

Welcome Remarks– Wernher von Braun Symposium
Oct.15, 2012, Chan Auditorium

- I am pleased to welcome you to our campus for the fifth annual Wernher von Braun Memorial Symposium. This year's theme, "Space Exploration, Security and Commerce: Our Path Forward," is particularly appropriate given this community is the birthplace of America's space program, and the need to guide and understand the direction of the future of space exploration.
- Today, and I suspect long into the future, UAH, NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, and the many science and technology companies that populate Cummings Research Park will continue to provide leadership in the advancement of space exploration, security and commerce. It's been that way for decades, and will continue.
- It's fitting that the Von Braun Symposium is again being hosted on our campus. Dr. von Braun played a special role in the history of this university. It was 51 years ago that he strongly advocated to the Alabama Legislature that a research institute should be built on campus. Dr. von Braun told that legislative body: *"by building the academic climate in Huntsville...this community believes that this area is destined to continue to grow and become a great and permanent scientific, educational and industrial center."* We continue to carry out Von Braun's vision.
- Forbes magazine describes Huntsville as one of the world's smartest cities, home to the highest concentration of Ph.D.s in the nation, and second in America for the concentration of scientists and engineers. Our students and faculty are excited to be a part of this community that boasts so much intellectual talent.
- UAH has long been a provider of workforce talent to the space program. Our ability to graduate high quality scientists and engineers is part of our mission. We are a Tier 1 national university as ranked by U.S. News & World Report, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classifies us at the highest level of research activity. We have four research programs ranked in the top 10, and 14 programs in the top 20, according to the data the National Science Foundation collects on R&D expenditures.
- UAH is a unique institution that confronts big challenges— a 21st century place.
- We appreciate your presence on our campus and look forward to the discussions that this symposium will generate. Thank you for being here.