



## **Brave Pavan has the flight of his life**

### **Zero gravity flight experience is a dream come true for teenager from Enfield**

Eighteen-year-old Pavan Patel from Enfield recently had his dearest wish to have a zero gravity flight granted by Starlight Children's Foundation, the UK's leading wish granting charity for children and young people with serious and terminal illnesses.

In August 2011, Pavan was diagnosed with a serious, life-threatening condition called acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, which is a cancer of the white blood cells. To fight the disease, Pavan has had to undergo a lengthy course of intensive chemotherapy treatment, which has made him feel very poorly and meant long stays in University College Hospital, London, which is where he is treated.

Pavan is an intelligent and determined young man, who is very interested in astrophysics and wishes to study the subject at university. Pavan was being tested for leukemia at the same time as he was sitting his GCSE exams and, even though it was a very stressful time for him and he was feeling very unwell, he still managed to achieve A's and A\*'s!

Pavan's mother Jaimini told Starlight, *"Pavan is a very sensible and well-mannered boy. He is doing well in school and is always praised by the teachers for his outstanding attitude to work despite all the setbacks he has had."*

Pavan was referred to Starlight by one of the CLIC Sargent nurses at UCH and the charity said it would be delighted to grant him a wish. For keen scientist Pavan, it didn't take him long to decide what his wish would be and he wrote to the charity and said that he would like to go on a zero gravity flight.

He said, *"The wish that I have asked for is a zero gravity flight in America, where you have the opportunity to feel weightlessness as if you were on the moon. I have seen this on television and read about it and I feel that this would interest me a lot and also give me an opportunity to meet other astrophysicists and see what they feel about the subject."*

To make sure that Pavan could have the best possible experience, Starlight contacted one of the world experts in weightless flights, Zero Gravity Corporation (ZERO-G). ZERO-G offers "a unique opportunity to experience true weightlessness" by taking clients up in a specially modified Boeing 727 and Pavan was over the moon when Starlight told him that he would be having his own weightless experience!

The charity arranged a once-in-a-lifetime trip for Pavan and his two older sisters, Nikki, aged 28, and Tanya, aged 27, to America for Pavan's ZERO-G adventure! After much excitement and anticipation, the day of departure finally arrived and Pavan and his sisters boarded a flight to San Francisco on 14<sup>th</sup> August.

The highlight of the trip, the ZERO-G flight, was to happen on 17<sup>th</sup> August so Pavan, Nikki and Tanya had a few days to enjoy the sunshine and the sights on offer! On 17<sup>th</sup> August, the family was collected from their hotel and taken to the meeting place for the flight. Pavan was very excited about the flight and couldn't wait to get started!

The team at ZERO-G were very friendly and knowledgeable, so it was interesting for Pavan to hear all about the flight and the science behind it. He was given a special flight suit and a short training session, which helped to prepare him for his once-in-a-lifetime weightless experience!

ZERO-G's parabolic flights create the same sensation of a flight in space and Pavan had an amazing time during the experience, floating, flipping and soaring as though he really was in space! They even filmed the flight so that Pavan would be able to share the experience with his family and friends afterwards.

On a complete high after the flight, Pavan and his sisters then enjoyed a short four day visit to Las Vegas, which they had contributed to themselves in order to get the very most out of the trip. The glitz and glamour of Las Vegas was truly the icing on the cake of a very memorable holiday and precious time together for the three siblings after everything that Pavan has been through.

After the trip, Pavan's sister Tanya said, *"We had an amazing time in San Francisco and Las Vegas. Pavan really enjoyed himself and we really enjoyed being there. Thank you to Starlight for making his wish come true!"*

### **About Starlight Children's Foundation**

To refer a child for a wish or to make a donation, please go online at [www.starlight.org.uk](http://www.starlight.org.uk). For every £1 you donate, 92p goes towards helping Starlight's very ill children.

For more information, please contact Henny Vere Nicoll at [henny@starlight.org.uk](mailto:henny@starlight.org.uk) / 020 7262 2881 # 231.

Starlight grants once-in-a-lifetime wishes for seriously and terminally ill children, restoring the magic and fun of childhood and giving the whole family happy memories to share, whatever the future holds.

Starlight also creates entertainment in every hospital and hospice throughout the UK. Sick children go to Starlight parties, laugh their way through pantomimes, go out on Starlight Escapes, play games and watch films on the Starlight Fun Centre, and enjoy the toys and puzzles of the Starlight Distraction Box. Happy children respond better to treatment and Starlight helps children to forget about their illness and simply have a bit of fun.

### **About ZERO-G**

Zero Gravity Corporation (ZERO-G) is a privately held company whose mission is to make the excitement and adventure of weightlessness accessible to everyone eight years and older. Based in Arlington, Va., ZERO-G is the first and only FAA-approved provider of weightless flights to the general public; entertainment and film industries; corporate and incentive markets; non-profit organizations; research and education sectors; as well as foreign and domestic government agencies.

Founded in 1993 by X PRIZE Chairman and space visionary, Dr. Peter H. Diamandis and former two-time space shuttle astronaut, Dr. Byron K. Lichtenberg, ZERO-G worked more than a decade to bring the marvel of weightless flight to the public. Since launching the *ZERO-G Weightless*

*Experience™* in October 2004, the company has conducted more than 450 weightless flights and flown over 12,000 people from around the world, including celebrity and media personalities; corporate charters; teachers and students; research scientists; and individuals aged eight to 93. One of only two agencies issued a Safety Approval by the FAA to conduct Space Flight Training, ZERO-G operates under the highest safety standards as set by the FAA (Part-121) with its partner Amerijet International Inc. For more information, contact Michelle Peters, [michelle@gozerog.com](mailto:michelle@gozerog.com) or visit [www.GoZeroG.com](http://www.GoZeroG.com).