

Press Release

First Space Academy Appointment

LOUGHBOROUGH, UK, 18th February 2010 – Magna Parva Ltd – the international provider of engineering design services for applications in hostile environments – is showing an innovative route to encouraging talented young people into engineering by successfully recruiting the first apprentice under the 'Space Academy' programme. Josh Thompson will work with Magna Parva for an initial three years while working towards his BTEC HNC qualifications. He will also receive training at the National Space Centre (NSC) on space exploration and communications skills.

The scheme, managed in collaboration with the NSC, offers professional apprenticeships to young people between 16 and 18 who have at least six good GCSEs and an interest in space.

Magna Parva's first apprenticeship appointment has come just as the Government's Space Innovation and Growth Team (IGT) has published its report into the future of the UK space industry. The report, which has been widely welcomed, recommended that the number of space apprenticeships in the UK be doubled.

Josh has a challenging but interesting time ahead as he will be working on projects such as MIXS Optics designed for use in Mercury missions, the Life Marker Chip for Martian exploration and so on. General day-to-day work could involve testing hardware, recording test results, assembling manufactured equipment for testing and taking responsibility for hardware quality assurance.

Andrew Bowyer, Director at Magna Parva, was selected as a member of the Innovation and Growth Team, participating in the Science sub-group. Mr Bowyer said: "We hear much about the importance of leading edge engineering to the UK economy, yet much undiscovered talent lies unused, especially among young people who have chosen not to follow an academic route".

Dr Sarah Hill, Space Academy Project Manager at the NSC agrees: "We're delighted to see Magna Parva taking a fresh approach with this scheme. We're sure Josh Thompson will benefit from his time at Magna Parva and make a valuable contribution to the work of the high quality team there."

Magna Parva was recently shortlisted for a Lord Stafford Award for Innovation in Development, recognizing the collaborative approach that has delivered a string of innovations in engineering for hostile environments.

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Notes to Editors: Pictures available

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About Magna Parva Ltd

Magna Parva is a fast growing, international provider of engineering services, hardware and innovative product solutions. It specializes in engineering for extreme environments such as space, defence and aerospace. The engineering know-how of Magna Parva covers innovative concept generation, detailed design, development, testing, integration and qualification of hardware during the entire project lifecycle.

Strict project management procedures and quality accreditations have allowed Magna Parva to gain the confidence of national and international agencies. It enjoys close relationships with a number of research organisations, and its customers include Rexam, the European Space Agency and Rutherford Appleton Laboratories.

Magna Parva's head office, design, analysis and laboratory facilities are in Loughborough UK, with a sister facility in Milton Keynes enabling manufacturing and large-scale assembly.
www.magnaparva.com

About The National Space Centre

The National Space Centre has pioneered the use of space in science education since opening in 2001 with over 50 000 school children and 2 000 teachers annually undertaking short education visits to the Centre. The Space Academy will build on these existing programmes by providing progressive, sustained curriculum support for 14-19 year olds and their teachers whilst sharing with them the excitement and discoveries of space scientists from our region's world leading space universities.

According to trade body ADS, the value of the space global market is estimated to be c.£200 billion) by 2015.