

**REMARKS FOR DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR LORI GARVER
NATIONAL AERONAUTIC ASSOCIATION, ROBERT J. COLLIER TROPHY
May 13, 2010**

Thank you so much for recognizing the amazing NASA-led team with this distinguished prize. It is an honor to accept this year's Collier Trophy on behalf of the agency, its international and commercial partners and the many dedicated people around the world who have contributed to the International Space Station's success – many of whom are in this room tonight.

I just left NASA Administrator, Charlie Bolden at the Cape – tending to the scheduled launch tomorrow of Atlantis, which is headed to the ISS, and he joins me in thanking you for this recognition. The ISS joins so many other legendary past trophy winners -- including the Gemini program teams, the Apollo 8 and 11 crews, the Skylab program. LANDSAT. Voyager. The STS-1 crew and those who developed the shuttle. And other pioneers in aeronautics like Glenn Curtiss and the Wright Brothers (who won in that order...which wouldn't make sense – if you didn't know the history).

As you noted, this award is "For the design, development, and assembly of the world's largest spacecraft, an orbiting laboratory that promises new discoveries for mankind and sets new standards for international cooperation in space."

The Station is indeed a marvel of engineering. One of the most impressive feats of human accomplishment in history.

I noted that the criteria for the award concludes with the phrase, "the value of which has been thoroughly demonstrated by actual use during the preceding year"... for me, that is the ISS's true contribution to humanity.

It is already making good on the promise of new discoveries for humankind.

We in this room know the station is just now coming into its full research potential, with construction nearly complete and a full crew complement of six. We're finally opening our doors to become the true orbiting laboratory we've dreamed (and testified) about. Scientists from all over the world are using station facilities in almost all areas of science and technology. They're sharing this knowledge to make life on Earth better for people of all nations and expanding the horizons of our exploration capabilities.

As promised, scientists are utilizing this unique environment of microgravity to test new vaccines (in cooperation with NIH), to improve the delivery of drugs to targets in the human body, to transfer the technology we use to recycle the station's water supply to provide fresh water to disaster victims in remote areas and to produce clean, unlimited biofuels from algae (ask me about it later... it is my favorite NASA project that was developed from ISS research)!

Now with more than 130 new and continuing integrated investigations (the work of nearly 400 scientists around the globe), the amount of scientific work has grown consistently during the transition from the station assembly era to the era of full utilization. This is thanks in large part to Mark Uhran, our ISS Assistant Associate Administrator, and Julie Robinson, our ISS Program Scientist, both here tonight.

So the 2009 Collier Selection Committee recognizes not only the technical achievements of assembling this amazing facility in space, but is recognizing the value of what the facility has already achieved.

Perhaps most importantly, the Committee is recognizing the team for "New standards for international cooperation in space"... Beyond the research and the engineering, perhaps the station's greatest accomplishment is its capacity to unite 15 nations in a peaceful purpose for discovery and for the betterment of humanity.

When most of us entered the field of aeronautics and astronautics, space was the very symbol of the Cold War -- of competition. Today, as represented by the International Space Station, space is a symbol of peaceful cooperation. Certainly nothing would have been harder to believe in the 1960s than the very existence of the station itself. In my confirmation hearing last year, I was asked about the "value" of human spaceflight. You get about 30 seconds (especially when you are deputy), and this was how I chose to respond – what "value" do you put on the evolution from Cold War competition to peaceful cooperation, as represented by the ISS?

Since I don't get to do this very often, I'll expand my philosophical view even further. Thanks to the ISS, there has never been a time in the past decade when all living human beings were on Earth at the same time. As we continue to expand humanity's presence into the Universe, as one of the current "stewards" of our space program, it is my endeavor to assure that November, 2, 2000 will be the last time in human history where all of us did reside on terra firma. Bill Shepherd is "in the house" and a few of us here tonight got to witness that Expedition 1 launch – one for the history books!

Since 2000, 193 different people, representing 15 countries, have been on the station. By my count 13 are here tonight. These astronauts have had children born on Earth while they were in orbit. They've celebrated holidays. They've voted. They've talked to heads of state, students and ordinary citizens. They have played music, kept diaries and run on the COLBERT treadmill.

The ISS is our toehold to the rest of the solar system and any exploration we want to pursue in deep space. I'd equate this accomplishment with the first ocean crossings. The exploration of the poles. And the daring of our very first astronauts, speaking of which I have to acknowledge one of our true heroes, who helped us kick off this entire Space Age, Senator John Glenn. We have a number of astronauts in the room with us tonight who have been to the station and helped us build, maintain and make discoveries on it, as well as shuttle astronauts who laid the groundwork for the station program.

And we have with us many dedicated NASA employees who ran the station program and guided it through the vagaries of five presidential administrations and numerous Congresses. Three ISS program managers are here tonight – Bill Shepherd, Randy Brinkley, and our current ISS Program Manager, for almost five years, Mike Suffredini. Thank you all for your contributions. This award is for all of you. We have someone here who shepherded the ISS through three of those five Administrations, who ushered in our partnership with the Russians and led our campaign on Capitol Hill which saved the ISS by just one vote – former NASA Administrator Dan Goldin (I'd take a win by one vote about now).

I want to especially thank our commercial partners who are here on stage with me tonight: The Boeing Company, Draper Laboratory, Honeywell Corporation, Lockheed Martin Corporation, United Space Alliance, United Technologies/Hamilton Sundstrand. You are partners in the deepest sense. Our astronauts' lives depend on your expertise and precision. Spacesuits, tools, the equipment that rotates the arrays, the very structure of the station itself. When things work and when they don't, they are essential to us. Thank you, and congratulations to you, for your success over this amazing odyssey. You truly deserve this recognition.

The station has overcome political challenges and tragedy. We all remember when it was very nearly defeated in Congress. And that construction had to stop for more than two years while the agency recovered from the loss of Columbia.

But tomorrow we plan to launch one of the final three space shuttle missions to the ISS. With tomorrow's shuttle launch, there will have been 34 shuttle flights to the station, 63 Russian flights to the station, one European flight, and one Japanese flight. After this flight, the station will be 100% complete as far as habitable volume. A human-like robot joins the station crew later this year and will help advance our knowledge in robotics.

President Obama's plans would extend the station to 2020 or beyond (if adopted), giving our orbiting national laboratory a critical role in the next phase of exploration as it helps us uncover the knowledge about human health in space that we'll need to venture farther into the solar system.

In the future, more international partner vehicles and new commercial partners will dock their own vehicles to the station and test their own systems and technologies to help create a whole new level of activity that will help the station contribute even more to the lives of people on Earth. In reviewing the history of the Collier award, I found out that for Mr. Collier, he strongly believed and set up the trophy to recognize the ideal that, "the flying machine should be unselfishly and rapidly developed to its ultimate potential for America's Economic advancement." In fact, providing this point, he was the first person to purchase a plane for his personal use. We envision the ISS and future space stations fulfilling this prescient ideal.

So it is such a great honor to accept this award on behalf of the entire ISS team, who together have created an unprecedented engineering marvel that is serving as a laboratory for cutting edge science and technology, that has helped usher in an end to the Cold War and that holds the promise of advancing America's economic potential. On behalf of all who made it happen – thank you again to the NAA for this honor!