

Remarks at Smithsonian Folklife Festival Opening Ceremonies
The Honorable Shana Dale
Deputy Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
June 25, 2008

Thank you Mike (Michael Coats) for your warm introduction and good morning ladies and gentlemen.

We very much appreciate the Smithsonian Institution's invitation for NASA to participate in this magnificent annual event. We're honored by the distinction the Folklife Festival has given NASA as only the second federal agency to be featured in the Festival's 42-year history.

Please allow me to extend my greetings to Texas Governor Rick Perry, a great friend of NASA, and to His Royal Highness, Prince Dasho Jigyel Ugyen Wangchuck of Bhutan.

I am delighted to represent the men and women of NASA as we embark on a new mission of engaging with the thousands of visitors to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival to tell stories and demonstrate the skills, techniques and knowledge of people who make the seemingly impossible possible as we highlight NASA's 50 years of innovation, inspiration and discovery.

We are delighted that NASA's festival participation will give people from throughout our country and the world the opportunity to learn from and interact with our engineers, scientists, astronauts and skilled technical staff. This year, we celebrate NASA's first 50 years of achievement and we look to the future. Our presence will highlight to the Festival visitors the incredible drama of exploration and discovery that will unfold in the years ahead as the United States, along with many other countries, returns to the Moon for long duration missions, and prepares for the first humans to reach the surface of Mars.

The entire NASA family has come together to support our presence at the Folklife Festival. During the next two weeks, you will meet people from all of our ten field centers, representatives of our aeronautics, exploration, science and space operations divisions, as well as representatives from our international partners. I hope all of you will get the opportunity during the Festival to learn from astronauts who have soared into space and seen our beautiful blue planet from the unique perspective of Earth orbit, and others who are helping us see places in our amazing universe that have never been seen before. Because NASA must innovate to accomplish our missions in the harsh, extreme environment of space, we push markets and thereby spur U.S. economic growth as we create new technologies that are then transformed to tackle the challenges we face on Earth. I hope you will see this incredibly important side of NASA as well.

Finally, I look forward to the lasting friendships that will be formed as we all interact: NASA, the Smithsonian Institution, Texas, and Bhutan.

I thank you for this wonderful opportunity and best wishes to all involved.

