongoing for letters of introduction.

Funds: In 2007, the foundation provided more than \$700,000 in charitable grants.

Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations.

Contact: Mrs. Adele Smithers-Fornaci, president, The Christopher D. Smithers Foundation, Inc. Box 67, Mill Neck, NY 11765

E-mail: info@smithersfoundation.org

Web: www.smithersfoundation.org/index.htm?smithers_body.htm&2 ■

Local Funding Briefs

In this section, Education Grants Alert focuses on private-sector funders that limit their giving to geographic regions in which they have a particular interest.

Battelle Pacific Northwest Division

Geographic Area: Areas of company operations in the Pacific Northwest.

Scope: The Battelle Pacific Northwest Division supports education projects that:

- Provide professional development for teachers or administrators in the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment.
- Increase student achievement, interest, and participation in STEM-related studies.
- Enhance, extend and enrich the “core” curriculum by linking academic learning to the world beyond the classroom.
- Promote diversity and equity within STEM, including a focus on under-represented students.

Deadline: Rolling.

Funds: In 2008, the foundation awarded more than \$800,000 in charitable grants.

Contact: Annette Schutzenhofer, Battelle Pacific Northwest Division, P.O. Box 999, MSIN K1-55, Richland, WA 99352; (509) 375-2229

E-mail: annette.schutzenhofer@pnl.gov

Web: <http://regionaloutreach.pnl.gov/corporate/eligibility.stm>

SRP

Geographic Area: Arizona.

Scope: SRP supports: increased quality of math and science education provided to students in grades K-12 through development of highly qualified teachers and supporting “train the trainer” programs for educators.

Preparation of teachers to better equip students for higher education by encourage student success in physical science, engineering or environmental science through enrichment activities and access to technology.

Development of job readiness and employment skills for high-school students.

Assistance to educators to implement programs that highlight the wise use of water and electricity as important resources.

Deadline: Rolling.

Funds: Grants range from \$350 to \$5,000, depending on program applied for.

Contact: SRP, 1521 N. Project Drive, Tempe, AZ 85281-1298; (602) 236-2497.

E-mail: educate@srpnet.com

Web: www.srpnet.com/community/contributions/Default.aspx

Westamerica Bancorporation

Geographic Area: California.

Scope: Westamerica funds education initiatives that support basic curriculums on a district-wide level versus individual schools; and that promote literacy, especially with adults and within minority communities

Deadline: Ongoing.

Funds: Grants range from \$100 to \$1,500.

Contact: Westamerica Bancorporation

Debbie Friesen, A-2H, P.O. Box 1230, Suisun City, CA 94585-1230; (707) 863-6938

E-mail: debbie.friesen@westamerica.com

Web: www.westamerica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=338&Itemid=247

Halliburton

Geographic Area: Areas of company operations in the Southwest, with a focus on Texas.

Scope: Halliburton supports nonprofit organizations dedicated to education, health, the environment and health-related community programs

Deadline: April 30, July 31 and Oct. 31.

Funds: In 2008, the company provided more than \$2.2 million in charitable donations.

Contact: Halliburton Community Relations, 10200 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, TX 77072-5206

Web: www.halliburton.com/AboutUs/default.aspx?navid=988&pageid=2274 ■

Stimulus spurs grants for cafeterias (cont. from p. 1)

When \$198 million in equipment funds was removed from the Senate version of the stimulus bill, SNA members again went into action in February. Their efforts resulted in the \$100 million program in the final bill. Although that is less than the original request, it still leaves members “very, very pleased,” Steines said.

The grant program means a chance to replace equipment that in some cases has been in use for as long as three or four decades. For example, SNA said a South Dakota district still uses a 38-year-old oven that could only be repaired after a local auto mechanic made a part for it.

“Generally speaking, school food service facilities are outdated, and equipment is inadequate to meet the production demands of today,” said Jill Conklin, director of national school accounts for Winston Industries, which manufactures commercial equipment for more than a third of the nation’s school districts. School nutritionists have a harder time implementing new programs and energy-efficiency standards because their equipment is outmoded, she added.

SNA president Katie Wilson made a similar argument in a letter to Congress, pointing out that districts in some parts of the country must replace items like deep fryers with more expensive convection ovens to meet requirements set by state nutrition guidelines or local wellness policies.

Guidelines to come. At press time, guidelines and deadlines to apply for the grants had not been released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Steines suggested keeping in touch with your state agency to stay up-to-date. In the meantime, here are the basics:

- Funds will be funneled through the agency in your state that administers the School Lunch Program.
 - Grants will be awarded by states on a competitive basis based on need.
 - Schools with 50 percent or more of students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals will get priority.
 - Funds will be available through FY 2010.
- For more information, visit schoolnutrition.org.
Contributed by Carol MacDonald at sister publication Managing School Business. ■*

EPA to provide funding for clean school buses (cont. from p. 1)

so there is no guarantee that it will be through grant solicitations versus the direct funding of existing programs. But, there is a nationwide competitive grant program, which opened March 5, that allows for school districts and organizations to apply for direct funding from the EPA, she said.

The National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program will receive approximately \$156 million, and grants from those funds will be awarded on a competitive basis to support diesel emission reduction programs, including the upgrading of older diesel buses to newer and more environmentally friendly methods. These methods include exhaust controls, engine upgrades, cleaner fuel use, idle reduction technologies, truck upgrade kits, engine repowers, and/or vehicle or equipment replacement.

“There is no spending cap on the cost of buses, but we are looking at cost effectiveness,” said Emerson. Also, “you cannot just buy a new bus to expand your fleet — this [grant program] is about reducing emissions.” School districts are allowed to apply the funding to replace older buses that put out the most pollution or to retrofit them to reduce emissions. If you are not sure if your project is fundable, Emerson suggests that you ask yourself “Will this action reduce emissions in some way?” If the answer is yes, then it is fundable.

As for the other 50 percent that school districts need to come up with to purchase the buses, money received from other stimulus funding initiatives is off limits. But, all hope is not lost for smaller, rural school districts that don’t have room in their budgets to make up the matching or leverage funding. “This summer the EPA is coming out with a regular RFP that can be applied for and used as leverage with the stimulus funds,” said Emerson.

At press time, the deadline for proposal submission was April 27, and a mandatory completion date of Sept. 30, 2010, was in place for all projects.

For more information, visit <http://epa.gov/otaq/eparecovery/progfinance.htm> ■

EPA’s tips to get your proposal ready:

- Prepare to implement a clean diesel project quickly and efficiently.
- Communicate with potential partners.
- Organize fleet information.
- Develop budget.
- Begin working on statement of work (based on FY 08 RFP) and other grant forms. ■

Funding Notebook

Solar systems to energize Arizona schools

SRP's Solar Energy for Schools program seeks to provide select K-12 schools across Arizona with funding to install and maintain a conventional solar photovoltaic system that will provide a clean, inexhaustible source of energy.

Winners receive an installed, fixed, flat-panel solar PV system that produces at least 10 kilowatts of electricity; a 10-year maintenance contract for the PV system; educational materials and educator training related to solar energy; and a data acquisition system to allow students and staff to monitor system output. Eligible schools must own the building on which the system will be installed and work to make sure it is installed by Dec. 31, 2010. Deadline for entry is March 20.

For more information, visit www.srpnet.com/environment/earthwise/solarforschools.aspx.

Outward Bound offers scholarships

Outward Bound U.S.A., the leading provider of adventure-based education programs, is offering \$2 million in scholarships to high school and college students to attend wilderness expeditions across the country. The scholarships, which cover up to 50 percent of course tuition, depend on financial factors and the chosen course. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

In addition, students may earn academic credit for their participation. Students, on average, earn one credit hour per course week by working with one of Outward Bound's partner colleges or through an independent study.

For further information, visit www.outwardbound.org/index.cfm/do/exp.scholarship_faq.

Writing initiative helps at-risk youth

Warrior Woman Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing teens and at-risk youth a means of artistic expression through empowering writing workshops, has launched the "36 Schools." As a way to keep creative programming in schools, the project is bringing workshops, free of charge, to three dozen schools throughout Florida.

For more information, visit www.thewarriorwoman.org/main/page_about.html.

Ohio school wins Future City Competition

Bexley (Ohio) Middle School has been announced as the winner of the 2009 Future City Competition (*EGA vol. 18, iss. 31*), in which teams from 38 middle schools nationwide competed to design a city of tomorrow addressing the theme "Creating a Self-Sufficient System Within the Home That Conserves, Recycles and Reuses Existing Water Sources."

The grand prize winners — Abby Sharp, 14, Wyatt Peery, 13 and Tom Krajnak, 14 — teamed up with their teacher, Peg Englehardt, and volunteer mentor, Mark Sherman, an engineer with Franklin County Engineers, to bring home the win. Each winner receives a trip to U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala.

For further information, visit www.futurecity.org/.

Scholarships to build up student futures

Turner Construction Company seeks applications for its New York City YouthForce 2020 Scholarship program, which will select five graduating high school seniors from New York City Schools to receive college scholarships of \$2,000 each year, for a total of \$8,000 for four years.

Eligible applicants must: maintain a 2.8 GPA; be accepted to a four-year engineering program in civil, electrical, mechanical, or occupational engineering; architecture; or construction management; participate in school and community activities; have a combined SAT score of 1600 or better; and complete a 350-500 word essay entitled "Why I Want to Pursue a Career in the Building Industry." Deadline for entry is May 4.

For more information, visit www.turnerconstruction.com/newyork/content.asp?d=6326.

Connecticut kids asked to dream big dreams

The State of Connecticut Treasurer's Office and the Connecticut Higher Education Trust invite K-6 students from across the state to enter the 2009 CHET Dream Big! Competition. These students are asked to express what they will be doing after college through a variety of creative mediums including drawing, essays and poetry. Prizes range from \$250 to \$500 for individual awards, and \$150 awards for classroom celebrations for the state level winners. Deadline for entry is April 3.

For further information, visit www.chetdreambig.com/.

Write on, drive home environmental progress

The Air & Waste Management Association asks students in grades 9-12 to enter the A&WMA 2009 High School Essay Contest "Driving Environmental Progress: What can students do?" Essays can be up to six pages in length and should describe the role that students can play in driving environmental progress.

Winners receive \$400 and certificate. Deadline for submission is April 22.

For more information, visit www.awma.org/enviro_edu/earth_week_2008.html.

Name the next NASA space station module

NASA invites participants to help name the next International Space Station's module — a control tower for robotics in space and the world's ultimate observation deck. Individuals can vote for the module's name online, choosing one of four NASA suggestions or by writing in a name. The winning name will be announced at the Node 3 unveiling April 28 at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Fla. Deadline for entry is March 20.

For further information, visit www.nasa.gov/home/hqnews/2009/feb/HQ_09034_Name_Node3.html. ■