I am very grateful for this opportunity to join in this celebration of the first fifty years of NASA. Like most of the members of the AIAA, I was initially drawn to aerospace by the unbelievable accomplishments and innovation of NASA people. I was inspired to pursue an engineering education and to pursue a career in aviation because of the inspiration provided by the work of several of the speakers that will follow me.

Through the years, NASA has not only lead tremendous advances in the aerospace sciences but has also been the inspiration for many young men and women to pursue careers in aerospace engineering and the sciences. This may be one of its greatest legacies.

The AIAA is honored to organize this celebration. I would like to thank all our sponsors who joined with us to make tonight happen. I would especially like to highlight our Gold Sponsors ATK, The Boeing Company, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Northrop Grumman Corporation, United Space Alliance and United Technologies Corporation for their support.

NASA … The membership of AIAA salutes you and looks forward to working with you on the next fifty years! Congratulations.

Thank you.