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For Immediate Release

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex to Feature Tensile Canopies from Birdair, Inc.

PTFE, Originally Developed for NASA, to Provide Daylighting, Shade and Protection

Construction of a permanent home for the Space Shuttle Atlantis is currently underway at The Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex in Merritt Island, FL, one of Florida's most popular destinations with more than 1.5 million visitors annually. Birdair, Inc., the leading specialty contractor of tensile structures throughout the world, will serve as the design-build roofing subcontractor for the addition of two custom PTFE tensile membrane canopies.

As part of the facility's 65,000-square-foot exhibit expansion to house the retired space shuttle, Birdair will design-build the two tensile membrane structures comprised of 7,320 square-feet of PTFE, a Teflon®-coated woven fiberglass membrane that will cover the visitor center's entrance and a dining simulated shuttle launch, including a surrounding orbital view of the Earth as part of the new experience at the complex.

PTFE fiberglass membrane was first developed for NASA in the late 1960's as a material for the space suits worn by the Apollo astronauts. Birdair's founder, Walter Bird, saw the potential for PTFE fiberglass to be used in architecture and was the first to adapt it for use as a roofing material. In 1973, Birdair constructed the first permanent tensile membrane structure at the University of La Verne in Southern California. Since then, Birdair has used the material on over 1,300 tensile structures all over the world, many of which employ the PTFE fiberglass fabric developed for NASA. In 1989 Birdair was honored by the U.S. Space Foundation (in cooperation with NASA) by induction into the Space Technology Hall of Fame. The Space Technology Hall of Fame recognizes innovations and pioneers like Walter Bird and his company, which have transformed technologies developed for space applications into products that help improve our quality of life.

"Birdair utilizes NASA technology on a daily basis in tensile architecture structures and we are excited to be a part of this project as it has come full circle," says Jeff Sellers, Director of Pre-Construction Services for Birdair. "The material is lightweight, durable, strong and noncombustible – ideal for both Apollo-era spacesuits and tensile structures world-wide."

Other members of the project team include owner Delaware North Companies, Buffalo, NY, architect PGAV Architects, Westwood, KS, engineer BRPH, Orlando, FL and general contractor Whiting Turner Contracting Company, Orlando, FL.

As a full-service specialty contractor, Birdair offers complete design-build solutions, and has completed more than 1,300 tensile architecture installations worldwide. Learn more at www.birdair.com.

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About Birdair

Birdair, Inc. is the leading specialty contractor of custom tensile structures throughout the world. In addition to pre-construction services such as design assistance, budgeting, construction methodologies and project scheduling, Birdair provides design-build solutions in all aspects of project design, fabrication, installation and maintenance. The company offers a selection of architectural fabric membranes, including PTFE fiberglass, ETFE film, PVC and Tensotherm™, an insulated tensioned membrane system. Birdair, based in Buffalo, NY, is a member of the Taiyo Kogyo Group, with operations serving North and South America and other international locations. For more information about Birdair, [like us on Facebook](#), call 1-800-622-2246 or visit www.birdair.com.

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