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Lunch Keynote
Wednesday, June 5, 2013
12:30 pm - 1:15 pm | Room D/B/A

Chair: Dr. S. Alan Stern, Associate Vice President, Southwest Research Institute	
Time	Speaker
12:30 pm - 1:15 pm	Space Technology Mission Directorate Overview – Engaging the Suborbital Community <i>Dr. Prasun Desai</i> <i>Acting Director for Strategic Integration and Analysis, NASA Space Technology Mission Directorate</i>



Dr. Prasun Desai is the Acting Director of the Strategic Integration and Analysis Office within the Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD). He also serves as the Rideshare/Hosted Payload Manager within STMD, responsible for coordinating the access to space for all of the projects that require demonstrations in space.

Desai has worked at NASA for 22 years. For the past three years, he has helped to establish the Space Technology Program from inception and this new office at NASA Headquarters. Prior to that, Dr. Desai spent 19 years at NASA Langley Research Center as a senior systems engineer applying expertise in the fields of atmospheric flight dynamics, systems optimization, engineering of entry systems, flight operations, and design of planetary exploration mission elements for robotic and human systems. Desai has contributed to the design, development, analyses, and flight operations of many NASA missions (Mars Exploration Rover, Stardust, Genesis, Mars Phoenix Lander) pertaining to entry, descent, and landing of probes at Mars and Earth.

Desai has received numerous awards for his work on various NASA missions. He received the Exceptional Engineering Achievement medal from NASA in 2004 for his contributions on the Mars Exploration Rover Mission and was subsequently awarded the 2005 National Engineer of the Year Award from the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He received the Exceptional Achievement medal from NASA on his contributions on the Stardust mission in 2007 and the Exceptional Engineering Achievement medal from NASA for his contributions on the Mars Phoenix Lander Mission in 2008. In 2012, Dr. Desai received the Exceptional Service Medal for his numerous contributions at NASA throughout his career. In addition, he has received more than 10 Group Achievement awards.

Desai has a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Rutgers University, an M.S. in Astronautics from the George Washington University, and a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Illinois. He is an Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and has authored or co-authored over 60 technical publications. Desai is also a prolific speaker, having given well over 100 presentations to schools (K-12), universities (domestically and internationally), churches, civic groups, professional organizations, and the general public to promote science education and science literacy and to motivate students for careers in math and science.

