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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LINDBLAD EXPEDITIONS ANNOUNCES TWO NEW PIONEERING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS**

***NEW EXPEDITION PROGRAMS ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO LEARN THROUGH FIELD EXPERIENCE AND EXPLORATION***

**New York, NY, December 4, 2007** – Recently, Lindblad Expeditions (LEX) announced its support and participation in the *Kalpana Chawla Ocean Journey Scholarship* – a scholarship program launched in October by Blue Ocean Institute in honor of Kalpana Chawla, the astronaut who perished in the Challenger explosion in 2003. LEX is honored to work with Blue Ocean Institute on this initiative designed to place more students interested in marine ecology into the field. Earlier this year, Lindblad Expeditions announced sponsorship of an additional field experience award program - the Young Explorers Grant (YEG) Program - which is run by the National Geographic Society and supports research, conservation and exploration initiatives proposed by young scientists and explorers, ages 18 to 25.

The *Kalpana Chawla Ocean Journey Scholarship* will be offered to two high school or college science students who show a strong interest in the oceans, and who would not otherwise have an opportunity to travel at sea. The selected scholarship recipients will take part in a weeklong Lindblad Expeditions voyage in the presence of scientists, naturalists and researchers. Dr. Carl Safina, President and Co-Founder of Blue Ocean Institute said, “For young people who dream of science, entering the world of it, for real, is vital. And, we are excited to work with Lindblad Expeditions to give young adults an opportunity to explore their passion for the ocean.”

Generous contributions from Kalpana’s friends, family and colleagues led to the establishment of the Kalpana Chawla Spirit of Columbia Fund at Blue Ocean in 2004. This fund supports the ocean journey scholarships in honor of the astronaut’s profound connection with the ocean, and her concern for its future. Ms. Chawla’s abiding love of the ocean and her interest in the work of Blue Ocean President and Co-Founder, Dr. Carl Safina, led her to bring Safina’s acclaimed book *Song for the Blue Ocean* on her final mission. NASA investigators recovered a piece of the book among the debris recovered from the tragic accident.

“Personally, I was strongly influenced by a mentor and role model who exposed me to wildlife photography and the importance of conserving the marvels of nature. I am so happy to have the opportunity to introduce these types of inspirational opportunities to the young award winners selected by Blue Ocean Institute,” said Sven-

Olof Lindblad, President of Lindblad Expeditions. In fact, supporting young talent and shepherding the next generation of marine stewards is central to many programs at Lindblad Expeditions. For example, the company initiated the Kids-At-Sea program in 1994, a program designed to provide mentorship, role models, and empowerment activities to inner-city high school students in New York City.

More recently, Lindblad expanded its efforts to foster the next generation of researchers, explorers, and conservationists, by lending support to the National Geographic Young Explorers Grant (YEG) program. This initiative, launched in mid-2006, provides seed grants to young people to pursue their first field experience. The program received hundreds of preliminary applications in its first funding cycle and, thus far, 32 YEG projects have been funded in diverse locations such as Jordan, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Canada, Egypt, the United States, and Mexico.

For more information on Blue Ocean Institute or the *Kalpana Chawla Ocean Journey Scholarship* see <http://www.blueocean.org/>.

For more information on Lindblad Expeditions and its programs please see [www.expeditions.com](http://www.expeditions.com) or contact Jennifer Gregoire at [jenniferg@expeditions.com](mailto:jenniferg@expeditions.com).

### **About Blue Ocean Institute**

Blue Ocean Institute works to inspire a closer relationship with the sea through science, art, and literature. Blue Ocean Institute develops conservation solutions that are compassionate to people as well as to ocean wildlife, and we share reliable information that enlightens personal choices, instills hope, and helps restore living abundance in the ocean. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit conservation organization headquartered in East Norwich, New York, with an office in Hawaii, our staff of nine focuses on producing research of high academic quality; accessible, relevant information; and practical, realistic solutions that engage people.

### **Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic**

Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic have joined in a mission-driven alliance to inspire people to explore and care about the planet. As pioneers of global exploration, the organizations work in tandem to produce innovative marine expedition programs and to promote conservation and sustainable tourism around the world. The partnership's educationally oriented voyages allow guests to interact with leading scientists, naturalists and researchers while discovering stunning natural environments, above and below the sea, through state-of-the-art exploration tools. A joint philanthropic fund that supports science and conservation groups enables better understanding of the world's remaining special places and fosters the dissemination of geographic knowledge around the globe.

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