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California Space Authority
Wil Simon, Media/PR Manager
(805) 349-2633 x111
William.Simon@californiaspaceauthority.org



LA Suppliers Forum Filled to Capacity Regional Firestorms Do Not Dampen Enthusiasm

Los Angeles, CA – Nearly 200 hundred attendees, consisting of more than 100 aerospace suppliers, packed the Suppliers Transformation Annual Forum on Wednesday at the Raytheon E4 Event Center in El Segundo even though recent regional firestorms have flooded major freeways making travel on roads difficult. The unique, nonexclusive forum, allowed any supplier to attend, and integrated suppliers into the planning of the forum agenda dealing with challenges and solutions facing major aerospace manufacturers and their relationships with subcontracting companies in the 21st Century.

"We were pleased with the participation, energy level, and perceived value of the Supplier Transformation Forum by all participants—both by panelists and registrants," said Christine Purcell, California Space Authority (CSA) Manager, Industry Workforce and Manufacturing Development. "All evaluations received indicated that day was high value, they learned something new or innovative, made valuable new contacts and see ways to immediately and positively affect their business."

The keynote address delivered by Dr. Wanda Austin, President (effective January 2008), The Aerospace Corporation, resonated with the attendees. Emphasizing "Smart Buyers," "Smart Suppliers," and the value of "collaboration" and "innovation," Dr. Austin pointed out the impact of space enterprise in California totaling more than \$50 billion. She also encouraged the crowd to remember that this event—the forum itself—was transformative and a positive step toward changes needed to keep the industry globally competitive in the new century.

"Dr. Austin did an awesome job of setting the stage for supplier transformation, describing the need, barriers and success factors required to remain globally competitive, as well as the need to invest to preserve national and economic security for our country," said Purcell.

Industry successes in transformation between primes and suppliers were highlighted by representatives from major manufacturers like Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and Aerojet working with subcontractors like Cristek Interconnets, Inc., Intrinsyx, Hitco, and Saalex Solutions. Other panelist discussions offered frank observations on the formula for success, industry challenges faced, and resources available drawing from a wide range of speakers and professionals including Mark Tomlinson, Executive Director, Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) who traveled from Michigan to attend the event.

"People understood the importance of being here," said Andrea Seastrand, Executive Director, CSA. "By partnering, by collaborating, by innovating, we can as a nation transform, even revolutionize, the space enterprise industry today and guarantee a better future for our children."

CSA hosted the event with Raytheon through the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant that affects the California Innovation Corridor. The "Corridor" is a region that spans 13 counties running north to Alameda, east to the Inland Empire and Antelope Valley, and south to San Diego.

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California Space Authority is a nonprofit organization supporting California's commercial, civil and national security space stakeholders. Governed by a statewide board of directors, CSA works closely with the State of California, industry, other government, education, workforce entities and academia to support space enterprise development and expansion statewide.