“HOUSTON, STATION ON SPACE TO GROUND.”

“TOUCHDOWN. MARK VANDE HEI AND PYOTR DUBROV, BACK HOME ONE YEAR AFTER LEAVING THE PLANET.”

WELCOME TO SPACE TO GROUND, I AM NILUFAR RAMJI. NASA ASTRONAUT MARK VANDE HEI CAME HOME THIS WEEK AFTER A RECORD 355 DAYS IN SPACE.

VANDE HEI ARRIVED AT THE SPACE STATION LAST YEAR ON APRIL 9th. HIS TIME IN ORBIT BREAKS THE PREVIOUS AMERICAN RECORD HELD BY FORMER NASA ASTRONAUT SCOTT KELLY, BY 15 DAYS. AS SCHEDULED, VANDE HEI RETURNED TO EARTH ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30TH ALONGSIDE COSMONAUTS PYOTR DUBROV AND ANTON SHKAPLEROV.

AS WE PREPARE FOR DEEP SPACE EXPLORATION OF THE MOON AND MARS, MISSIONS LIKE VANDE HEI’S WILL INFORM RESEARCHERS ON THE EFFECTS OF LONG-DURATION LIFE IN MICROGRAVITY.

“What we’re doing in effect is practicing keeping people healthy on a long trip through space. The big difference is when we get our first folks to Mars, we’re not gonna have a staff of nurses and doctors there to make sure we’re healthy and take care of us. So being able to contribute to that is something that I will always be very, very proud of.”

DURING HIS TIME ON THE ORBITING LABORATORY, VANDE HEI PARTICIPATED IN, AND CONDUCTED MANY SCIENCE INVESTIGATIONS.

“Anytime you can take science experiments and charge the variables, you learn something new and the space station provides unique abilities to have solutions where you don’t have sedimentation, where you can keep a homogenous mixture, for example. Buoyant forces just don’t work the same way so the way combustion works is different. But also, I’d say space is exciting because we human beings are explorers at our core, and we want to understand better how we fit into the vast scheme of things. And the further we go, the more we learn.”

SO, AFTER SPENDING CLOSE TO A YEAR IN SPACE, WHAT WILL HE MISS ABOUT IT?

“I will miss the certainty that every day I’m spending contributing with innovations in science, technological demonstrations that are helping out all of humanity and pushing the boundaries of human existence.”
NOW THAT HE’S BACK ON TERRA FIRMA, MARK WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO RELAX AND REHABILITATE TO HELP HIM BALANCE OUT THE RIGORS OF YEARLONG SPACE TRAVEL.

FOR MORE ABOUT THIS INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENT, WE INVITE YOU TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @ISS_RESEARCH.

THAT’S SPACE TO GROUND FOR THIS WEEK. THANKS FOR WATCHING, WE WILL SEE YOU NEXT WEEK.