



Press Release

June 16, 2011

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Women in Aerospace Annual Conference a Success

Panelists forecast "the road ahead" for aerospace

Arlington, Va. --- Women in Aerospace, the leading professional group promoting women's opportunities in aerospace, held its annual conference last Friday at the Key Bridge Marriott. The conference, entitled "Aerospace 2011: The Road Ahead," analyzed key aerospace issues from government and industry leaders including keynotes from two former female astronauts, FAA senior technical advisor, Pam Melroy, and newly appointed NOAA assistant secretary, Dr. Kathryn Sullivan.

Melroy called "point-to-point" global transportation an ultimate goal for commercial space and forecasted that the first person to go to Mars is in school today. Fresh in her role at NOAA, WIA attendees were among the first to hear Sullivan's priorities at NOAA. Chief amongst them was finding solutions for a potential gap in environmental data used to forecast the weather, specifically citing lack of funding for the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) program. Sullivan told WIA attendees, "If we do not have JPSS, it would mean that citizens in Birmingham or Joplin would not have the warning like they did this year," she said referring to the recent severe weather in both those regions.

The conference also hosted panels that explored other key issues of contention including the military space budget and the future of weather and earth science satellites. A common theme from both sessions was the need for stronger national framework for military and weather satellite programs, especially in light of today's budget cutting environment.

Two space-related panels were also held on the topics of access to the International Space Station, and options for NASA's heavy lift vehicles. Both sessions were positive in tone, with the consensus of panelists in the heavy-lift session optimistically predicting that a decision on NASA HLV would occur this year.

A general session on global competition for the U.S. aerospace industry was also featured. Attendees were cautioned by panelist Fred Downey, vice president at the Aerospace Industries Association

that America's edge in aerospace is threatened by cuts in the federal budget, as well as by nations like China who could lead in areas such as the regional jet market in the near future.

Unique to WIA were the morning sessions targeted at professional development for women in the aerospace field. One session focused on gender issues in the workplace and another on mentoring programs. Panelist Jane Chappell, a vice president at Raytheon, told attendees that their career is "not an individual sport" and stressed the necessity of networking. On the topic of mentoring, Dianne Sousa, a director at Lockheed Martin, advised attendees not to wait "to get tapped on the shoulder" but to find a mentor on your own.

Nearly 300 public and private sector professionals and students from across the nation attended this year's conference up by 42 percent from last year. "We are extremely pleased by the number of attendees and the caliber of speakers we had this year," said Samantha Segall-Anderson, WIA president and conference co-chair. "WIA's network is expanding and our conference is yet another indicator of the value WIA offers to aerospace professionals."

"WIA's reputation in aerospace is stronger than ever," said Bruce Wald, conference co-chair and Vice President & General Manager, Night Vision & Imaging at ITT, the conference's presenting sponsor. "My company, ITT, sees great value in Women in Aerospace, as do the other companies sponsoring this event. Not only is WIA great for networking, but the organization also provides a strong forum to discuss the pressing issues facing our companies today."

This year, WIA's conference was sponsored by ITT, ATK, Ball, The Boeing Company, CSC, IMSG, Intelsat, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, ULA, Aviation Week, Pratt & Whitney, Space News, Aerojet, Booz Allen Hamilton, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman, PRTM, SAIC, DFL Space, Infinite Links, SpacePolicyOnline.com, and Berliner, Corcoran & Rowe, L.L.P.

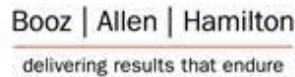
The "Road Ahead" was WIA's second annual conference.

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