American Astronautical Society
Igniting
Innovation
2025
von Braun Space Exploration Symposium
October 27-29 | Huntsville, AL
astronautical.org/vbs

American Astronautical Society

IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

The American Astronautical Society: Convene. Connect. Collaborate.

Since 1954, AAS has been the premier network for current and future space professionals dedicated to advancing all space activities. Recognized for the excellence of our national symposia, technical conferences, and influential publications, AAS helps shape the U.S. space program. AAS members have opportunities to meet and connect with leaders in the space industry to exchange information and ideas, discuss career aspirations, and expand their knowledge and expertise.

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Monday, October 27

1:00 pm **Opening Remarks**

- **Ronald J. Birk**, President, American Astronautical Society
- **Charles Karr**, President, The University of Alabama in Huntsville

1:30 pm **Commercial Horizons: NASA's Lunar and Mars Payload Services – Innovation, Technology & Cost-Effective Access**

- **Matt Wallace**, Solar System Exploration Director, JPL - Moderator
- **Ray Allensworth**, Spacecraft Program Director, Firefly
- **Steve Clarke**, Vice President for Space Programs, Astrobotic
- **Trent Martin**, Senior Vice President of Space Systems, Intuitive Machines
- **Aaron Mitchell**, Director of Product Management, Impulse Space

2:25 pm **Macauley Winner Presentation – Hugh Chen**, Georgia Tech

2:35 pm **New Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence**

- **Juan Román-Velázquez**, Director, Space Science and Engineering, Civil and Commercial Space, SAIC - Moderator
- **Cesar Gonzalez**, Chief Technology Officer, Barrios
- **Tifani O'Brien**, Vice President, AI Accelerator Lead, Leidos
- **Shahram Rahimi**, Head of Department of Computer Science, Professor, University of Alabama

3:30 pm **Networking Break**

4:05 pm **Testbeds and Proving Grounds: Enabling Innovation Through Shared Capability**

- **Ronald J. Birk**, Principal Director, Space Enterprise Evolution Directorate, The Aerospace Corporation - Moderator
- **Nate Robb**, Senior Manager of Test Operations at Test Stand 4670, Blue Origin
- **Patrick Tobbe**, Lead Developer and Architect for SLS Avionics and Flight Software Test Labs, Dynamic Concepts

5:00 pm **Keynote Speaker**

- **Christian Davenport**, Author and Journalist

5:30 pm **Reception** – *Concludes at 7:30 pm*

Tuesday, October 28

8:00 am **Networking Breakfast**

9:00 am **2024 Student Poster Contest Winner – Maria Chytka**, UAH

9:15 am **Macauley Winner Presentation – Celvi Lisy**, MIT

9:25 am **Artemis III and Beyond: Establishing a Permanent Lunar Presence**

- **Chris Crumbly**, Principal Research Engineer, Auburn University - Moderator
- **John Couluris**, Senior Vice President of Lunar Permanence, Blue Origin
- **Kristin Houston**, President, Space Propulsion & Power Systems, L3Harris
- **Aarti Matthews**, Director, Starship Crew and Cargo Programs, SpaceX
- **Mark Pond**, Senior Director, Space Exploration, Northrop Grumman
- **Kirk Shireman,** Vice President of Human Space Exploration, Orion Program Manager, Lockheed Martin

10:45 am **Networking Break**

11:30 am **Building the Lunar Economy Through Establishing Infrastructure**

- **Wesley Fuhrman**, APL Lead, Lunar Surface Innovation Initiative, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory - Moderator
- **Tim Cichan**, Chief Architect, Commercial Civil Space, Lockheed Martin
- **Jeff Parker**, Chief Technology Officer, Advanced Space
- **John Troeltzsch**, Exploration Solutions Architect, BAE Systems

12:30 pm **Luncheon**

- AAS Awards Presentations
- **Keynote:**
  - **Michael López-Alegria**, Chief Astronaut, Axiom Space

Day concludes at 2:00 pm

Wednesday, October 29

8:00 am **Networking Breakfast**

9:00 am **Student CanSat Competition Review – UAH Space Hardware Club**

9:15 am **The Economic Frontiers of Low Earth Orbit: Progress, Market Shifts, and Commercial Viability**

- **Mike French**, Founder, Space Policy Group - Moderator
- **A.C. Charania**, Senior Vice President of Space Business Development, Zeno Power / Advisor, Balerion Space Ventures
- **Bob Ess**, President, Starlab Space Stations
- **Richard Leshner**, Vice President of Government Relations, Vast

10:10 am **Industry Outlook Fireside Chat**

- **Allen Cutler**, President and CEO, Coalition for Deep Space Exploration

10:35 am **Networking Break**

11:20 am **Managing Risks in a Fiscally Constrained Environment**

- **David Radzanowski**, VP Finance, AAS Board - Moderator
- **Ronald J. Birk**, Principal Director, Space Enterprise Evolution Directorate, The Aerospace Corporation
- **Karla Jackson**, Vice President of Contracts, BAE Space and Mission Systems
- **Phil McAlister**, NASA (Ret.)

12:20 pm **Luncheon**

- AAS Awards Presentations
- **Luncheon Discussion: Former NASA Administrators**
  - **Mike French**, Founder, Space Policy Group – Moderator
  - **Charles Bolden**, Former NASA Administrator
  - **Jim Bridenstine**, Former NASA Administrator

Day concludes at 2:00 pm

Thank you to the 2025 Planning Committee

Chair: Kirk Pierce, NASA Marshall
Industry Co-Chair: Bobby Watkins, Barrios Technology

Terry Abel, Lockheed Martin
Reginald Alexander, The Aerospace Corporation
Sara Alvarado, SEDS
Debbie Batson, Teledyne Brown Engineering
Katie Boggs, BAE Systems, Inc.
Jeramie Broadway, NASA Marshall
Jacqueline Cortese, Blue Origin
Chris Crumbly, Auburn University
Rajiv Doreswamy, University of Alabama
Vicky Gomez, The Aerospace Corporation
Lauren Holt, Northrop Grumman
Andrew Hyche, The Boeing Company
Emily Idelson, AAS
Tom Koshut, UAH
Bart Leahy, Advanced Space
Darin Lindon, KBR
Lisa Mitchell, Amentum
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Nelli Mosavi-Hoyer, JHU Applied Physics Laboratory
Mary Occhipinti, Moog, Inc.
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Kirk Pierce, NASA
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Bobby Watkins, Barrios
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Rita Wilcoxon, Leidos

Thank you for attending the 2025 von Braun Space Exploration Symposium!

Please join us at one of our upcoming events.

Full information available at astronautical.org/events/calendar

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