

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Goddard Space Flight Center
Greenbelt, MD 20771



June 3, 2016

Reply to Attn of: 140

TO: Distribution

FROM: 140/Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Determination Regarding Attendance of NASA Employees at West Virginia University Alumni Luncheon

The West Virginia University Alumni Association (WVUAA) is hosting a luncheon on June 14, 2016, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. In addition to West Virginia University, sponsors include Asher Agency, BDO, Capital Caring, Hamilton Insurance, Head, United Bank, West Virginia Robotic Technology Center, and Widmeyer and Associates.

Approximately 300 guests have been invited to the luncheon, including members of Congress, congressional staffers, federal agency representatives, industry officials, alumni, school administrators, and students. The estimated cost per person of the luncheon is \$50. Attendance at the luncheon will allow NASA employees an opportunity to discuss with other guests issues concerning NASA's programs and missions.

Based on the above, I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR 2635.204(g). I further find that there is an Agency interest in having NASA employees attend this event. Accordingly, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect WVUAA or the sponsors of the luncheon may accept an invitation for free attendance to the luncheon. However, NASA employees whose duties substantially affect WVUAA or the sponsors, for instance by way of procurement duties, should seek an individual determination regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.

We understand that WVUAA plans to hand out a small gift item valued under \$20. NASA attendees are reminded of the \$20 gift exception at 5 CFR § 2635.204(a) which provides that employees may accept gifts valued at no more than \$20 per occasion (and no more than \$50 from a single source in a calendar year).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Andrew Falcon".

R. Andrew Falcon