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SPACE SHUTTLE (STS-116/DISCOVERY)

The primary objective of Shuttle Mission STS-116 is to deliver the third integrated truss structure to the International Space Station (ISS). Along with the P5 truss segment, Shuttle Discovery will carry a SPACEHAB single laboratory module and an integrated cargo carrier with an assortment of hardware. STS-116, also designated as ISS Assembly Mission 12A.1, will be the shuttle's 20th assembly flight to the ISS and will include three planned spacewalks (EVAs) during the planned 11 days in space. One of Discovery's astronauts, after traveling to the orbiting outpost on STS-116, will join the Expedition 14 crew already working on the station, replacing an expedition crew member who will fly home with the Discovery crew.

THE STS-116 CREW – A former test pilot, **Mark L. Polansky** will lead the STS-116 crew. A veteran Shuttle pilot, he has logged over 309 hours in space since becoming an astronaut more than 10 years ago. Shuttle Pilot **William A. Oefelein**, a former fighter/test pilot, will be making his first space journey. He was selected as a NASA astronaut in 1998. A veteran of two shuttle flights, **Robert L. Curbeam** is one of the assigned mission spacewalkers. Since becoming a mission specialist astronaut in 1995, he has logged over 593 hours in space, including over 19 EVA hours during three spacewalks. His companion spacewalker is European Space Agency mission specialist astronaut **Christer Fuglesang** from Sweden. A first-time space flyer, he was selected to join the European astronaut program in 1992. Mission specialist **Sunita L. Williams**, an astronaut since 1998, will join Expedition 14 in progress and serve as a flight engineer. If the first two prior EVAs are successful, she will conduct a spacewalk task with Curbeam. To assist with the construction of the space station, mission specialist astronaut **Joan E. Higginbotham's** primary task on STS-116 will be to operate the station's robotic arm. She was first selected to the astronaut corps in 1996. A former flight instructor and member of the 1998 astronaut class, **Nicholas J.M. Patrick** is assigned to STS-116 as a mission specialist. His flight on Discovery will be his first space voyage.

THE STS-116 CREW INSIGNIA – The crew patch for STS-116 depicts the space shuttle rising above Earth and the orbiting space station. The United States and Swedish flags trail the shuttle orbiter, depicting the international composition of the STS-116 crew. The illustrated seven stars of the constellation Ursa Major, "The Big Dipper", are used to provide direction to the North Star, which is superimposed over the installation location of the station's P5 truss.