NASA Honors Boeing Expendable Launch Systems, Retirees Maclean and Simmons

Boeing Expendable Launch Systems (ELS) has been awarded NASA's Public Service Group Achievement Award for outstanding support.

ELS, located in Huntington Beach, Calif., provides engineering, manufacturing and program support for the Delta family of launch vehicles, and major components of the International Space Station.

The award recognizes the group's contribution "in continuing the Delta tradition of excellence" during the recent launches of the Advanced Composition Explorer, and the Mars Global Surveyor and Mars Pathfinder missions. The missions sent robotic spacecraft to Mars to give the world its first close-up look at the surface of the red planet.

"We're honored to receive this award from NASA," said Jay Witzling, Boeing vice president, Delta II. "We strive to deliver world-class support for our customers, and this award recognizes that we are meeting that challenge."

Two Boeing retirees also have been recognized for their significant contributions to NASA programs. Donald A. Maclean received NASA's highest honor awarded to a non-government employee, the Distinguished Public Service Medal, and J. Crane Simmons received a NASA Public Service Medal.

Maclean was recognized for his lengthy career with the Space Shuttle/Payload Assist Module and Delta programs. Maclean joined the company as an electrical engineer assigned to the Delta program in 1977. During his career, Maclean made significant contributions to certify the launch readiness of more than 150 Delta launch vehicles.

Maclean, who retired as Delta deputy launch sites director from the Boeing Company last year, played a key role in coordinating more than 240 launches from sites at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., and Cape Canaveral Air Station, Fla., including the return to full flight of the Delta expendable launch vehicle after the Shuttle Challenger accident in 1986.

Maclean earned a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from Michigan State University. Maclean and his wife, Mary, reside in Cocoa Beach, Fla.

Simmons also was recognized for his support of NASA programs during his 40-year career working on the Space Station and Delta programs.

Simmons joined the company in 1957 as an engineer, and held successive positions, including director of engineering for the Space Station. In his most recent post as director of engineering for the Delta Program, Simmons contributed to the design and engineering of more than 200 Delta launch vehicles, and helped lead the program to a success rate of 97 percent over the last 20 years, and 94 percent over the last 37 years.

Simmons also was instrumental in implementing a major upgrade to Delta launch vehicle avionics, creating a new 21st century generation of Delta rockets. In addition, Simmons was lauded for his role in leading recovery efforts following the failure of a Delta II launch vehicle at Cape Canaveral in 1997, when the launch schedule was resumed within only four months.

Simmons holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Utah, and a master's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Southern California. He and his wife, Shanna, reside in Huntington Beach, Calif.

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