



## News Bureau

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## News Release

Sept. 20, 2006

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Journalists interested in covering the symposium should contact Dawn Starostka, (505) 522-1232, (505) 644-5884 cell, or [Dawn@helpinghandsevents.com](mailto:Dawn@helpinghandsevents.com).

### **Spaceflight symposium update: Lockheed's George Sowers and Mojave's Stu Witt to speak**

George Sowers, director of business development and advanced programs for Lockheed Martin Space Systems, and Stu Witt, general manager of the Mojave Spaceport, have been confirmed as key participants in the 2nd Annual International Symposium for Personal Spaceflight (ISPS) in Las Cruces, N.M., Oct. 17 and 18.

Sowers will speak during the symposium's plenary session, "Meeting the Challenges," on the morning of Oct. 17. Witt will participate in a panel discussion on the development of spaceports in the afternoon of Oct. 18.

NASA recently selected a team headed by Lockheed Martin to design and build the space agency's next-generation human space exploration vehicle, a successor to the space shuttle. The Orion project has an initial contract value of about \$4 billion.

"One of the most significant indicators of the maturing of the spaceflight business is that aerospace companies like Lockheed Martin are now addressing personal spaceflight in their business development divisions," said Patricia Hynes, director of the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium, who is co-chairing the symposium with William Gaubatz of the X PRIZE Foundation. "George Sowers is going to talk about how Lockheed Martin will be transforming itself to address this new sector of the aerospace business."

Witt will discuss the development of the Mojave Spaceport in California and its impact on surrounding communities. Mojave was the site of the Ansari X Prize competition in 2004.

"We will have two sessions on spaceports, one on New Mexico's Spaceport America and

one on developing the spaceport network,” Hynes said. “Hearing what the participants in these sessions have to share should help dispel the myth that spaceports are just for the rich.”

Spaceports will serve as hubs for the emerging space-based economic sector, providing links to in-space manufacturing and scientific exploration, facilitating rapid point-to-point travel around the globe and creating centers of commerce, she said. The symposium’s spaceport sessions will examine the business, technical and regulatory issues involved in the development of spaceports.

Other sessions will focus on space vehicles, space tourism, medical considerations for suborbital and orbital spaceflight, and other topics. Participants will include experienced astronauts as well as “new space” entrepreneurs from companies such as Rocketplane Kistler, SpaceX, Starchaser Industries, Virgin Galactic and the Rocket Racing League.

ISPS 2006, to be held at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces, precedes the X PRIZE Cup competitions to take place at the Las Cruces International Airport Oct. 20 and 21.

The symposium is presented by New Mexico State University, the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium, the X PRIZE Foundation, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, the Association of Space Explorers and the National Space Society.

ABC television newsman Sam Donaldson will be the master of ceremonies for the first day of the symposium.

Detailed information about the symposium, including an online registration form, can be found on the ISPS Web site, <http://spacegrant.nmsu.edu/isps/2006/>. For assistance with registration, contact Joylynn Watkins of the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium, (505) 646-6414 or [nmsgc@nmsu.edu](mailto:nmsgc@nmsu.edu).

Information about the X PRIZE Cup activities scheduled for Oct. 20 and 21 can be found on the Web at <http://www.xprizecup.com/>.



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