

**Remarks by the Honorable Fred Gregory
NASA Deputy Administrator
Unveiling of Michael P. Anderson Memorial
Statue
Spokane, Washington
June 12, 2005**

Thank you Anne Marie (Anne Marie Axworthy, Avista Utilities,
Co-Chair of Michael Anderson Memorial Statute.) for that gracious
introduction and good afternoon ladies and
gentlemen, distinguished guests.

To Sandy, Kaycee, Sydney, Mr. and Mrs.
Anderson, Mike's sisters Brenda, Joann and Dianne
and all of Mike's family, please allow me to express
NASA's great appreciation for this opportunity to
join you in celebrating Mike's Anderson's
tremendous legacy.

The good people of Spokane—Mike’s friends and neighbors—have captured so well Mike’s wonderful spirit through the statute you are about to see, and I can’t think of a better tribute to this hero for our time and for all times.

Of the many attributes that defined Mike’s life of adventure and achievement, I’m certain the nurturing he received in this proud community helped to propel him on his life’s journey.

Following his bold announcement at the very advanced age of four that he wanted to become an astronaut when he grew up, Mike fueled his

enthusiasm for learning and exploration here in
Spokane.

His physical science and astronomy teacher at
Cheney (Chee-Nee) High School, Hal Sautter,
remarked that Mike was a “lab rat... You had to use a
shoehorn to get him out of there.” This was an
attribute we got to know very well at NASA.

When he wasn't training for a mission, I know
Mike relished the opportunity to return home and
encourage Spokane's future generation of explorers
to follow their dreams and reach for the stars.

I don't think the people of Spokane could ask for
a better role model than Mike Anderson.

And neither could we at NASA. It was ten years ago when this accomplished Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, with the combined skills of a dedicated scientist and accomplished pilot, entered the astronaut corps.

On his first spaceflight, Mike and his STS-89 crewmates did an outstanding job transferring more than 9,000 pounds of scientific equipment, logistical hardware, and water from the Space Shuttle *Endeavor* to the Russian Mir Space Station.

And on the *Columbia* STS-107 flight, Mike took great pride in overseeing 80 science experiments,

including one that used a bioreactor to grow prostate cancer cells at a high rate.

This experiment had great meaning for Mike. From the deck of the *Columbia* he, noted how “prostate cancer has a high rate of occurrence in African-American males so some of the research we are doing up here we can really help out in those areas.”

That was the essence of Mike’s noble character. As an astronaut he got the greatest satisfaction from his ability to help other people, and as so many of the speakers have noted, to inspire our youth.

It is a tradition in the American west for cities to honor the bold explorers who ventured forth into uncharted territory, explorers the caliber of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, who explored the territory just south of here 200 years ago.

Generations from now, when the reach of human civilization is extended throughout the solar system, I'm confident that people will come to this wonderful memorial to learn about and pay their respects to Mike Anderson.

They will look at the beautiful statute and then they will turn their gaze to the skies, their hearts

filled with gratitude for this brave explorer who helped blaze our trail to the stars.

Mike Anderson, who was always looking for the next challenge over the horizon, lived a wonderful, meaningful life of great achievement and very special grace.

To honor his memory with this statute is a tremendous recognition of a true NASA and American hero.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be a part of this tribute on behalf of the entire NASA family.