

NEWS RELEASE

Outstanding engineer and Aerospace President and CEO Wanda M. Austin to accept award from PSU

July 2011 – Portland State University’s Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science is pleased to announce the induction of Dr. Wanda M. Austin, president and chief executive officer of The Aerospace Corporation, and engineering undergraduate student Kjersten Criss will be inducted into the Denice Dee Denton Women Engineers Hall of Fame at Portland State University’s Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science on November 10, 2011. The Denton Award was developed as a way to honor outstanding women who are shaping the engineering profession. “Dr. Austin and Ms. Criss serve as important role models for others, particularly female students, who are pursuing careers in engineering,” states Dr. Renjeng Su, dean of Maseeh College. “Recognizing their career accomplishments highlights the importance and success of women in engineering.”

Dr. Austin gives strong support to women considering a career as an engineer. “With the number of young women entering the engineering disciplines decreasing, it is important to show that these fields are challenging and fulfilling, and that women entering engineering can reach the highest levels of achievement,” said Dr. Austin. “We must continue to encourage young people, and especially young women, to pursue careers in engineering, and to ensure that their pathways to achievement remain open.”

Internationally recognized for her work in satellite and payload system acquisition, systems engineering and system simulation, Dr. Austin is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a trustee of the University of Southern California. In 2010, Dr. Austin received the AIAA von Braun Award for Excellence in Space Program Management. Dr. Austin served on President Obama’s Review of Human Spaceflight Plans Committee in 2009; she was appointed to the Defense Science Board in January 2010.

Since 1979, Dr. Austin has served The Aerospace Corporation in positions of increasing responsibility, including as general manager of the Military Satellite Communications Division and as senior vice president of both the National Systems Group and the Engineering and Technology Group. On January 1, 2008, she became President

and CEO. Under Dr. Austin's watch, the corporation resolved a launch hiatus with its support to four successful satellite launches, including the last two GPS IIRM satellites, and continues to contribute to national security space programs by conducting studies such as Next Generation Electro-Optical System; by addressing the protection of information transmitted to and from spacecraft; and by supporting programs such as NASA's human spaceflight, NOAA's weather satellite, and the Landsat system of satellites.

The award for the outstanding Maseeh College female engineering student goes to Kjersten Criss, an undergraduate who is majoring in electrical engineering. Criss is a research assistant to Professor James McNames; her research is based on sensor devices to monitor movements of patients with movement disorders, and software to interface the movement sensors and computers. A patent, "Automatic model-based video assessment of movement disorders," is pending based on this research. Criss is a member of the Society of Women Engineers, The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), and the American Physical Society. She is president of the PSU Chapter of the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society. In 2010, Criss received the Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the Maseeh College Advisory Board Scholarship.

About the Denice Dee Denton Women Engineers Hall of Fame

Portland State University recognizes the contributions of prominent women in technology and engineering through the Denice Dee Denton Women Engineers Hall of Fame. After earning her doctorate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Denice Dee Denton excelled as a faculty member, a dean of engineering, and a chancellor for a major public institution with exceptional skill and wisdom. Her lifetime of accomplishments and accolades serves as an inspiration for fellow women engineers and technologists. The Denice Dee Denton Women Engineers Hall of Fame honors in perpetuity those who have similarly made significant impact on our lives through their dedication to the engineering profession.

Past inductees are EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson (2010), Xerox Corporation President Ursula M. Burns (2009) and U.S. Navy Commander and Astronaut Sunita Williams (2008) and engineering students Deborah A. Beck (2010, civil and environmental engineering), Lisa S. Dierksen (2009, civil engineering) and Diana Laboy-Rush (2008, engineering and technology management).

About STEM—Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

Portland State University supports the national science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) initiative to strengthen the academic training of students in technological and scientific areas to prepare them for

successful careers. STEM activities at Portland State include mentoring for women and others underrepresented in the STEM fields. Success in STEM education is critical to U.S. competitiveness.

Under Dr. Austin's leadership, in September 2010 The Aerospace Corporation joined Change the Equation (CTEq), an initiative to cultivate widespread literacy in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Dr. Austin supports STEM in many ways, including having chaired the South Bay Aerospace Consortium for Workforce Development, speaking at the Los Angeles U. S. Air Force Base's "STEM to Career" symposium to encourage businesses and schools to take an active role in STEM education, and acting as a panelist for the Center for Excellence in Education webcast "From Education to Enterprise: Science and Technology in the Next Generation."

In 2009, at the STEM Global Competitiveness Conference, Dr. Austin was honored as the recipient of the Black Engineer of the Year Award.

About Portland State University (PSU)

Located in Portland, Oregon, PSU has about 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students, making it the largest university in Oregon. PSU's motto is "Let Knowledge Serve the City," and we provide every student with opportunities to work with businesses, schools and organizations on real-world projects. Our downtown campus exhibits PSU's commitment to sustainability with green buildings, while sustainability is incorporated into much of the curriculum. The Institute for Sustainable Solutions (ISS) serves as a hub, facilitates, and supports research, dialogue, education, and outreach among and between science, business, educators, government, organizations, and the public.