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Educators to work with NASA

A technology applications teacher at Raul Yzaguirre School for Success in Houston, Texas and a recent EducationWorld Teacher of the Day, Tom R.Chambers will join educators from across the country this summer as they work with NASA to design educational resources.Chambers and 24 other middle and high-school educators will work with NASA and the International Society of Technology for Education (ISTE) to participate in the Learning Laboratory: Magnetic Space Cyber Café. The group will work in virtual project teams to produce educational artifacts on the magnetosphere, magnetic reconnection and NASA's 2014 mission to launch four data-collecting satellites into space. The Solar Terrestrial Probes mission involves four identically instrumented spacecraft that will use Earth's magnetosphere as a laboratory to study the microphysics of three fundamental plasma processes: magnetic reconnection, energetic particle acceleration and turbulence.

NASA scientists and engineers will work with the educators, helping this group design resources for teachers to use with students.

"I was selected based on my sciences background, the fact that I worked at NASA during the Apollo Program, and the fact that I've involved some of my students with NASA STEM activities at my school," Chambers said. "I imagine that part of the acceptance also was due to my curriculum planning and implementation via technology applications."

When it launches in 2014, NASA's new Magnetospheric Multiscale (MMS) mission will give scientists unprecedented insights into a little-understood physical process at the heart all space weather. This process, known as magnetic reconnection, sparks solar flares, coronal mass ejections and other phenomena that can imperil Earth-orbiting spacecraft and even power grids on terra firma. MMS's assignment is to study the mysterious process that occurs when magnetic fields cross and reconnect, releasing magnetic energy in the form of heat and charged particle kinetic energy.

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