



January 31, 2022

To Our American Astronautical Society Members,

2021 was a year wherein the American Astronautical Society (AAS) continued to pivot adjusting to the business environment driven by COVID. Our members were faced with travel limitations, meeting restrictions when they could travel, and inefficiencies of the virtual office. To a growing degree, teams and coworkers are less stable due to the workforce adjustments and reorientations accompanying the pandemic.

As our members have been affected, so has the society. Member participation in our activities was unpredictable. Speakers were uncertain. Venues were unavailable.

As our members adapted, so did we. Our **Staff** started the year working remotely gradually returning to office residence. Our **Publications** grew as members continued to submit articles and features. Our **Technical Committees** switched to virtual conferences. Our **Special Activities** of CanSat and Hangouts found enthusiastic participation for their virtual options. Our **Symposia** transitioned from successful virtual events in the early year to surprisingly well attended face-to-face meetings in the fall. Our **Awards** recognized the best in the industry. In addition, to help support the next generation of the space industry, AAS provided student registrations to our Symposia and awarded thousands of dollars in student awards.

A few details for each of these areas follow:

Our Staff:

Jim Way, our Executive Director, has completed his fourth full year at AAS and is entering his fifth. His leadership and passion for the industry have led AAS to attain a wide range of accomplishments and milestones. Kelsey Cadow, our Events Coordinator, began her first year with us during our busiest months. With her strong events background, she has enhanced the logistical elements and overall success of events. Abigail Howard, our Communications Coordinator, began her first year with us as well and is a powerful addition to the team. Her passion for communicating quality messages to Society membership and the public has been seen across all mediums and brought even more value to AAS. The staff continually pivoted between in-person and a virtual world throughout the year. They showed great leadership and critical thinking skills overcoming the challenges and adversity caused by the ongoing pandemic. They are already positioning for the return to full in-person schedules.



Our Publications:

Our peer-reviewed technical publication, [*The Journal of the Astronautical Sciences*](#), published continuously since 1954, has continued to grow and prosper. In 2021 we published forty-six articles and one editorial piece. This was our first year of international support for our editorial staff, with two associate editors from Canada and Europe. Two more additional editors will be added to the team in 2022. Please be sure you take advantage of this incredible resource! Staying with publications, [*Space Times*](#) has had its second full year as an e-publication, publishing a dozen articles. Volunteer writers from all areas of the space industry posted engaging articles that helped inform and educate on a variety of space-related subjects. Article topics included AAS news, industry news, interviews with young professionals, and event recaps. We look forward to continuing to expand our Space Times content in the future.

Our Technical Committees:

The 31st AAS/AIAA Space Flight Mechanics Meeting was held virtually from February 1-3, 2021. There was a total of 196 papers presented in thirty sessions, with three hundred attendees. The conference was held virtually due to the ongoing COVID pandemic, with presentations, Q&A, and social events all occurring online. A greater than normal number of students and retirees were able to attend due to the online format. As we return to in-person conferences, we hope to find ways to retain positive aspects of the online experience (e.g., videos of talks, remote participation for those with difficult travel circumstances).

The 44th annual [*AAS Guidance and Control Conference*](#) was not held due to the global pandemic. However, the AAS Rocky Mountain Section continues to recognize academic excellence by annually awarding one scholarship to a top Aerospace Engineering student and one scholarship to a top Electrical Engineering student. This scholarship was established with an endowed fund at the University of Colorado over 40 years ago.

The [*AAS/AIAA Astrodynamics Specialists Conference*](#) was held virtually, August 9-11. The event had over three hundred attendees to enjoy more than 230 presentations on topics including Asteroids and Small Bodies, Trajectory Design, Martian Moons and Solar Sails, and more. This event is a key component of AAS as a technical society and we look forward to continuing to build on this year's success.

Our Special Activities:

The annual [*Student CanSat Competition*](#) looked a little different again this year as it was held virtually. We still saw thirty-eight international teams participate throughout the event. The 2021 mission was to design a CanSat that would consist of a container and two autorotating maple seed science payloads. Upon deployment, the container would release the payloads and relay payload data to a ground station. Due to the coronavirus, we were not able to host a



launch weekend, and scoring was based on CDR and PDR scores as well as a live, simulated mission. First place went to Ryerson University from Canada, with second place going to the Federal University of Technology from Brazil. A virtual award ceremony was held online announcing the top five teams with guest speaker Charlie Bolden. The 2022 competition will be held in-person at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia in June of this year.

AAS has continued to host our [“Future in Space Hangouts”](#) online discussions throughout the year with our Moderator, Tony Darnell, and a group of various experts discussing space-related topics. These virtual hour-long sessions feature the latest in space exploration, technology, innovations, policy, ethics, and more! These sessions are a way to engage various groups in the industry to collaborate across organizations. Some of the Hangout topics included “Viewing Exoplanets Through a Solar Gravity Lens”, and “NASA's DART Mission: Protecting Earth from Hazardous Asteroids”. Previous Hangouts are available to view for free online on our website.

Our Symposia:

In March, we held the [58th Annual Robert H. Goddard Memorial Symposium](#). Again, due to the pandemic, the event was held online only, but we still had a great turnout and an excellent program. The Symposium registered 330 attendees who engaged in discussions focused on “planetary stewardship.” Topics included data management, space missions for climate research, commercial human spaceflight and science, sustainable technologies, and more. Speakers included Ellen Stofan from the Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Representative Don Beyer, with Niki Fox and Gavin Schmidt from NASA. We will be hosting the 59th Goddard Symposium from March 16-18, 2022, at the University of Maryland in College Park, MD. Please join us!

The third annual [John Glenn Memorial Symposium](#) was held July 13-15 fully online. Over 270 attendees, we were able to achieve a successful event despite being virtual. The theme of the symposium was Convergence: Deep Space, Near Space, and Aeronautics Coming Together and included speakers such as Jim Reuter, NASA Associate Administrator; Jeffrey A. George, NASA Lunar Architecture Lead, Bill Nelson, NASA Administrator; and many more. The Fourth Annual Glenn Symposium will take place July 18-20, 2022, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

The [International Space Station Research & Development Conference](#) took place online as well, with the plenary sessions taking place August 1-3, and the AAS-hosted Technical Sessions occurring August 16-18. AAS and CASIS have collaborated for several years on this event that brings together experts in the technical, commercial, research, policy, and other space industry segments. The technical sessions allowed deep-dive discussions and presentations on a variety of topics including Biology and Medicine, Computing, Physical Sciences and Material Development. The technical sessions had over five hundred attendees with great international



participation. There was over sixty orals and eighteen poster presentations over a three-day period. The 2022 ISS Conference will take place in Washington, D.C. July 25-28.

The 14th annual [AAS Wernher von Braun Symposium](#) took place in-person at The University of Alabama – Huntsville, on October 12-14. We had a strong attendance of over 380! Featured speakers included Robert Cabana, NASA Associate Administrator; Lisa Watson-Morgan, NASA HLS Program Manager; Jim Free, NASA Associate Administrator; and many more. The 2022 von Braun Symposium will be back in Huntsville, Alabama, on October 26-28.

Our Awards:

During the year, AAS honored many very deserving individuals and teams. At the beginning of 2021, AAS selected ten winners for the Society's prestigious awards. Milestone missions, future legends, and industry leaders were recognized, and the recipients were honored at different events during the year. Our 2020 class of AAS Fellows was announced in May with seven individuals achieving this significant status through their noted contributions to the industry and the Society. Details on all recognitions can be found on the AAS website.

AAS has fared well during this year of uncertainty. We have continued to bring value to our members. More importantly, our members have continued to bring growth and substance to our events and activities. We look forward to a fully in-person schedule in the year 2022. We hope you plan to spend some time with us.

Sincerely,
Alan DeLuna
President