

Obama telephones shuttle, space station astronauts

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In this image from NASA Television, astronaut Richard Arnold II makes a space walk outside the international space station on Monday, March 23, 2009. (AP Photo/NASA TV)

(AP) -- President Barack Obama says he is extraordinarily proud of the astronauts aboard the linked shuttle-space station complex.

During a video conference call Tuesday, Obama questioned the 10 [astronauts](#) about everything from how fast they are traveling and to exercising in space. He also asked what they do besides work on experiments and how weightlessness affects their sleep.

Students from Washington area middle schools and members of

Congress joined him for the call.

The crew will spend Tuesday recuperating from Monday's third and final spacewalk of the Discovery shuttle's mission. The hatches between Discovery and the [international space station](#) will be sealed Wednesday. The shuttle will undock and head for home. It is scheduled to land Saturday.

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