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Arizona Capitol Museum Opens Phoenix Mars Mission Exhibit

The Arizona Capitol Museum, in partnership with The University of Arizona, is opening its newest exhibit, "Up from the Ashes: Phoenix Goes to Mars," during Arizona's Statehood Day observance on Feb. 14.

The exhibit will commemorate the major breakthroughs in space exploration that UA scientists have made over the last 50 years, with emphasis on the Phoenix Mars Mission, the first mission to the Red Planet led by the a public university.

"Up from the Ashes: Phoenix Goes to Mars" features the various stages of the mission, including project development, launch, landing and science operations – which will take place at the UA's Science Operations Center in Tucson.

Highlights from the exhibit include a one-tenth scale model of the Phoenix Mars Lander, models of some of the cameras aboard the spacecraft, photographs of Mars taken with the UA HiRISE (High Resolution Imaging Experiment) camera and more than 20 high-resolution photographs of the spacecraft taken at various stages of its development.

On display through the conclusion of science operations, the exhibit will be updated as data is analyzed and new information is made available during science operations.

"The exhibit is a testament to the pioneer spirit of Arizona, which the Arizona Capitol Museum highlights in its historical exhibits and The University of Arizona's pioneering research that has taken us into space," said Brenda McLain, curator of the Arizona Capitol Museum.

The exhibit will be open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information on the exhibit at the Arizona Capitol Museum, call 602-926-3620 or visit <http://www.lib.az.us/museum>.

The 55,000 square foot Arizona Capitol Museum, located at 1700 W. Washington Street in Phoenix, tells the story of Arizona's history from Territorial Days to the present through more than 20 exhibits. It is part of the State Library, the oldest cultural institution in Arizona, dating to the organization of the Territory in 1863.

Launched in August 2007, the Phoenix Mars Mission is the first public university led mission to the Red Planet and the first in NASA's Mars Scout Program. The mission is designed to study the history of water and search for complex organics in the ice-rich soil of Mars. The mission is led by Peter Smith of the UA's Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, with project management at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in Pasadena, Calif., and development partnership at Lockheed Martin, in Denver. International contributions are provided by the Canadian Space Agency; the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland; the universities of Copenhagen and Aarhus, Denmark; the Max Planck Institute, Germany; and the Finnish Meteorological Institute.

Exhibit Opening Information

When: Feb. 14, 12 p.m.

Where: Arizona Capitol Museum
Second Floor Rotunda
1700 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007