

# MSU unveils Space Science Facility

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(MSU) – Calling it the most exciting project in recent memory, Morehead State University President Wayne D. Andrews officially opened the new \$16.6 million Space Science research, instructional and support facility today (June 11).

Gov. Steve Beshear, members of the Board of Regents and other officials took part in the ribboncutting ceremony.

Financed primarily with state funds and located east of Normal Hall on Vaughan Drive, the two-story, state-of-the-art building encompasses 45,000 square feet of floor space. It includes a control center for the 21-meter space antenna system on the ridge top above Nunn Hall, RF and electronics laboratories, an anechoic chamber that mimics the electromagnetic environment of space, a rooftop antenna test range, space system development laboratory, classrooms, offices and reception area, and a digital Star Theatre.



MSU officially opened the new \$16.6 million Space Science research, instructional and support facility Thursday with a ribboncutting ceremony.

The building will serve as a research and development facility for fundamental and applied research and for instruction in the space science

and astrophysics degree programs.

“This exciting project is a tribute to the vision and imagination of those who conceived the space science program and to the pride and determination of our legislative alumni, especially Rep. Rocky Adkins and Sen. Charlie Borders, who were key players in our state funding for this component,” Dr. Andrews said.

MSU’s Space Science operations began in December 2004 with the commissioning of the \$3.5 million space tracking system by former President Ronald G. Eaglin. That facility was financed largely with federal funds secured with the assistance of U. S. Rep. Hal Rogers and U. S. Sen. Mitch McConnell.



**President Wayne D. Andrews**

“To his lasting credit and to the University’s benefit, Dr. Eaglin recognized the great potential of what Dr. Ben Malphrus and his dean, Dr. Gerald DeMoss, believed could happen in these hills...far removed from NASA operations in Texas, Florida and California,” said Dr. Andrews. “A reporter wrote at the time that Dr. Eaglin had shown that the sky was no longer the limit at MSU. Today is further evidence of that fact.”

In his remarks to an overflow audience in the rotunda of the new building, Gov. Beshear said:

“For decades, we have launched brave men and women as well as numerous satellites into space, hoping a closer, firsthand look – one that

literally surrounded ourselves with this mysterious environment — would help us understand what a telescope could not.”

“Today, Morehead State University is proudly declaring the role it wants to take in future space explorations and discoveries with the official opening of the state-of-the-art MSU Space Science Facility.”

“President Andrews, President Eaglin, Dr. Malphrus: I am thrilled about this Space Science Program and this university. Your vision for and faith in Morehead State will one day translate into big things. Even though the program and your undertaking are still young, everyone here maintains high expectations.”

Gov. Beasher also announced a \$750,000 equipment grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funds through the Department of Local Government.



**Gov. Steve Beshear**

For Dr. Malphrus, professor of space science and director of the SSC, the wait was worth it.

“This is a dream come true. This is a major milestone for the Space Science program at Morehead State University. The new facility will greatly enhance our capacity to develop, test, validate and operate spacecraft systems. The new laboratories and research infrastructure will allow us to engage our students in engineering design efforts for space systems and

intimately involve them in astrophysics research,” said Dr. Malphrus.

“The facility will support the Kentucky Space program’s goal of creating a cottage aerospace industry in the commonwealth and greatly expand our role in Kentucky’s space enterprise. Generations of students will be trained in this facility that will support not only scientific research but also an industry vital to the nation’s economy and security as we enter a new space age.”

MSU is among only five institutions in the U.S. with a bachelor’s degree in space science.

The control center will remotely operate the 21-meter antenna which will serve next year as the primary earth station for a cube satellite to be launched by KySat, a consortium of universities and private organizations.

The digital Star Theatre is a 108-seat, multi-function, digital classroom with a full 360-degree projection system with six digital star projectors. The Star Theatre will be used as an instructional tool for MSU space science students, visiting K-12 students and the general public.

D.W. Wilburn Inc. of Lexington was the general contractor and Hastings and Chivetta of St. Louis was the project architect.