

NEWS RELEASE

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MICROCOSM AWARDED CONTRACT FOR STUDY OF AUTONOMOUS NAVIGATION USING X-RAY PULSARS

For Immediate Release

EL SEGUNDO, CA, February 3, 2006 – Microcosm, Inc., an aerospace engineering firm in El Segundo, California, today announced the award of a Phase I Small Business Innovative Research contract for the preliminary design of a system for providing autonomous navigation for spacecraft anywhere in the solar system making use of the naturally-occurring signals from X-ray pulsars. The work is funded by NASA and will be done in cooperation with the Naval Research Laboratory.

According to Microcosm President, Dr. James Wertz, “X-Ray pulsars throughout the galaxy provide signals that have much the same information as the GPS network. They provide the potential for very high precision timing, navigation, and attitude determination anywhere in the solar system. The development of this technology could provide GPS-like services for navigation, orbit determination, and timing for spacecraft in orbit around the Moon or planets or in interplanetary space.” The GPS system provides very precise timing based on on-board atomic clocks, updated and synchronized from time to time with Earth-based atomic clocks. X-Ray pulsars provide a natural source of the same information, but without the GPS constellation of satellites or the need for updates from Earth-based sources.

About Microcosm, Inc.

Microcosm is a small business specializing in space mission engineering and the development of technologies and methods to facilitate more responsive space missions at substantially reduced costs. Microcosm's three primary business areas include the Scorpius[®] family of Responsive, Low-Cost Expendable Launch Vehicles; Autonomous Guidance, Navigation and Control Systems; and Space Mission Engineering and Architecting.

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