Elachi: ‘Exciting’ year to come

By Mark Whalen

In his Sept 29 State of the Lab address, JPL Director Dr. Charles Elachi declared the upcoming year “a very challenging time, but an exciting time in the history of JPL.”

Elachi congratulated the GALEX, Mars Exploration Rover and STERT teams on the great effort to successfully launch four spacecraft in a five-month period. All four missions are operating well. Elachi also congratulated the Galileo team on its recently completed mission, lauding their “vision and tenacity.” “Even with Galileo gone,” he pointed out, “we still have 37 spacecraft and four major instruments in operation across the solar system. We all should take pride in the richness of the science and develop implementation guidelines.”

In light of the aforementioned lessons learned and the Columbia Accident Investigation Board’s recent report, NASA is forming an Engineering and Safety Center, a “virtual team” that includes staff from all NASA centers. Based at Langley Research Center, the team will provide an additional step of checks and balances—not to wait until problems happen, but to bring an external perspective from talent both inside and outside the agency,” Elachi noted.

“The way that we should work as a team to help the agency achieve its goals,” he said. “He told the audience about a “One NASA” meeting that will be held at JPL Oct. 17 (see page 3 article).

The director described a slight shift in focus for the Lab in its implementation strategy. The former plan was to have one in-house mission in progress at JPL, now the goal is to have one large and one small- or medium-sized mission always in development.

In addition, the Lab will implement in-house strategic subsystem elements of projects subcontracted to industry; in-situ instruments in house; and select missions, subsystems and instrument early on the mission definition process. The Strategic Management Council will identify critical technical areas and ensure that approaches are implementable.

The Lab will receive an additional boost with Elachi’s announcement of investment in its burden budget for the near term. Highlights include:

• The Research and Technology Development area will increase from $10 million in FY 03 to $25 million in 04, then to $35 million in 05 and $45 million in 06.
• An increase of $8.8 million for JPL’s technical infrastructure and $3.8 million for an information infrastructure upgrade.
• The new Human Resource Development Fund ($2.5 million for FY 04, trending to $15 million in a few years) will allow JPL to annually hire at least 25 “fresh-outs,” within three years of graduation; hire staff in specific disciplines for critical areas such as astrophysics, system engineering, and planetary and Earth science; and conduct joint appointments with local universities, including Caltech, USC, UCLA and others.
• A $2 million business investment for a system to allow for enterprise resource planning and integrate it with the Lab’s engineering and design processes as well as manufacturing and inventory processes. 
• $4 million to the Microdevices Laboratory, to upgrade equipment. In total, the additions represent an increase for investment from 21 to 26% of JPL’s burden budget. This is very exciting news, Elachi said. “I feel that these investments were essential to the long-term health of the Lab.”

As soon as the budget is approved, JPL could face some growth in personnel. Elachi envisions that JPL will add 100 to 200 work years (the equivalent of 100 to 200 full-time employees) in the next year. To accommodate that, the Lab is considering renting 200 to 300 workspaces in the Pasadena area over the next year.

For the long term, JPL has developed a 10-year master plan, which includes the construction of three major buildings and possibly an education center. The first building, a flight project center, is slated to start a year from now and will manufacture 500 to 600 offices.

In closing, Elachi said, “In this 45th anniversary of NASA, we can all be proud of what JPL has accomplished for the nation and the human kind as part of the NASA team.”

Elachi’s address is archived at http://dailyplanet.jpl.nasa.gov

Get tickets for Family Day, set for Nov. 1

JPL FAMILY DAY WILL BE HELD Saturday, Nov. 1. Tickets are required, and are available through Oct. 17. All JPL badge holders and their immediate families may attend. Family Day will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch and entertainment will be provided in the mall, and it’s a great opportunity for your family to see your workplace up close. Activities and tour sites include a Mars Exploration Rover mission exhibit, Cassini mission exhibit and planetarium show, von Kármán visitor center, Space Flight Operations Facility, JPL Store, Welcome to Outer Space movie, Child Educational Center and Caltech Credit Union.

Tickets are available at the JPL Store, Building 114-104; Human Resources, 180-502; Public Services, 186-122; credit union, 218; Mars Exploration Program, 264-6404; and Employee Services and Recognition, 310-213.

For more information, call Nancy Kapel at ext. 4-9432.
CloudSat radar shipped for integration

The CloudSat spacecraft’s Cloud Profiling Radar has been shipped from JPL’s Spacecraft Assembly Facility to Ball Aerospace in Boulder, Colo. The CloudSat Project, traditionally known as Ball/PLD, will install and verify the radar into the spacecraft, and a series of environmental tests will be conducted. The Cloud Profiling Radar was developed with JPL’s Earth System Science Pathfinder mission that will launch in 2005, will study clouds in detail to better characterize the role they play in regulating the Earth’s climate. CloudSat is a joint U.S./Canadian mission intended to provide a global survey of cloud properties. CloudSat data will lead to improvements in climate models and weather models, and should improve the accuracy of weather forecasts and climate predictions.

CloudSat will fly in orbit formation as part of the “A-Train,” a constellation of six satellites in Earth orbit that will cross the equator within a few seconds to minutes of one another at around 1:30 p.m. local time.

Goddard honors JPL’s AIRS team

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center recently honored members of JPL’s Atmospheric Infrared Sounder (AIRS) team with group achievement awards for outstanding teamwork on the Earth Observing System Aquarius mission. AIRS, an atmospheric science satellite, was developed by the JPL Earth System Science Pathfinder mission that will launch in 2005, will study clouds in detail to better characterize the role they play in regulating the Earth’s climate. CloudSat is a joint U.S./Canadian mission intended to provide a global survey of cloud properties. CloudSat data will lead to improvements in climate models and weather models, and should improve the accuracy of weather forecasts and climate predictions.

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Special Events Calendar

October 17

Folk Music—Irish songsportst Felix Campbell will appear at Caltech’s Winnett Student Lounge at 8 p.m. Tickets are $15 for adults, $14 for seniors, and $12 for students. For more information, call (626) 395-4652.

Tuesday, October 21

“Remembering the Past, Imagining the Future: Diagnosing and Treating Alzheimer’s Disease”—This free event will be held in Beckman Auditorium at 8 p.m. Dr. Jeff Cummings will discuss the latest innovations in imaging techniques for visualizing pathology in the brains of Alzheimer’s patients, how this will impact the diagnosis of Alzheimer’s, the preventive options available for predicting Alzheimer’s in at-risk individuals, and talk about the newest methods for treating this disorder and treatments on the horizon. For more information, call (626) 395-4652.

Wednesday, October 15

“Viruses, Viruses, Viruses”—Caltech president Dr. David Baltimore will deliver this free lecture at 8 p.m. in Beckman Auditorium. For more information, call (626) 395-4652.

Thursday, October 16

“Peter Diamandis—Nanobusiness: Nanotech comes to Caltech”—Dr. Peter Diamandis has devised an approach to nanotechnology that is designed to address some of the world’s most pressing problems and is expected to change the way the world views technology and progress.

NASSA Honor Awards Ceremony—The annual event to honor JPL staff will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the mall. TIAACREF Enrollment Meeting—This workshop, held on Tuesday, is designed to assist employees new to

Goddard honors JPL’s AIRS team

Fred O’Callaghan (right), former ARES/Project manager and current project manager of the Astronomy and Fundamental Physics Experiments Program (720), received his award from ARES project manager Tim Pugno (left) and ARES/Science team leader Dr. M. Baskaran (center).
One NASA

Workshops underway agencywide

The resulting session objectives are to provide an overview of the strategy for the agency, outline accomplishments and future plans for enterprises and centers, highlight how all centers contribute to enterprise plans and future plans for enterprises and centers, provide examples of collaboration among enterprises and centers through real-life examples, and share information about various initiatives.

One of 38 One NASA actions was to broaden employees’ knowledge of the agency’s vision and the initiative, so in response KSC was selected to host the initiative’s first leader-led workshops, which opened at the KSC Visitor Complex IMAX Theater. NASA leaders discussed how the agency vision relates to all employees’ work objectives. This portion was also aired on NASA TV for those unable to attend.

Kennedy, James Jennings, NASA’s associate deputy administrator for institutions and asset management; Ed Weiler, associate administrator for Space Science; Kevin Peterson, Dryden Flight Research Center director; incoming KSC Deputy Director Woodrow Whetstone; and implementation team lead Johnny Stephenson each explained their respective contributions to One NASA.

Stephenson emphasized, “One NASA allows us to accomplish more as a team than ever possible individually.”

Breakout sessions provided detailed information about the progress of NASA’s ongoing initiatives. Specifically, the gatherings focused on (1) project management; (2) return to flight; (3) President’s Management Agenda/Full Cost Accounting; (4) human capital/NASA Shared Services Center; and (5) integrated planning.

Also, these workshops introduce key leaders outside of individuals’ own enterprises while simultaneously emphasizing the level of cross-center collaboration underway within NASA. For example, Weiler shared his knowledge of astronomy to explain to KSC’s workforce that thinking out of the box may be difficult but often yields amazing results.

Kennedy, the new director of KSC, helped spearhead the program initially and he’s incorporating those leadership ideals into his daily practices.

“One day is a very, very special day,” he said. “When you leave here, I hope you feel you’ve learned a lot and had a chance to celebrate that we’re a team.”

Dr. Julian Earls presented a refreshing motivational speech during lunch as well. Earls, Glenn Research Center’s incoming director, used humorous analogies to express constructive leadership concepts. For example, he explained how the “Tate Family” easily undermines an organization’s goals. The notorious family members are Dic Tate, Agi Tate, Hesi Tate and Irri Tate.

“The true significance is not so much what happens here, but what happens when you leave here—because of what happened here,” Earls said. “When spiders build webs, you may think they’ve failed, but what happens when you leave here—because of what happened here,” Earls said. “When spider webs unite they can contain a lion.”

These activities are just the first of many like it that will prompt discussion and information sharing. Also, additional One NASA information can always be referenced at www.onenasa.nasa.gov.

JPL’s ‘One NASA’ town hall set for Oct. 17

JPL will hold a One NASA town hall meeting on Friday Oct. 17, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in von Kármán Auditorium. It will feature Dr. Ghassem Asrar, associate administrator of NASA’s Office of Earth Science (Code Y); Johnny Stephenson, the One NASA team lead from NASA Headquarters; Jim Kennedy, director of Kennedy Space Center; and Dr. Charles Elachi, JPL’s director. They will discuss how JPL is supporting the One NASA initiative.

The meeting will be followed by two breakout sessions from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. One meeting, to be held in von Kármán Auditorium, will address the implication of Full Cost Accounting and Integrated Financial Management at JPL. The subject and location of the second breakout session is to be determined. Check the Daily Planet (http://dailyplanet) the week of Oct. 13 for more information.
The new Micropropulsion Laboratory opened its doors on Sept. 15 to develop, evaluate and test microthrust propulsion technologies and microspacecraft systems, allowing JPL to become a leader in microthruster development.

“We will face many challenges, and now we will have the tools to meet those challenges,” said John Ziemer, a senior engineer in the Advanced Propulsion Systems section.

The 1,000-square-foot facility and test chamber, which are funded through JPL grants and loans, will initially be involved in the Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (LISA) Project, which will continue its first operation of the test chamber and will begin the testing of the miniaturized next step.

Letters
My father, surviving brothers, and sisters-in-law will be celebrating the life of my youngest brother Mark. The gift basket and any contributions we have given to our family through this celebration of life gathered for the family.

Dear JPL Family: We would like to thank you for your support and thoughts expressed on the recent passing of my father. We have given to our family through this celebration of life gathered for the family.

Alphonse Schmelzel, age 35, Section 335; Allan Klump, age 30, Section 341; and Mark Salama, age 33, Section 352; have given to the family.

The following JPL employees retired in the mid-70s, in good condition, total frame height 27", total frame width 18", total frame depth 2", and verification including performance, contamination and lifetime testing, including duets. jfz@alumni.caltech.edu, Jim.

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