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United Launch Alliance Supports Afterschool STEM Learning for Low-Income Youth

February 10, 2010 (DENVER) – United Launch Alliance, the nation’s rocket company headquartered in Centennial, Colo., has awarded Mi Casa Resource Center a grant of \$20,000 to fund after-school STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities for low-income youth.

The Mi Casa Neighborhood Center afterschool program is located at Lake Middle School and serves a student population that is 92% Latino. All the children at the Mi Casa Neighborhood Center qualify for the federal free or reduced breakfast and lunch programs. Mi Casa and United Launch Alliance share the concern that many kids in the public school system – particularly low-income children at urban schools like Lake – have insufficient opportunities for STEM learning. The United States lags behind other developed nations in the STEM knowledge of its students, and Latino students in this country, on average, trail well behind their peers in terms of academic achievement.

“Most of the young people we serve at the Neighborhood Center don’t have opportunities to participate in STEM-related activities outside of the school day,” says Karen Fox, Mi Casa’s Director of Youth & Family Development Programs. “We’re extremely excited about working with United Launch Alliance, as our partnership will greatly increase Mi Casa’s ability to offer engaging, educational STEM activities to youth who otherwise would not have that learning opportunity. We hope the experience will open our children’s eyes to the promising STEM-related career fields that are available to them.”

United Launch Alliance was formed in 2006 as a joint venture of Lockheed Martin and Boeing to provide reliable, cost-efficient spacecraft launch services for the U.S. government.

“United Launch Alliance is committed to a robust corporate citizenship program that targets the need to excite our next generation of engineers and rocket scientists,” says Michael C. Gass, ULA president and CEO. “We have a national crisis in not inspiring enough of our young people to pursue careers in science and technology. Together with the Mi Casa, ULA is working to address this challenge by supporting STEM programs and mobilizing our workforce to help make a difference in our community.”

In 2010, members of ULA’s Denver staff will serve as volunteers during STEM-related afterschool activities at the Mi Casa Neighborhood Center. Members of the ULA team will play a valuable role as mentors and role models to the youth at the Neighborhood Center, helping them understand the many educational and professional opportunities available to them in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

About United Launch Alliance

ULA provides reliable, cost-efficient space launch vehicles and services for the U.S. government, including the Department of Defense, NASA, the National Reconnaissance Office and other commercial customers. The company employs nearly 1,800 people at its Centennial, Colorado, headquarters.

About Mi Casa Resource Center

Mi Casa Resource Center is among the oldest and largest Latino-serving organizations in Colorado. Mi Casa was founded in 1976 by eight Head Start mothers in west Denver to create new opportunities for women and their children to succeed. For more than 30 years, Mi Casa has been committed to advancing the economic success of Latino and low-income families through business, career, and youth and family development strategies. For more information, please visit our website www.MiCasaResourceCenter.org