

Remarks by The Honorable Shana Dale
NASA Deputy Administrator
Introduction of 50th Anniversary Logo
September 13, 2007

Los Angeles is filled with people who understand the power of dreams, and people who truly understand the spirit of achievement.

Those of us in the space program also dream, and we dream big. We've come together here for a glimpse of the future. But before we do so, let's look back for a few moments. Nearly fifty years ago, our Nation's first era of space exploration began with the launch of a satellite (Explorer 1) and the formation of an agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

A few years later, President Kennedy gave NASA, and this Nation, an audacious challenge. The challenge forged NASA and fundamentally altered the way we view our world. Less than a decade later, America met his challenge. From a small lander came two men, a small step and a giant leap. Those first footsteps of achievement are still there. They are as permanently imprinted in the dusty soil of the Moon as they are etched in our minds and hearts.

We've benefited in more ways than the memory of achievement. Reaching out into the new frontier has brought real benefits in security and prosperity, in inspiration and innovation, and in saving lives and protecting the environment.

Every decade has seen advances from the space program in unexpected and essential ways – from the remote health monitors developed during the early space shots of the 1960s, to the Landsat Earth-observing satellites first launched in the 70s, all the way through recently developed technologies like paper-thin solar cells and advanced water recyclers.

The list of space-derived benefits over the last fifty years is almost limitless. Today, on the cusp of NASA's 50th anniversary celebration, we're rededicating ourselves to the spirit that made the Moon landings possible, the spirit that shapes and guides space exploration.

We've prepared a logo for that celebration, which is being unveiled for the first time today. *[logo unveiled]* I hope you'll see beyond the "50" in the foreground to the image beyond. The galaxy you see is a composite of several images taken by the Hubble Space Telescope. It's referred to as the "Grand Plan" galaxy, because its spiral shape is so well and so smoothly defined.

I like that metaphor – NASA's first fifty years in the foreground, and a grand plan, something even brighter, beyond. That's what NASA is all about. America, along with our international partners, is making that happen. Each of us can have a part. Pioneers in the private sector are bringing more and more people access to low-Earth orbit. I applaud those efforts. At the same time, NASA engineers and contractors are reaching further, building the Ares launch vehicle and Orion spacecraft that will take us to the Moon and then beyond.

We're on the brink of a new era of space exploration. It's closer than you think. A day, a year, a decade, and suddenly today's hopes will become tomorrow's realities. For the last fifty years, NASA has challenged, and learned, and achieved. Our future is even brighter. Today, new horizons beckon. Worlds of promise are opening. It won't be easy, but the potential is there – a day of living and working on another world and our blue planet seen from the grey soil of a lunar outpost. We can make that future happen together.

And now, it is my distinct honor to introduce a special guest, an individual who has been with NASA almost from the beginning, a man who has stood in the shadow of the Moon, and who has dedicated his life to pushing mankind beyond. Astronaut Buzz Aldrin, thank you for your service, your lifelong commitment, and your unwavering love of human space flight. Please join me in welcoming an explorer, a trailblazer, and an American hero.