

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Ames Research Center
Moffett Field, CA 94035-1000



April 2, 2008

Reply to Attn of: DL: 200-12

TO: Distribution

FROM: DL/Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Determination Regarding the Attendance by NASA Employees at the Yuri's Night 2008 Event, including VIP Reception

On April 12, 2008, NASA Ames Research Center is partnering with the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) to co-sponsor Yuri's Night 2008, at NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, California. SGAC is a non-profit corporation organized to represent students and young space professionals to the United Nations, States, and space agencies. SGAC's objectives are to develop new space leaders and to build world-wide communities and connections among people who are passionate about space.

Yuri's Night 2008 is a collaborative effort between NASA Ames and SGAC designed to be an educational outreach event and celebration to commemorate the launch and orbit of the first man in space, Yuri Gagarin, and the flight of the first space shuttle. The event will bring together space enthusiasts of all ages to educate, inspire, and celebrate a common interest in space exploration. The event includes:

- Space and science-themed art exhibits featuring local and nationally-known artists;
- Salons, forums, and talks by Bar Area science and technology organizations, as well as NASA scientists and officials;
- Local and international musicians and artists showcasing theme-related works;
- Cutting-edge interactive technology demonstrations.

During the Yuri's Night 2008 event, SGAC will host a VIP reception as part of the event. SGAC has invited approximately 146 guests to attend the VIP reception as follows: Approximately 78 individuals including congressional members, state and local officials, and representatives of corporations, universities, media and the entertainment industry; 28 officials from HQ and other NASA Centers; and 25 officials from Ames, who are attending the Yuri's Night event to support the goal of disseminating information about NASA's vision for space exploration. In addition, approximately 15 individuals are attending the event by purchasing a ticket that includes the VIP portion of the event. The estimated value of the VIP event is \$200 per person.

NASA officials invited to attend the SGAC reception at the Yuri's Night event will have the opportunity to meet with representatives from local government, the media, universities and industry to discuss NASA's educational and outreach mission as well as other NASA programs and projects focused on making NASA's Vision for Space Exploration a reality.

In addition, the Yuri's Night 2008 event will include as a theme, "Radical Sustainability". The event will showcase renewable energy and other environmentally friendly technologies. NASA officials attending the VIP reception will have the unique opportunity to interface with leaders in Silicon Valley and beyond to explain and promote NASA's role in addressing this important issue, while providing local politicians and community leaders an opportunity to explore some of the benefits that may be applicable to their represented communities.

Accordingly, I find that the VIP reception sponsored by SGAC at the Yuri's Night 2008 event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR §2635.204(g). I further determine that there is an Agency interest in having NASA personnel attend the reception. Therefore, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect SGAC, or a majority of all of their members, may accept an invitation for themselves for free attendance at the Yuri's Night event, including the VIP reception.

NASA employees whose duties may substantially affect SGAC, or a majority of all of their members, such as by way of procurement duties, should seek an individual determination pursuant to 5 CFR § 2635.204(g)(3)(i) regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.

In the event that trinkets or other mementos are distributed at the event, attendees are reminded of the \$20 gift exception at 5 CFR § 2635.204(a) which provides that employees may accept gifts for themselves (and family members) valued at no more than \$20 per occasion. NASA invitees are reminded not to exceed the \$50 cap on gifts from any one prohibited source in a calendar year.



Thomas W. Berndt

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