National Aeronautics and Space Administration

LAGNIAPPE

John C. Stennis Space Center

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Administrator visits Stennis

Bolden – NASA's future is strong

See pages 6-9

Goal – $145,000

To-date – $142,930

(98.6% of goal) *as of 1/13/17

How about we start this new year out in proper fashion – I will not ask you how many resolutions you already have broken if you do not ask me how many I already have broken. Ark!

Resolutions notwithstanding, welcome to 2017! If the most recent year is any indication of the days ahead, you better install seat belts in your pirogue; it is going to be an exciting ride.

As with any new presidential administration, change is inevitable. But as my granddaddy used to say, "I'll cross dat bayou when I see the ducks flying in." It was his south Mississippi way of saying, why worry about things you cannot control.

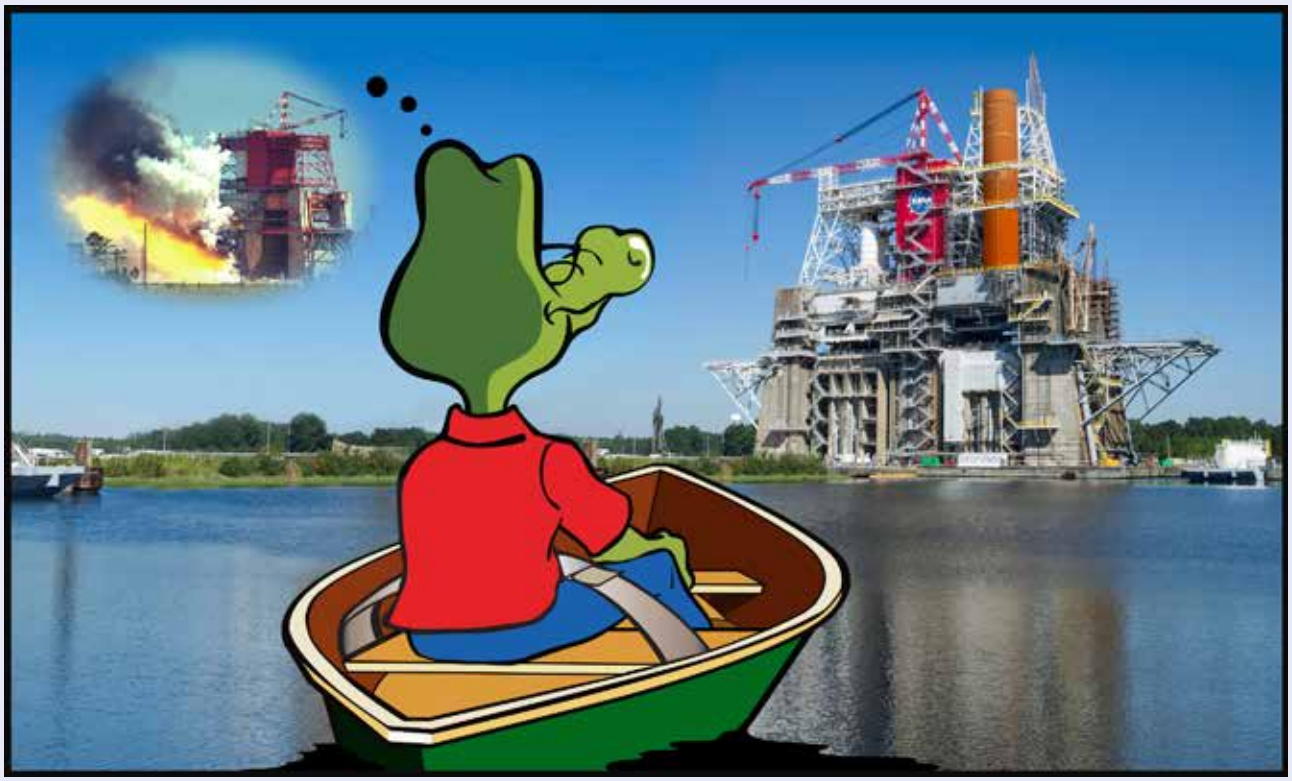
Change happens. Whether good or not as good, the best way to handle it is to stay focused on what is important and keep moving ahead. That is what has kept Stennis Space Center growing and going strong for 55 years. It also is what will keep us moving forward in 2017 and the years after, staying focused on our mission to power this nation's space exploration future.

All in all, it is a great time to work for NASA and at Stennis. NASA still ranks as the best place to work in the federal government – for the fifth year in a row. It is not hard to see why, considering both the kind of people you get to work with and the fact that the whole universe is your workplace. Ark!

In addition, Stennis definitely is one of the very best places to be working in this new year. We soon will resume testing of RS-25 engines that will power the new Space Launch System (SLS) farther into space than ever before. And, we are on schedule to begin testing the first actual SLS flight stage by year's end.

For the latter, we will install the flight stage on the B-2 Test Stand and fire all four of its RS-25 engines at the same time, just like will happen when they fire again to launch SLS Expedition Mission-1.

The last time we saw a hot fire like that around here was in the 1970s, when the space shuttle propulsion system was tested with three engines firing at once. If you remember that one, which also was on the B-2 Test Stand, well, the SLS test will be even bigger, stronger and louder. Let me tell you, that will be something worth crossing the bayou to see.



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FULFILLING NASA'S EXPLORATION MISSION

NASA again ranked as 'Best Place to Work'

For the fifth year in a row, NASA has been ranked as the best place to work in the federal government, based on results of the 20th annual employee survey by the Partnership for Public Service.

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden said credit for the accolade "goes entirely to the NASA workforce, and I am honored to work with every one of them."

The 2016 workplace survey involved almost 408,000 civil servants at 379 federal organizations. It ranks federal organizations by overall employee satisfaction and commitment, and also evaluates key focus areas, such as innovation, training and development, leadership and diversity.

"The NASA workforce's passion and dedication to our missions and each other is evident in this year's results, because every single question increased in percent favorability," Bolden said in an online blog message. "This commitment to continuous innovation ... is what makes NASA so special, and is the fuel for our journey to Mars and all of our cutting-edge missions in air and space."

As noted in a separate news release, in 2016, that cutting-edge work involved advances in a range of areas. The end-of-year report highlighted several aspects of ongoing work:

Solar System and Beyond. NASA's efforts beyond Earth in 2016 included missions to study Jupiter, Saturn and Pluto, as well as launch of a first asteroid sampling mission and continued work on the James Webb Space Telescope.

International Space Station (ISS). In 2016, a pair of astronauts completed a one-year mission aboard the ISS, and groundbreaking research continued aboard the orbiting laboratory. Also, NASA's commercial cargo partners Orbital ATK and SpaceX launched more than 24,000 pounds of critical supplies to the International Space Station.

Journey to Mars. NASA's Journey to Mars is moving forward with plans to send new robotic explorers to the Red Planet, while ticking off key milestones for the first flight of the Space Launch System rocket and Orion spacecraft in late 2018.

> ***The NASA workforce's passion and dedication to our missions and each other is evident.***
>
> **Charles Bolden**

Aeronautics. In 2016, NASA pursued advancements that will help make airplanes use less fuel, release fewer emissions and fly more quietly. NASA also took steps to return supersonic flight to the commercial marketplace and to resume designing, building and flying several experimental aircraft – or X-planes – as a means to demonstrate key green technologies and help accelerate their use by industry.

Earth. In 2016, new Earth science missions got under way to enable studies that will unravel the complexities of the planet from the highest reaches of Earth's atmosphere to its core. These include missions to track global sea level rise, boost the nation's weather observation capabilities and advance understanding of hurricanes worldwide.

Technology. NASA selected three companies in 2016 for in-space robotic manufacturing and assembly projects that could revolutionize low-Earth space work. NASA's Technology Transfer Program also continued to share agency technology with industry, academia and other government agencies at an unprecedented rate.

Public Engagement. By engaging in public events, more than 2 million people this year had the chance to interact with representatives of America's space agency. More than 400 million people were reached through NASA's use of social media during these events.

Citizen Science, Prizes and Challenges. In 2016, NASA launched 28 challenges with almost 122,000 participants, received over 5,000 submissions, and provided a total of $1.2 million in cash awards.

STEM Education Collaboration. NASA continued its work with other federal agencies, industry partners and academia to provide to students and teachers throughout the United States unique and compelling opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education.

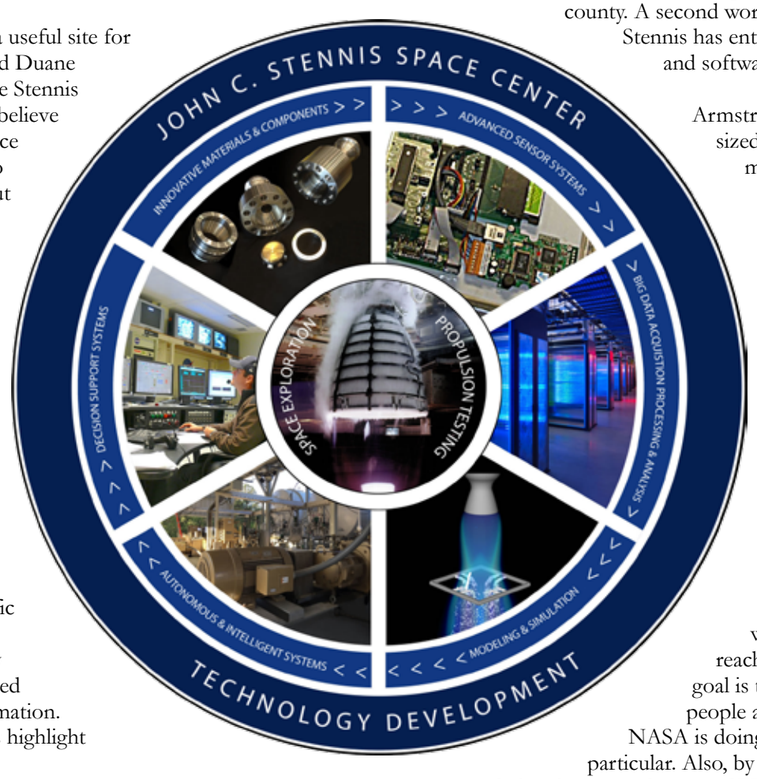
To access the year-end news release, visit: http://go.usa.gov/x92As. To review the complete federal workplace survey rankings for 2017, visit: http://bestplacestowork.org.

Redesigned web presence provides informative look at Stennis technology

If you have not clicked on the "Technology" tab at the NASA Stennis Space Center website lately, you will find a new look there when you do. The Stennis Advanced Technology and Technology Transfer Branch recently unveiled a redesigned web presence designed to be informative, useful and easy to navigate.

The enhanced presence features a series of pages and links that highlight the technologies developed at the center and the work of the branch to share them.

"Our goal was to create a useful site for many types of users," said Duane Armstrong, who leads the Stennis technology branch. "We believe the result will be of service to the general public who wants to learn more about Stennis, companies who might be interested in the technologies we have or interested in partnering with us on technology projects, leaders who are seeking information to promote Stennis and its value and many others."



The home page features news, a looping slide show highlighting the branch and tabs to specific pages on technology development, technology transfer, technology-related events and contact information. Once accessed, the pages highlight a variety of areas.

One features a link to electronic copies of NASA's annual *Spinoff* publication, which highlights dozens of technologies developed at the agency, then introduced for use into the larger world. For each year, links provide information for the individual Stennis-related technologies included in the annual publication. All Stennis-related technologies in *Spinoff* issues dating back to 1978, when the publication was introduced, are highlighted on the site.

Another page identifies the six areas of technology development work. A scroll-down menu offers examples of the work, as well as information on current technology projects and cooperative agreement policy. Additional pages provide information on Stennis technologies currently patented, licensing options, NASA's Technology Transfer University efforts to bring real-world technologies into the classroom, scheduled technology events the Stennis office is attending and electronic links to request information or a copy of the NASA *Spinoff* publication.

The site also features a pair of maps tracking the reach of Stennis and its technology team. A map of Louisiana and Mississippi shows the areas where the annual NASA *Spinoff* publication has been distributed. By moving across the map, one can identify the number of distribution points in each parish and county. A second world map shows where Stennis has entered into patent licenses and software usage agreements.

Armstrong particularly emphasized the value of the state map. Each year, the technology team seeks to distribute copies of the NASA *Spinoff* publication as widely as possible. Key targets include schools (both public and independent), libraries and universities, sites where the distribution can reach multiple people.

"The map gives us a much better idea of where we've been able to reach, as well as where we have opportunities to reach," Armstrong said. "Our goal is to help inform as many people as possible of the work NASA is doing in general and Stennis in particular. Also, by reaching out to schools, we can help educate students on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) studies and careers they can pursue."

Although unveiled and active, work continues on the web pages, with new or enhanced features planned. In each instance, the design follows a simple approach to facilitate web visitors using either a full-sized computer or a tablet device.

"We did not want to overwhelm people with a lot of information but let them know what is happening and how they can contact us to learn more," Armstrong said. "That's the goal, to make it easy for people to learn about the work here at Stennis and to get whatever additional information they need."

To explore the Stennis Space Center technology page online, visit: http://technology.ssc.nasa.gov/.

NASA has released its *Spinoff 2017* publication, which takes a close look at 50 different companies that are using NASA technology – innovations developed by NASA, with NASA funding, or under a contract with the agency – in products that benefits the general public.

Whether it is the self-driving tractor that harvests food, cameras used in car-crash safety tests or tools making brain surgery safer, NASA technology plays a significant role in daily lives.

"The stories published in *Spinoff* represent the end of a technology transfer pipeline that begins when researchers and engineers at NASA develop innovations to meet mission needs," said Stephen Jurczyk, associate administrator of the agency's Space Technology Mission Directorate. "This year's spinoffs includes products and services at work in every sector of the economy. They are innovations that make people more productive, protect the environment, and much more."

Spinoff 2017 features several Stennis Space Center-related products:

- Using NASA satellite data, Conservation International of Arlington, Virginia, has developed a program to help developing countries spot rain forest wildfires, including illegal burns, and limit legal burning activities. The system includes use of mobile devices with an OnSight platform developed by GeoVisual Analytics of Boulder, Colorado, in partnership with Stennis.

- GeoVisual Analytics also worked with NASA to develop a program that uses satellite data to capture an image of the entire planet every 16 days. The system incorporates "on-ground" data collected via the OnSight platform developed in conjunction with Stennis. The platform crowdsources data by allowing individuals to report actual conditions on the ground.

- Working with a team at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana, engineers at Stennis tested a flame trench lining made with geopolymer concrete that could prove more durable than existing linings. Using a more durable lining means less work and expense to replace flame trench linings that break down from exposure to extreme heat during engine tests. Based on the work with Stennis, Louisiana Tech has launched a company that is provided geopolymer concrete products to other companies as well.

In addition to those three items, the *Spinoff 2017* publication cites five Create the Future Design Contest winners. These included a low-power, efficient monitoring system developed at Stennis Space Center. The wireless sensor system was highlighted as one of the top 100 entries in the *NASA Tech Briefs* contest.

Finally, the annual publication features several Spinoffs of Tomorrow, including two related to Stennis:

- A data software suite that provides for collection of more reliable measurements and information, such as during rocket engine tests. The NASA Data Acquisition System is adaptable and can be customized to a variety of uses.

- Traceable gas standards to measure impurities in propellants and pressurants used for rocket propulsion. Such standards did not previously exist. Their development by Stennis operators provide an increased margin of safety and a consistent method for measuring impurities.

Spinoff 2017 also highlights development of laser imaging technology that discovered snow on Mars and now helps archeologists uncover humanity's past , as well as software that might help create supersonic jets for general public use.

"NASA's ambitious mission goals require technology that pushes the envelope of what's possible," said Daniel Lockney, NASA's Technology Transfer Program executive. "And these innovations have many secondary benefits for our lives and planet."

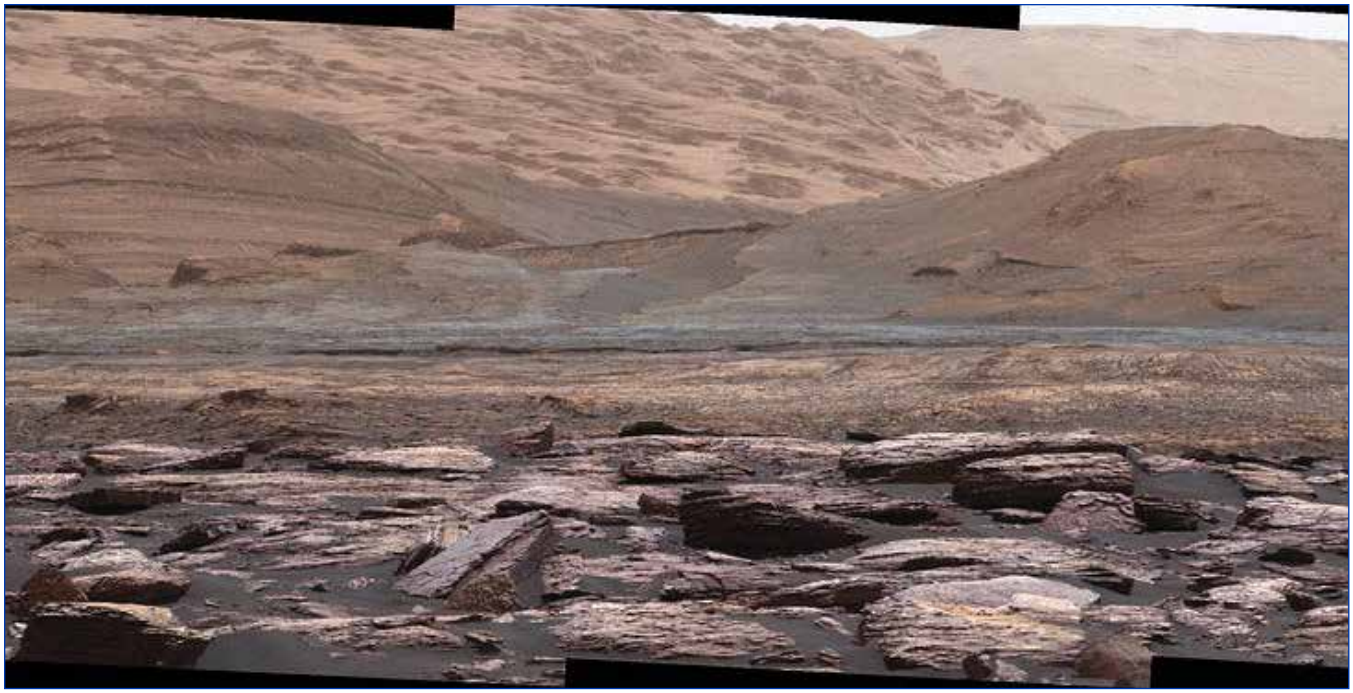
Spinoff is a part of the agency's Technology Transfer Program. The program is charged with finding the widest possible applications for NASA technology through partnerships and licensing agreements with industry, ensuring that NASA's investments in its missions and research find additional applications that benefit the nation and the world.

An iPad version of *Spinoff 2017*, including shortened versions of the stories with multimedia and interactive features, is available for download in the Apple iTunes store. For print and digital versions of *Spinoff 2017*, and for more information, visit: http://spinoff.nasa.gov.

Bolden marks 10th – and final – visit to Mississippi Gulf Coast as administrator

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden visited Stennis Space Center on Jan. 6, meeting with area reporters to discuss the future of the agency and with site employees to thank them for their ongoing work and service. The trip marked Bolden's 10th visit to the Gulf Coast area since he was confirmed as NASA administrator in July 2009. During a roundtable discussion, Bolden expressed confidence in the future of the agency as a new presidential administration assumes office. Detailing ongoing missions, he said there is enough work already under way to ensure the ongoing legacy of NASA and its space exploration program. Stennis Director Rick Gilbrech echoed the sentiment, noting that the Stennis work force is extremely pleased and proud to be testing the engines that eventually will put human footprints on another planet. Speaking with employees, Bolden thanked them for their service, noting that Stennis is strong and will remain so. He urged employees to tout NASA and its work. "Anytime anybody gives an opportunity to talk about what you do, take it, ..." he said, "Tell them you're responsible for getting people into space, because that's what you do everyday."

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden has been no stranger to Stennis Space Center, first visiting the site just one month after he was confirmed in his leadership post. Following his initial August 2009 visit, Bolden returned to Stennis that fall to help the center celebrate its 50th anniversary. After not visiting the center in 2010, Bolden has returned to the Gulf Coast area in each of the last seven years. His January 2017 visit marked his final stop at Stennis as NASA administrator. He completes his tenure with the inauguration of a new presidential administration. During his visits, Bolden always took time to tell the NASA story, whether in speaking to reporters, visiting with schoolchildren or meeting with employees. In 2013, he affirmed the work of Stennis employees, noting, “Stennis continues to demonstrate that the road to space goes through Mississippi. I applaud the center’s continued work to help bring about a new era of exploration through its commercial partnerships and the ongoing essential work it does for us in testing new propulsion systems.”



The foreground of this scene from the Mast Camera (Mastcam) on NASA's Curiosity Mars rover shows purple-hued rocks near the rover's late-2016 location on lower Mount Sharp. The scene's middle distance includes higher layers that are future destinations for the mission. Variations in color of the rocks hint at the diversity of their composition on lower Mount Sharp. The purple tone of the foreground rocks has been seen in other rocks where Curiosity's Chemical and Mineralogy (CheMin) instrument has detected hematite. Winds and windblown sand in this part of Curiosity's traverse and in this season tend to keep rocks relatively free of dust, which otherwise can cloak their color. The orange-looking rocks just above the purplish foreground ones are in the upper portion of the Murray formation, which is the basal section of Mount Sharp, extending up to a ridge-forming layer called the Hematite Unit. Beyond that is the Clay Unit, which is relatively flat and hard to see from this viewpoint. The next rounded hills are the Sulfate Unit, Curiosity's highest planned destination. The most distant slopes in the scene are higher levels of Mount Sharp.

NASA in the News

NASA selects exploratory missions

NASA has selected two missions that have the potential to open new windows on one of the earliest eras in the history of our solar system – a time less than 10 million years after the birth of our sun. The missions, known as Lucy and Psyche, were chosen from five finalists and will proceed to mission formulation. Lucy, a robotic spacecraft, is scheduled to launch in October 2021. It is slated to arrive at its first destination, a main belt asteroid, in 2025. From 2027 to 2033, Lucy will explore six Jupiter Trojan asteroids. The Trojans are thought to be relics of a much earlier era in the history of the solar system, and may have formed far beyond Jupiter's current orbit. The Psyche mission will launch in 2023 to explore one of the most intriguing targets in the main asteroid belt – a giant metal asteroid, known as 16 Psyche, about three times farther away from the sun than is the Earth. Scientists wonder whether Psyche could be an exposed core of an early planet that could have been as large as Mars, but which lost its rocky outer layers due to a number of violent collisions billions of years ago. The mission will help scientists understand how planets and other bodies separated into their layers early in their histories. For more on such missions, visit: https://discovery.nasa.gov/missions.cfml

Safety panel releases 2016 report

The Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel (ASAP), an advisory committee that reports to NASA and Congress, has issued its 2016 annual report examining NASA's safety performance over the past year and highlighting accomplishments, issues and concerns to agency and government officials. The report, released Jan. 11, is based on the panel's 2016 fact-finding and quarterly public meetings; "insight" visits and meetings; direct observations of NASA operations and decision-making processes; discussions with NASA management, employees and contractors; and the panel members' own experience. "NASA has made great progress over the past year and is at a critical time with hardware being produced, testing intensifying, and several important milestones in the near future," ASAP Chair Patricia Sanders said. "Challenges and difficult decisions will need to be faced with clarity, transparency and thoroughness. Risk elimination in human spaceflight is impossible, but risk management is imperative." The report emphasizes the need for constancy of purpose – consistent program goals, funding and schedules. For more information and to view the 2016 report, visit: http://oiir.hq.nasa.gov/asap/index.html.

Access all NASA news releases online at: http://go.usa.gov/3f3KW.

A Jan. 21, 2004, test on the A-2 Test Stand at Stennis Space Center marked the 1 millionth second of test and flight firing for the space shuttle main engine.

2004 – Space shuttle main engine hits milestone

Note: For more than 50 years, NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center has played a pivotal role in the success of the nation's space program. This month's Lagniappe provides a glimpse into the history of NASA and the south Mississippi rocket engine test center.

One million is a large number. It is a number to be celebrated when it represents a milestone, especially a milestone of human space flight.

Thirteen years ago on Jan. 21, 2004, Stennis Space Center reached such a milestone with the 1 millionth second of successful test and flight firing of the space shuttle main engine. If you add it all up, that is over 277 hours (or a little more than 11-and-a-half days) of testing flight operation.

When the Apollo Program ended, NASA chose Stennis Space Center (then-Mississippi Test Facility) to conduct all sea-level testing of space shuttle main engines. After that announcement, engineers began work on converting the stands that once tested the Saturn V boosters to test the shuttle engines.

The first space shuttle flight was in 1981, but testing of the engines started in 1975. Each test taught the NASA and contractor teams how to make the engines more reliable and safer, and how they could have a longer life span to continue to take the shuttle into low-Earth orbit.

Another thing to celebrate along with 1 million seconds of test and flight firing was the fact that during the Space Shuttle Program, no mission ever failed as a result of engine malfunction.

The engine that had the honor of firing off for the 1 millionth second was a flight engine used by space shuttle Discovery on its STS-121 mission. It had a successful test firing of eight-and-a-half minutes, the amount of time it took the space shuttles to get from the launch pad in Cape Canaveral, Florida, into orbit.

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Stennis future dependent on diverse, inclusive approach

This article was written by Joe Schuyler and Dave Liberto of the Stennis Engineering and Test Directorate.

Stennis Space Center is recognized by NASA and commercial entities as a center of excellence for testing rocket propulsion systems, thanks to the hard work and dedication of all employees. The Stennis Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) implementation program is critical to maintaining this reputation, and concerted efforts have been made to promote the principles and practices described in the president's "Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce."

The Engineering and Test Directorate has promoted D&I initiatives in an effort to foster cultural shifts towards recognizing the value of diversification in the workforce, promote outreach initiatives to incentivize a multicultural environment, and demonstrate the effectiveness and benefits of inclusivity. Any technical organization needs to continually find new and innovative ways to solve problems. Einstein once wrote: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." Creating a diverse and inclusive work environment is critical to enabling new and innovative thinking and ensuring the success of NASA's mission, as well as maintaining a competitive position in the marketplace.

Many believe diversity and inclusion have always been part of the NASA culture. All milestone or process reviews invite open discourse and are indicative of a culture very accustomed to acquiring feedback and buy-in of activities. These perspectives do, indeed, lend themselves to a D&I culture, but there are additional areas to be refined and improved. Engineering and Test Directorate leadership has committed to quarterly events to drive D&I discussions. The first event established further thoughts as developed by commercial business entities to understand what it means to them. Some of the discoveries from the business community are as follows:

- In broad terms, diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for, and appreciation of, differences. But it is more than this. Each person brings diverse perspectives, work experiences, life styles and cultures. As a source and driver of innovation, diversity is a "big idea" in business and in society. The power of diversity is unleashed when people respect and value differences.
- Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected and supported. It is about focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve his or her full potential.
- People are the most important asset of any company. To succeed in the global marketplace, companies must make the most of the full range of their people.
- With demographic shifts, advances in technology and communications, and globalization, diversity is quickly becoming a driver of growth around the world.
- Maximizing the potential of a diverse workforce is not only a social imperative but also a competitive advantage. From a business vantage point, to best serve the market, one must "employ" the market.
- People with different lifestyles and different backgrounds challenge each other more, which is not a bad thing. Diversity creates dissent, which is needed. Without it, there will be no deep inquiry or breakthroughs."
- The dynamics created by dissent prevents organizations from becoming too insular and out of touch with their increasingly heterogeneous customer base. As a result, working teams are able to come up with a wider range of solutions to business problems.

The immediate challenge is the speed by which the world is changing. Newly emerging aerospace companies, large and small, are operating differently. If that is not recognized, Stennis will not be able to adjust to meet the needs of its customers. To successfully chart the future path, everyone will need to think differently in order to develop new and innovative ways to do business. Through D&I initiatives, Stennis will continue to grow and adapt to the changing landscape in order to remain the world class rocket propulsion test center that it is today.

Stennis observes MLK Jr. Day

Mildred Tillison Graham speaks to Stennis employees during an onsite program Jan. 10 observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day. A resident of Slidell, Louisiana, Graham has recorded more than 40 years of church and community service. Her volunteer work in hospitals, senior centers, nursing homes and elsehwere embodies King's call to service and reflects the theme of this year's emphasis – "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On, Not a Day Off!"

Stennis schedules 3 educator workshops

The NASA Office of Education at Stennis Space Center has announced a trio of 2017 winter/spring professional development workshops for educators. Preregistration is required, and space is limited.

The first two workshops are open to in-service, pre-service, home school and informal STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) educators of grades 4-8. The third, on weather and hurricanes, is open to educators of grades 5-8 and is restricted to U.S. citizens. Participants in any of the workshops will receive five continuing education/continuing learning units.

The workshops focus on three aspects of NASA work – its journey to Mars, the science of flight, and weather and hurricanes. Dates and details are:

- **Journey to Mars workshop.** Jan. 26, 2017, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., INFINITY Science Center at Mississippi I-10 Exit 2. Registration closes Jan. 22 and is limited to 30 educators. Participants should bring lunch or plan to purchase at INFINITY Café. NASA has been on the forefront of exploring Mars and paving the way for future human exploration. This hands-on workshop will guide educators in an investigation of Mars using Earth and Mars comparisons, modeling and engineering design. It also will integrate NASA online resources and STEM classroom activities, including those from NASA's *Modern Figures* campaign. The *Modern Figures* emphasis highlights contributions made by African American women who served as "human computers," as depicted in the new movie *Hidden Figures*. Register online at: https://www.etouches.com/219171.

- **Aeronautics: The Science of Flight workshop.** Feb. 23, 2017, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m, INFINITY Science Center at Mississippi I-10 Exit 2. Registration closes Feb. 19 and is limited to 30 educators. Participants should bring lunch or plan to purchase at INFINITY Café. NASA puts stock in the importance of hands-on engineering challenges that provide students the opportunity to create, design and build experiences with real-life applications. In this development workshop, educators will receive information on the science of flight to inspire future scientists, mathematicians and engineers. They will explore basic principles of flight, construct aircraft models and use the engineering design process to make activities educationally challenging. NASA aeronautics technology also will be introduced. Register online at: https://www.etouches.com/219187.

- **Weather and Hurricanes workshop.** March 30, 2017, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m, Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi. Registration closes Feb. 19 and is limited to 30 educators. Participants should bring lunch and any snacks they wish for the day. Keesler Air Force Base Weather School, Hurricane Hunters and NASA Stennis Space Center are collaborating on this workshop. Educators will explore the Air Force and NASA's role in the understanding and forecasting of weather, climate and hurricanes, as well as their effects on Earth's systems. Air Force and NASA data, STEM curriculum resources and tours will guide educators through a "storm" of classroom activities and learning strategies in this unique "climate" of learning. Register online at: https://www.etouches.com/211635.

For more information regarding the educator workshops, contact April McIntosh in the NASA Office of Education at Stennis Space Center at 228-688-3338 or april.l.mcintosh@nasa.gov.

Hail & Farewell

NASA bids farewell to the following:

Melba Harris	Management and Program Analyst	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Jo Ann Larson	Equal Employment Manager	Office of Diversity and Equal Employment

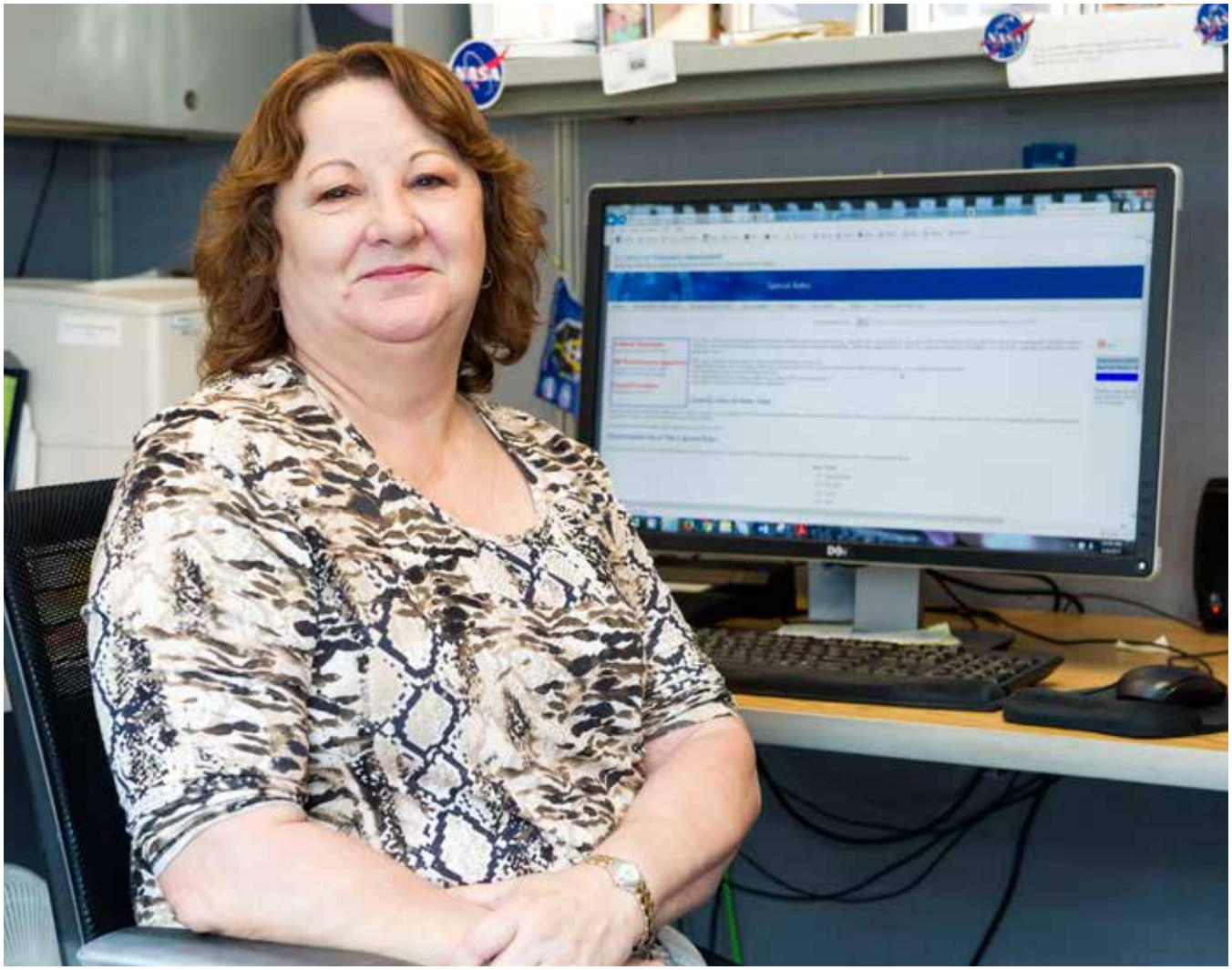
NASA welcomes the following:

John Bourgeois	AST, Mechanical Experimental Equipment	Engineering and Test Directorate
David Christiani	Contract Specialist	Office of Procurement
Jasper Cook	AST, Electronic Instrumentation Systems	Engineering and Test Directorate

Faces of Stennis

Each month, Lagniappe will feature employees at Stennis Space Center whose work enables the center to fulfill its mission as the nation's largest rocket engine test center. This month's employees are highlighted on the following pages.

Jeanie Frederick



Jeanie Frederick marks it up to “just luck” that she ended up working at Stennis Space Center in May 2000 as a program assistant in the Office of the Inspector General. Almost 17 years later, she is particularly proud to be a member of the Stennis family. “Everyone is so friendly and willing to share their knowledge and experience about the work they do,” she says of her colleagues. After spending her initial three years in the Office of the Inspector General, Frederick began work in the Office of Human Capital. As a human resources specialist, her primary duties are processing personnel actions, in-processing new employees and coordinating staffing for the student Pathways programs. Frederick also serves as the Stennis awards officer, processing all awards at the center and monitoring each organization’s awards budget. In that role, she is singlehandedly responsible each year for preparation and execution of the center’s annual Honor Awards Program, the most prestigious awards ceremony to recognize accomplishments of the workforce. She takes pride as well in being part of the team that hires the employees Stennis needs to fulfill its assigned mission. A native of nearby Westwego, Louisiana, Frederick now lives in Picayune, Mississippi. Her earliest space-related memory is of the Apollo 11 mission, most notably the moment in July 1969, when Neil Armstrong became the first human to set foot on the moon. After witnessing much of the subsequent Space Shuttle Program firsthand while working at Stennis, Frederick is understandably excited about the next great period of American space exploration. “I’m eager to see our next launch vehicle successfully go into space,” she says.

Michael Vallan

Michael Vallan arrived at Stennis Space Center just a few months ago in September 2016, but he has seen enough to understand how NASA keeps being named as the best place to work in the federal government. "It's the people," Vallan says. "Folks here have been welcoming, accommodating and eager to provide assistance, insight and feedback. Also, the nature of my job allows me to come into contact with some of NASA's emerging technology and the people behind it. All of it is pretty cool stuff." As an attorney in the Stennis Office of the Chief Counsel, Vallan is on the front lines of the "pretty cool stuff." The Lawtell, Louisiana, native is a registered patent attorney and specializes in intellectual property law matters. Anything involving patents, copyrights, trade secrets or trademark issues – Vallan is the person to call. At Stennis, he helps evaluate NASA technology and inventions to determine if they should be patented and licensed. In other words, Vallan is key in helping the Stennis Advanced Technology and Technology Transfer Branch "spin off" those cool inventions and innovations into the everyday world. He wants to do even more on that front, communicating with various Stennis offices to help them understand different types of intellectual properties and how they can be protected and used to benefit others. Vallan also assists on other legal matters that arise, such as software release issues. Early in his work career at Stennis, Vallan already is excited about the possibilities ahead, particularly the new technologies and innovations that will be discovered and pursued. And why not? As he is quick to point out, working with all that cool stuff "makes my job here very enjoyable."