FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DRI Nevada Medal Recipient Dr. Steven Squyres, Leader of the Mars-Rover Project, to Visit Sandy Miller Elementary School in Las Vegas

(Las Vegas, Nev. – April 16, 2012) – Steven Squyres, Ph.D., this year’s recipient of the Desert Research Institute Nevada Medal, will visit Sandy S. Miller Elementary School Academy for International Studies on April 26.

Squyres, best known for his work as the Principal Investigator for the Mars Explorations Rover Project (MER) and his study of the history and distribution of water on Mars, will spend the day with the students as a way to get them excited about science. During his visit he will talk about his work and answer questions from the students. Then he will spend time touring the school’s robotics and science labs where he will have the opportunity to drive the robots and rovers that the students have built. His visit will end with a lunch with former Nevada First Lady Sandy Miller and select faculty at the school.

“I look forward to spending time in Nevada sharing my experiences with other like-minded science enthusiasts,” Squyres said.

“We are so honored to have Dr. Squyres visit our students,” said Anne Grisham, Ph.D., principal of Sandy S. Miller Elementary School. “Our goal is to promote science and technology at the school and having a real-life scientist here really gets the students excited about these areas.”

The evening of April 26, Squyres will be honored at the 25th annual Desert Research Institute Nevada Medal dinner at the ARIA Hotel.

Squyres is currently the Goldwin Smith Professor of Astronomy at Cornell University. He has won various respected awards including the 2004 Carl Sagan Memorial Award and the 2009 Carl Sagan Medal of Excellence in Communication in Planetary Science. He has been recognized by “ABC News,” “The Colbert Report,” and Wired Magazine. In 2005, Squyres published “Roving Mars: Spirit, Opportunity and the Exploration of the Red Planet,” which has since been adapted into the Disney film, “Roving Mars.”
“Dr. Squyres’ research on our solar system has earned him an extraordinary reputation in the field of planetary sciences,” said DRI President Steven Wells, Ph.D. “DRI is honored to award him the Nevada Medal.”

Squyres has also been a co-investigator on the 2003 Mars Express and 2005 Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, and a member of the Gamma-Ray Spectrometer Flight Investigation Team for the Mars Odyssey Mission. In addition to his studies on Mars, he has worked with NASA on numerous other space exploration projects, including the Voyager mission to Jupiter and Saturn, the Magellan Mission to Venus, the Cassini Mission to Saturn and the Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous Mission.

For more information on the 25th annual DRI Nevada Medal dinner please visit www.dri.edu/25.


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**About the DRI Nevada Medal**

The Nevada Medal was established by DRI in 1988 to acknowledge outstanding achievement in science and engineering. The annual award includes an eight-ounce minted medallion of .999 pure Nevada silver and $20,000 lecture honorarium sponsored by AT&T.

The award program involves public lectures by the medalist at DRI campuses in Reno and Las Vegas. The award is formally presented by the Governor of Nevada during dinner ceremonies in Reno and Las Vegas attended by Nevada’s business, educational and governmental leaders.