

# Reaching for the Stars

## GSA Associate's Son Launches Experiment into Space

**W**es Powell, a GSA Federal Supply Service associate, watched with anticipation as an experiment developed by his son Grant and three other students was launched into space aboard the space shuttle Discovery. The experiment, destined for NASA's International Space Station was one of a number of experiments selected for launch in August of 2001.

Grant Powell and three of his seventh grade classmates in Beaver Creek, Ohio developed the experiment through a program offered by Wright Patterson Air Force Base. The program offered schools across three states the opportunity to submit experiments for the International Space Station.

The experiment was designed to determine the viability of rice as a nutritional supplement for astronauts after exposure to the space environment and to determine whether exposure to space inhibits the growth of mold. This would open the possibility for storing grain in space and reducing mold damage as experienced at world food banks on Earth. The students explained, "If it is safe to store grains in space, then it would help shortage problems for these grains on Earth and help us solve the hunger problem in needy nations."

Grant's team experiment was selected, along with a number of others, over experiments designed by 300 students in a three state area. Results of the experiment are not yet known, but Grant, now a high school sophomore, has high hopes for the experiment and is eagerly awaiting the results.

Grant is interested in engineering and may one day study aeronautics. "I'm definitely into Space," remarked the student, but he hasn't decided on a carrier path yet. Grant, his parents and his grandmother were able to view the launch of the experiment from the VIP area at Kennedy Space Center in Florida.



**A Proud Moment for the Powell Family. Wes works as the Deputy Director for Federal Supply's Fleet Management Division, Great Lakes Region.**