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NM spaceport hosts launch of student experiments

Associated Press - May 20, 2011 4:35 PM ET

UPHAM, N.M. (AP) - Students from New Mexico, Texas and Arizona gathered at Spaceport America at dawn Friday to see a year's worth of work launched into space.

Twenty-seven experiments were part of this year's annual student launch sponsored by NASA through its Summer of Innovation Program.

Engineers from UP Aerospace supervised from a command center about a mile away from the crowd as the SL-5 rocket lifted off. The rocket took the students' experiments a record 73.5 miles high.

After the payload reached its maximum altitude, a parachute deployed and the experiments were returned to earth so data could be downloaded.

Some experiments were designed to monitor changes in temperature and radiation, while one tested whether a cell phone was capable of receiving a text message at the edge of space.

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