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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NASA ASTRONAUT JOHN D. OLIVAS TO SPEAK TO  
EL MONTE UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

HENAAC is proud to welcome NASA Astronaut John D. Olivas, Ph.D. as a guest speaker for the students of the El Monte Union High School District on Wednesday, May 14, 2008 at Rosemead High School Auditorium from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

The “Astronaut Day” event where Danny will be speaking to over 600 High School students is made possible by an ongoing partnership between Viva Technology (HENAAC’s K-12 education program), the El Monte Union High School District and NASA.

Born in North Hollywood, CA and raised in El Paso, TX, John “Danny” Olivas has had a successful and rewarding career as an accomplished engineer and astronaut. Never giving up on his dreams and continuously seeking to develop his professional skills led Danny to his ultimate goal to explore outer space. After a ten year journey of preparation and discipline, Danny was assigned to the STS-117 Atlantis which was the 21<sup>st</sup> mission to visit the International Space Station. During two spacewalks, he accumulated over 14 hours of EVA (extra-vehicular activity) experience in which he contributed to the first ever on-orbit EVA repair to the Space Shuttle Atlantis.

Danny completed his Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Texas at El Paso, earned his Master's degree at the University of Houston, and pursued his Doctorate at Rice University. Presently, he is assigned to the Capsule Communicator (CAPCOM) Branch that is responsible for all interfaces with the flight control team at Mission Control in Houston and the on-orbit STS and ISS crews.

For his contributions in engineering and involvement with the Hispanic community, Danny was honored with the 1999 HENAAC Most Promising Engineer Award. He continues his support of and partnership with HENAAC by motivating young students to pursue higher education and careers in STEM through educational programs such as Viva Technology.

It is through events and programs such as Viva Technology, that HENAAC fulfills its mission “to educate, motivate and enable more students to achieve careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).” Many of the students attending the Astronaut Day event are enrolled in the Viva Technology Programs held at Arroyo HS, Mountain View HS and Rosemead HS. In these sessions, students learn about various engineering and science majors, the universities that offer curricula and degrees in these majors, and which companies/agencies/products are associated with these STEM fields. Over the 10 weeks of programming, students interact with college students and meet engineering and science professionals. At the end of the program they have the opportunity to win technology prizes and receive a certificate of completion as part of a Graduation Ceremony celebrating the culmination of the comprehensive program.

The Astronaut Day event will be held at the Rosemead High School auditorium on Wednesday, May 14, 2008. We are also proud to welcome Rosemead HS alum and member of the Black Eyed Peas, Taboo who will be speak to the students during the day’s activities.

For more information on the event, HENAAC and/or Viva Technology, please visit us at [www.henaac.org](http://www.henaac.org)