

## *President's Message*

Six months have passed swiftly since I assumed leadership as the President of the Washington Space Business Roundtable (WSBR). I now want to offer some thoughts to our members on the state of WSBR and my vision for where we are headed. First, though, I would like to offer my sincere appreciation for the outstanding work accomplished by my predecessor, Andrea Maleter of Futron. During her two-year tenure, WSBR made outstanding progress in furthering the goals of the organization and ensuring that WSBR remained a prominent participant in the broad "space" debate. I am a firm believer in the axiom "if it isn't broke don't fix it" and I see no need to change the course that Andrea set us on. That does not mean that I or the Board won't try to tweak the system somewhat.

The state of WSBR is sound from both a financial perspective and an organizational one. One of my goals was to increase the number of sponsors within WSBR. Through the outstanding efforts of our Membership Committee Chair, James McCormick, WSBR welcomed six new sponsors this year, including three new platinum sponsors, and one sponsor upgraded from gold to platinum.

Our primary goal is to expand our education thrust in both scholarships and community outreach. In both cases we have been very successful, due in no small part to the efforts by our Education Committee Chair Stephen Ganote of Avascent, ably assisted by Janice Starzck of ILS. In the last year we sponsored both students and teachers to the Space Camp in Huntsville and provided scholarship assistance for six students to attend the Summer Science Program sponsored by Thomas Jefferson High School. As part of our community outreach, a number of WSBR members participated in an event at the Emery School in Washington DC where we talked to middle school students on the importance of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition and the opportunities it provides. We hope to do more of these in the future. Also, I need to offer my personal gratitude to EADS North America for their generous donation to our scholarship fund of \$5,000 in the name of Sean O' Keefe. They have set the bar high for other sponsors to aspire to.

Another area where I believe we have met the challenge is in our monthly speaker luncheons. This was due to the outstanding work of Patrick Boyle of Longbottom Communications, our Program Committee Chair. In this day of tight budgets and multiple association affiliations, the work that Patrick accomplished in securing quality speakers and attendance at the luncheons has been truly remarkable.

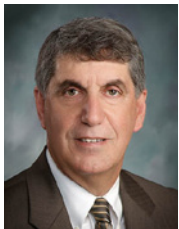
As is the case in all organizations, the lead person is only as good as his or her supporting staff. From my perspective, WSBR is well represented by a superb Board of Directors who are both professionally committed and fully engaged in ensuring that WSBR remains a leading voice in fostering the space business in the Washington region.

As I mentioned in the beginning, I would like to share some thoughts on my vision as we go forward. I believe that an introspective look within WSBR may be warranted. This is primarily driven by the fact that the resources available to companies to invest in associations is and will continue to be under scrutiny. So what do I mean by an introspective look? I believe we need to reinforce the unique opportunity that WSBR provides to our sponsors so that you the sponsor can validate your investment in WSBR, be it in time or dollars.

I also want to ensure that WSBR continues to attract the right level of speakers to reflect our broad sponsor footprint. For the most part we tend to rely on a few Board members who have professional relationships with individuals. This has been highly successful to date but I am concerned over the long term. So, one of my thoughts is to establish a nomination process that is available to all sponsors so we ensure we are meeting your needs.

Lastly, I would like to find a way to encourage/ solicit a youth movement within WSBR at the luncheons. I would encourage each of the sponsors to consider inviting to our monthly luncheons some of your new young talent that would serve to expand their horizons on what is unique to a Washington-based association and could serve as the lifeblood for WSBR in the future.

I welcome any comments on assisting the process to make WSBR stronger and relevant in your eyes. [Please email me.](#)



*Thank you for your participation in WSBR and the honor of serving as your President.*  
**Dennis Granato**