

Discovery's manifest includes ponytail

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U.S. astronaut Sunita Williams, assigned to the International Space Station, sent a present home with the Discovery space shuttle crew -- a ponytail.

Williams' tresses were ferried back to Earth, where they will become a wig for a child suffering hair loss either from chemotherapy or a medical condition, USA Today said.

Williams earlier this month was shuttled to the ISS, where she'll live for six months. At the space station, astronaut Joan Higginbotham snipped the hair that hung down Williams' back.

"We're so excited," says Madonna Coffman, president of Locks of Love, which will receive Williams' hair. She said the donation "will bring in families who may not have known about us."

Williams grew her hair for months in anticipation of donating it, her mother, Bonnie Pandya, told USA Today.

Long hair can be problematic in the space station, which has no gravity to keep it in place. Cutting hair also can be tricky, the newspaper noted. Higginbotham used clippers attached to a hose connected to the station's vacuum system.

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