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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

When Space Shuttle Endeavor took flight, it was carrying more than astronauts. Aboard the shuttle was a very special banner that has been to the depths and heights of earth.

Middle and high school girls involved in SCUBAgirls program gave this banner to NASA. The banner has previously been taken to Hawaii and was submerged in 2-thousand feet below the ocean and carried top off the world's highest mountain, Mauna Kea (Maw Nah KEY a). In a few days on October 28<sup>th</sup>, the SCUBAgirls and Dominic Dupont will watch astronaut Gorie unfurl the banner in space through a live downlink.

University of South Florida's College of Marine Science, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute sponsor the SCUBAgirls program. This program gives students the opportunity to get involved in science.

U-S-F grad student Jennifer Dupont expressed the benefits of the SCUBAgirls program:

(SOUND BITE...15 SECONDS)

"The opportunities these students have to work with scientists collecting real data in the field are exceptional. SCUBAgirls is an example of the wonderful spirit in our college of engaging young people in the excitement of research."

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