

Remarks As Delivered
By the Honorable Shana Dale
NASA Deputy Administrator
Women in Aerospace Awards Dinner
Introduction of International Achievement Award Winner
Debra Facktor Lepore
October 2, 2007

Thank you for that introduction Dawn (Dawn Sienecki, President of WIA). It is an honor to be here, and a pleasure to introduce the winner of this year's International Achievement Award.

I have known Debra for many, many years. In fact we met when Debra was in her early 20's, and I was in my mid-20's, and she was teaching aerobics. We have followed each other's careers over the years and I have been impressed by her innovative way of thinking and numerous accomplishments.

In the late 1990's, Debra proposed that NASA procure commercial services to re-supply the International Space Station. From there, she served as the Chief of Moscow Operations for Anser's Center for International Aerospace Cooperation in Moscow – the first woman to serve that role in any U.S.-Russia cooperative project. Then she went on to Kistler Aerospace Corporation, where she was the Vice President of Business Development and Strategic Planning. Currently, Debra is the only female president of a launch vehicle company – AirLaunch LLC.

At each step, Debra has promoted the mentoring of women by women, especially among engineers and others in the aerospace industry.

It's worked.

Her ideas have been so successful that a variety of groups, ranging from the Intel Corporation to the International Women's Forum have used her paper, "Women Mentoring Women" as a model for establishing their own mentoring programs.

Debra is a mentor and a model; an entrepreneur and an engineer. She's also a great daughter, having brought two "official guests" with her, her parents, Mrs. Carolyn Facktor and Dr. Michael Facktor, and her cousins.

Thanks to her trailblazing, new worlds of opportunity are opening to women and men around the globe.

So it is my distinct pleasure to present to you Debra Facktor Lepore, this year's winner of the Women in Aerospace International Achievement Award.