

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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A New Era Begins at Spaceports

The Global Spaceport Alliance (GSA) congratulates Jeff Bezos and Blue Origin on a spectacular first crewed launch of the New Shepard spacecraft on July 20th. Achieving an altitude of 63 miles, the spacecraft carried Mr. Bezos, his brother Mark Bezos, Oliver Daemen (a student from the Netherlands), and Wally Funk, a woman trained for spaceflight in the earliest days of the NASA astronaut program but never flew. At 18 years old, Daemen is the youngest person to fly in space, and Funk, at 82, is the oldest.

Further, the GSA congratulates Sir Richard Branson and Virgin Galactic on a flawless flight of SpaceShipTwo Unity on July 11. The spaceplane was carried into launch position by Virgin Galactic's carrier plane VMS Eve that took off from Spaceport America, a GSA member spaceport. Branson was joined on the historic flight by three crewmates and two pilots. Virgin Galactic has already established relationships with several other GSA members world-wide to provide launch services.

According to Dr. George Nield, GSA Chair, "We couldn't be more excited about these back-to-back achievements. These flights mark the beginning of new era in human spaceflight and of the role that commercial spaceports will play in the new space economy."

James Causey, GSA Executive Director, added, "These successes open the way for a new industry of space tourism and affordable access to space for a variety of commercial and scientific purposes. These milestones in the history of space will play very well for all of the spaceports and other members of the Global Spaceport Alliance."

About the Global Spaceport Alliance

The Global Spaceport Alliance is the voice of the emerging global spaceport community. Its vision is to be recognized worldwide as the official organization for spaceports and the spaceport ecosystem. To accomplish this vision, GSA provide members with the information, data, research, and networking needed for the successful planning, funding, and operation of spaceports around the world.

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