Orbital ATK's Cygnus Successfully Berthed to ISS, Delivering Satellites from Multiple Countries and Organizations

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Houston, TX – April 22, 2017 -- Orbital ATK's Cygnus (OA-7) spacecraft successfully berthed to the International Space Station (ISS) early this morning after launching Tuesday, April 18th from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. This mission is NanoRacks' largest CubeSat mission to date – carrying 38 CubeSats to be deployed from NanoRacks deployers on both the ISS and on the outside of Cygnus.

The largest portion of this mission includes 28 CubeSats from the QB50 Mission. The QB50 Mission consists of dozens of universities located around the world – including Israel, Canada, Australia, Korea, Spain, Germany, France and more. Coordinated by the von Karman Institute and sponsored by the European Commission, the QB50 CubeSats will take advantage of the space station orbit to study the lower thermosphere (200-380 kilometers) collecting scientific climate data, in what is considered by experts a relatively unexplored part of Earth's atmosphere.

The ISS portion of the QB50 Mission involves over 300 students and 50 professionals which brings the program together.

See the full list of QB50 Mission CubeSats here.

OA-7 is also the third flagship mission where NanoRacks is providing opportunities for CubeSat deployment from Cygnus after the vehicle departs from the station. The NanoRacks External Deployer is installed on the exterior of the Cygnus service module with the capability to deploy satellites after Cygnus' completion of its primary ISS resupply mission.

On this mission, NanoRacks integrated four of Spire's Lemur-2 satellites in the External Deployer. Once deployed from the Cygnus vehicle itself, these satellites will build on Spire's mission to provide close to real time information from anywhere on Earth via their small satellites. This mission will build on Spire's offerings of maritime and weather data.

Additionally on this NanoRacks CubeSat mission are three satellites that were selected for flight by NASA's CubeSat Launch Initiative (CSLI) as part of the seventeenth installment of the Educational Launch of Nanosatellites (ELaNa) missions, and sponsored by the NASA Launch Services Program (LSP). These CubeSats are:

IceCube – NASA Wallops Flight Facility
CXBN-2 – Morehead State University
CSUNSat1 – California State University, Northridge

Learn more about the ELaNa XVII ISS CubeSat Deployment satellites here.

“We’re all extremely proud to have brought together such a wide variety of satellites on this mission. With so many innovative technology demonstrations, including a global constellation of research satellites, commercial payloads, and NASA sponsored missions, this is truly our most comprehensive and technologically diverse CubeSat mission to date,” says NanoRacks Senior Mission Manager, Conor Brown. “The collaboration behind this mission exemplifies the growing support for commercial utilization of the Space Station, and NanoRacks is proud to be at the forefront of this transition. Not to mention, it was remarkable to share this launch experience in Cape Canaveral with so many of our partners from all over the world.”

NanoRacks is excited to continue to expand the Company’s CubeSat and SmallSat services, and is now offering the “Doublewide Standard” which will allow for 6U CubeSats in the 2U x 3U form factor and 12U CubeSats in the 2U x 6U form factor.

For further media inquiries, please email Abby Dickes at adickes@nanoracks.com

For continued updates, follow us on twitter: @NanoRacks

About NanoRacks, LLC

NanoRacks LLC was formed in 2009 to provide commercial hardware and services for the U.S. National Laboratory onboard the International Space Station via a Space Act Agreement with NASA. NanoRacks’ main office is in Houston, Texas, right alongside the NASA Johnson Space Center. The Business Development office is in Washington, DC. Additional offices are located in Silicon Valley, California and Leiden, Netherlands.

In July 2015, NanoRacks signed a teaming agreement with Blue Origin to offer integration services on their New Shepard space vehicle. NanoRacks, along with partners at ULA and Space Systems Loral was also recently selected by NASA to participate in the NextSTEPs Phase II program to develop commercial habitation systems in low-Earth orbit and beyond.

As of April 2017, over 530 payloads have been launched to the International Space Station via NanoRacks services, and our customer base includes the European Space Agency (ESA) the German Space Agency (DLR,) the American space agency (NASA,) US Government Agencies, Planet Labs, Urthecast, Space Florida, NCESSE, Virgin Galactic, pharmaceutical drug companies, and organizations in Vietnam, UK, Romania and Israel.