

Growth: Spacewalks Capture NASA Contract

by Gail Kellner
February 23, 2017

Many remember the first American spacewalk conducted on the Gemini 4 mission in 1965 by NASA Astronaut Ed White. Commander James McDivitt captured magnificent images of the 23-minute excursion, and whether you were viewing those pictures in the sixties or via the internet at a much later date, it was a poignant slice of history.

Hundreds of Extravehicular Activities (EVAs) have been conducted since that first American spacewalk, and Vaeros' Human Space Flight Directorate has recently been granted a new contract to support the mission of Johnson Space Center's EVA Project Office.

"EVA is anytime an astronaut goes outside of the space station or crew vehicle into the harsh and deadly environment of space to do repairs, install new equipment, or to do inspections," said Dr. David Bearden, general manager, NASA and Civil Space Division.



Astronaut Ed White during first American spacewalk in 1965. (Photo: NASA)

NASA's immediate need is to consolidate contracts in an effort to provide seamless and objective support to manage its future acquisition activities, maintain proprietary data, and reduce the potential for conflict of interest issues, according to Bearden.

Within the next two to three months, 16 technical and support roles will be filled by Aerospace for this new project.

"The primary job will be the support of the planning, provisioning, and execution of spacewalks on board the International Space Station (ISS) to support systems servicing and ISS payload objectives," said Jeffrey Hanley, principal director, Human Exploration and Space Flight. "Spacewalk events require months of pre-planning and review, and NASA conducts readiness reviews prior to each spacewalk to assure the risks are managed and the crew, procedures, and hardware readiness is acceptable," he said.

The other function of the organization, according to Hanley, is managing the acquisition of new EVA hardware, which includes tools, crew aids, and spacesuits.

Although the current spacesuit was originally developed in the late 1970s, and it was first used on the shuttle in 1983, it is largely unchanged, he said.

"NASA has new technologies and techniques that can improve the lifetime of the spacesuit and its robustness, as well as the capability of performing NASA's future mission goals beyond microgravity EVA to service the ISS," Hanley said. "The present suit is not built for exploration," he added.

The next EVA on the ISS is scheduled for late March. Aerospace senior management will be on hand in Houston to observe some of the EVA from the Mission Control Center and to meet new employees who will support this effort.

Velocity: Ideas Flow at Shark Tank Event

by Kimberly Locke
February 16, 2017

The water was warm, figuratively speaking, and the ideas were flowing as employees from across organizations turned out for the second Shark Tank-like event, part of Aerospace's focus on the new corporate strategic imperative, Velocity.

This second session was held Feb. 1 in El Segundo, hosted by the Office of the Chief Velocity Officer.

President and CEO Steve Isakowitz was a special guest at this session and listened intently to the ideas presented and asked questions of the presenters.

As one of four recently announced strategic imperatives, Velocity is defined as "responding to customers more quickly and streamlining Human Resources (renamed People Operations) and business processes."

The corporation is prototyping these sessions — named after the television show in which startup companies pitch their ideas to a panel of investors — to engage employees and give them an opportunity to bring their ideas forward. So far, the Shark Tank prototype has been limited as a proof-of-concept, with broader participation in the offing. The first event was held in December and paved the way for the second session.

Submissions of assorted business solutions related to streamlining various corporate practices and processes were plentiful at both events. Prior to being selected to present their ideas, employees submit them through a website. Those whose ideas offered the most promise, in terms of such factors as feasibility, and projected cost and schedule commitments, were then invited to share them with the panel of judges.

At this latest event, judges representing a cross-organizational group listened to four ideas, mostly centered on process improvements.

Each presenter was given five minutes in which to present one slide about their idea. The panel then took five minutes to discuss the idea with the employee, fellow panelists, and to ask questions. For the most part, the employee was informed on-the-spot as to whether their idea would be pursued.

The following two projects were selected for further exploration and funding at the second Shark Tank event:

"Augmented Reality Workplace (or Why I Stopped Worrying About Typing Relevant Keywords and Learned to Love AR)," presented by Andy King, manager, Simulation and Graphics, Engineering Applications Department, Computers and Software Division, Engineering and Technology Group.

"Cost Transfer (and Master Data Change) Request Automation," presented by Mindy Dayton, director, Finance Systems, Finance and Accounting Directorate, Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

Judges were: Dr. Willie Krenz, vice president, chief information officer, and acting chief velocity officer; Ellen Beatty, vice president, chief financial officer, and treasurer; Heather Laychak, vice president and chief people officer; Domenic Rigoglioso, associate general counsel; and Sabrina Steele, executive director, Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Division. The intent of the cross-functional panel is, as Krenz said, to have the key decisionmakers in the room so the most feasible and most beneficial ideas gain buy-in for pursuing almost instantly.

The purpose of these sessions is to "engage Aerospace staff on the generation of new ideas based on their experience in the workforce," said Krenz. "It's another approach to making improvements at Aerospace and is in addition to our executive listening tours," he added. Stay tuned for the third Shark Tank session in the next month or two.



Presenter Andy King shows a scaled model replica of a hologram installation to President and CEO Steve Isakowitz. (Photo: Eric Hamburg)

Projects previously selected during the pilot Shark Tank event were:

“Provide Employees with On-line Access to Images and Clipart,” presented by Bryan Tsunoda, director, Internal Communications, Corporate Communications and Public Affairs.

“Reclassify Business Imaging Center from a “Pool” to a Traditional Cost Center,” presented by Ralph Brown, General Services director, Facilities, and Peggy Kearney-Soranno, Budgets, Budgets and Financial Analysis, both of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer; this effort has been completed since it was presented at Shark Tank I.

“Paperless Procurement,” presented by Jennifer Halford, director, Applications Development, Enterprise Information Systems.

Holloman and Betts Receive 2017 Herndon Black Image Awards

by Wendy O’Dea
February 07, 2017

Dr. Sherrica Holloman and Denise Betts were recognized by the Aerospace Black Caucus on Monday, Feb. 6 when they received the Robert H. Herndon Black Image Award at a ceremony in El Segundo. The awards ceremony, in its 35th year, was the first observance of several planned during February, African American History Month.

The Herndon Award was established in 1982 to recognize and remember former Aerospace engineer and manager Robert H. Herndon. The honor is awarded to individuals who exemplify leadership and initiative, participate in company and community volunteer opportunities, and have noteworthy career and professional achievements.

Danielle Sherrod, national president of the Aerospace Black Caucus, opened the ceremony, welcoming the award winners and their families, as well as Jessica Herndon, granddaughter of the late Robert H. Herndon, Aerospace President and CEO Steve Isakowitz—who shared his own personal story—and members of the Executive Council. In addition to a large turnout in El Segundo, Aerospace employees around the country watched the ceremony via Skype.



National President of the Aerospace Black Caucus Danielle Sherrod, left, with Herndon Award recipients Sherrica Holloman and Denise Betts. At right, Marie Smith, member of the award event committee. (Photo: Eric Hamburg)

The 2017 theme for African American history month is “Changing the Landscape: Inclusion and Innovation for the 21st century and Beyond.” Sherrod noted that this was perfectly embodied by Robert H. Herndon and his exceptional work ethic, humanitarian spirit, and tireless dedication to the community. “We celebrate his legacy and those who exemplify those same qualities in their outstanding work for Aerospace and the community at large,” she said.

Holloman, a Vaeros project engineer for the science and technology program for NASA and Civil Space, manages tasks that support NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, the biggest Aerospace customer across all of the NASA centers. According to Zigmund Leszczynski, systems director, GSFC Formulation and NASA Technical Applications, Holloman works closely with the NASA team to provide programmatic support to the Flight Projects Directorate. “This is a critical role that provides NASA decision-makers with key insight into flight programs to ensure they stay on track for launch and on budget,” Leszczynski said. “This is vital for program and mission success. When working with Dr. Holloman, one quickly realizes she is a consummate professional, gifted leader, and truly wonderful person.”

Holloman received a Bachelor of Science degree in aerospace engineering with a mathematics minor from Virginia Tech, a Master of Science in technology and policy from MIT, and a Ph.D. in systems engineering from The George Washington University. She has received many awards and is currently involved in a variety of professional activities including The Aerospace Mentoring Initiative, The Aerospace Corporation Black Caucus, The Aerospace Corporation Women’s Committee, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, National Society of Black Engineers, National Defense Industrial Association, and Society of Women Engineers.



Senior Vice President Malissia Clinton, left, presented Jessica Herndon, granddaughter of Robert and Mary Herndon, with a special award in memory of her grandmother, who died last fall. Jessica holds her daughter, Emery. (Photo: Eric Hamburg)

“One of my life principles is to work hard even when no one is looking,” Holloman said. “The fact that I’m standing here today is evident that someone has noticed.” She thanked the Aerospace community, noting that when you’re given the tools to succeed, “it’s very easy to do.”

Bryan Tsunoda, director of internal communications, presented the award to Betts, who is the manager of Technical Publications within the Corporate Communications Division. Tsunoda shared entertaining details about Betts’ early life — including her affinity for spelling bees and Nancy Drew novels—and her early career in advertising, insurance and financial services, and home-building industries. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Pepperdine University.

Betts has also dedicated her time to charitable causes, including LIFE (Love Is Feeding Everyone); The Chosen One Foundation, which helps children become empowered through education, financial assistance, and preparation for the working world; and assisting youth with essay preparation for college applications and resume creation

after graduation.

A senior editor in Technical Publications for seven years, Betts was promoted to lead editor in 2009 and manager in 2010. She manages a team of 12 editors and professional word processors to assist with producing deliverable reports, the corporation’s primary physical product.

Betts thanked a number of people at Aerospace as well as her immediate and extended family. “There are no hidden figures here,” she said. “You may see me standing alone before you on this stage, but I assure you it’s crowded with a great many people who had a hand in helping me become who I am today.”

After congratulating the recipients, Isakowitz captured everyone’s attention with recollections about a former coworker, Dr. Memphis Norman, and how Norman’s story impacted him. Isakowitz thought he knew Norman quite well, having worked closely with him on NASA programs at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Washington, D.C. in the 1990s.

“Memphis always had a smile on his face. He had a Ph.D. He was a Vietnam veteran. He spent 20 years at OMB and I sat next to him every day. I thought I knew him,” Isakowitz said. However, one day, tipped off by a coworker, Isakowitz realized he didn’t know Norman as well as he thought.

The son of a poor sharecropper, Norman made his way to college and, in 1963, joined other students—at the urging of Medgar Evers—at the Woolworth lunch counter sit-in held in Jackson, Mississippi to protest the city’s segregated facilities and its treatment of black people. Norman was abused, beaten, and eventually arrested (along with his abuser).

“What happened that day helped to fuel a growing energy and sense of purpose for civil rights activists and prompted Martin Luther King to begin considering a mass march on Washington,” Isakowitz recalled. “This was a part of Memphis I never knew.” He added that he’d learned two lessons from Norman. “First, the stories like Memphis’ are not just African American history stories. It’s all of our story. We still see large swaths of our society who are resistant to change, resistant to allowing all who are capable of contributing to do so. That does not fly here at Aerospace. Aerospace is, has been, and always will be at the forefront of championing diversity. Here, everyone is and will be given an equal opportunity to contribute their unique talent and abilities to furthering our goals.

“I sat next to a person I thought I knew yet he was so much more,” Isakowitz continued, noting the second lesson. “That’s how we should all feel about each other. We have amazing people with their own incredible life threads that tie us together. We should celebrate that and share in these moments, like we are doing here today.”



President and CEO Steve Isakowitz at the Herndon Award ceremony with Aerospace executives and guests. (Photo: Eric Hamburg)

Show Your Swag!

February 01, 2017

Are you enjoying your new Aerospace gear? Show off your Aerospace spirit by snapping a photo and sharing it with your colleagues on this [SharePoint site](#).

Consider taking a photo with a coworker, at home, while doing something athletic, at the beach, wherever. We look forward to seeing your Aerospace pride.

Also, stay tuned for an online store where you'll be able to buy other Aerospace-branded items in the future.



February 2017 Obituaries

by Elaine Young
February 01, 2017

Sincere sympathy is extended to the families of:

Helen Burns, hired March 22, 1966, retired Oct. 1, 1996, died Nov. 29, 2016.

Robert Carbone, hired Dec. 17, 1962, retired April 1, 1988, died Jan. 14, 2017.

Flora Deans, hired Aug. 15, 1968, retired Oct. 1, 1989, died Dec. 28, 2016.

Rolf Gross, hired May 18, 1965, retired Oct. 1, 1993, died Jan. 5, 2017.

Tobenette Holtz, hired Oct. 11, 1976, retired July 1, 1995, died Nov. 26, 2016.

Patricia Jeter, hired Sept. 22, 1980, retired Aug. 1, 1998, died Jan. 24, 2017.

Bernard Klem, member of technical staff, hired Feb. 12, 1973, retired Oct. 1, 2004, died, Dec. 7, 2016.

Louis R. McCreight, member of technical staff, Nov. 2, 1981, retired April 1, 1992, died Dec. 29, 2016.

William McPherson, member of administration staff, hired Oct. 19, 1968, retired Nov. 1, 1991, died Dec. 23, 2016.

Joseph Neiss, member of technical, hired March 8, 1966, retired Oct. 1, 1993, died Jan. 10, 2017.

Gordon Stewart, member of technical staff, hired Sept. 5, 1962, retired Oct. 1, 1996, died Jan. 23, 2017.

James Todd, member of technical staff, hired April 20, 1964, retired Sept. 1, 1996, died Sept. 19, 2016.

Elliot Weinberg, member of technical staff, hired May 3, 1963, retired Nov. 1, 1991, died Dec. 27, 2016.

To notify Aerospace of a death and have it included in the Orbiter, please contact Human Resources at 310-336-5107.

February 2017 Notes

by Elaine Young
February 01, 2017

Notes of appreciation to fellow employees and Aerospace for thoughtfulness and sympathy have been received from:

Valerie Jackson, on the recent passing of her mother, Esther Greufe.

To submit a note of appreciation to Aerospace, please contact Valerie Jackson in Human Resources at 310-336-0891.

February 2017 Anniversaries

by Elaine Young
February 01, 2017

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Engineering and Technology Group

David Warren

35

Engineering and Technology Group

Diana Robertson, Sherrie Zacharius

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Engineering and Technology Group

Boyd Carter, Dennis Cottle, Jeffery Martindale, Phuong Than,

Robert Boughton, Tung Lam

Executive Offices

William Tosney

Operations and Support Group

Lisa Nikitas

Space Systems Group

Joseph Adams, Malina Hills

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Engineering and Technology Group

Craig Sather, Ryan Noguchi

National Systems Group

Jorge Seidel

Operations and Support Group

Sandra Jones

15

Defense Systems Group

Charles Bauland

Engineering and Technology Group

John Gentle

Enterprise Information Services

Max Robinson

Operations and Support Group

Denise Betts

Space Systems Group

Daniel Bass, Timothy Lelesi

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Engineering and Technology Group

Esteban Valles, James Boulanger, Jeffrey Sokol,

Shaun Brown

National Systems Group

Cheryl Spohnholtz, David Harvatin

Operations and Support Group

Anthony Choi, Baudelio Betancourt

Space Systems Group

Mary Ellen Vojtek, Oscar Pardo, Valerie Wade

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Space Systems Group

Todd Moeller

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