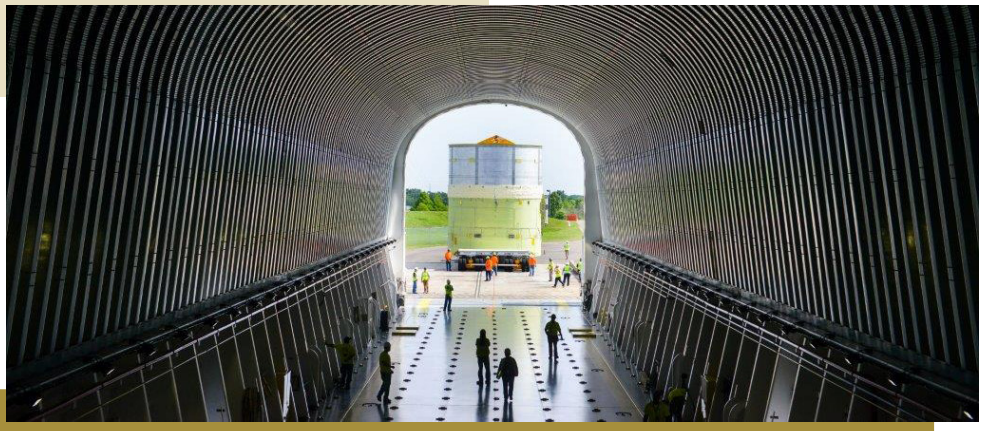
michoud messenger

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

SLS Engine Section Test Article Loaded on Barge Pegasus

An engine section structural qualification test article for NASA's new rocket, the Space Launch System, was loaded onto the barge Pegasus at the agency's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans. On April 28th the test article made its way from Michoud to NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, for structural loads testing. For the test series, hydraulic cylinders will be electronically controlled to push, pull, twist and bend the test article with millions of pounds of force to ensure the hardware can withstand the extreme forces of launch and ascent. The engine section, located at the bottom of the rocket's core stage, will house the four RS-25 engines and be an attachment point for the two solid rocket boosters that will power the SLS launch. The engine section test article is the first of four core stage test articles to be manufactured at Michoud and is designed to the same specifications as the engine section that will fly on the first SLS mission with the Orion spacecraft.

After its 1,240-mile voyage from the Michoud Assembly Facility, NASA's barge the Pegasus arrived at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, on May 15 with the Space Launch System engine section structural test article, which is the first test article manufactured at Michoud to arrive at Marshall for extensive testing.



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Letter from Leadership

Team,

Keith Hefner, Michoud Director

I want to commend everyone on a job well done getting the Space Launch System (SLS) engine section test article ready, successfully moved, and safely delivered to Marshall on the Pegasus barge. There was an enormous amount of planning and preparation that went into this across many departments throughout NASA, Marshall and Michoud. Everyone came together as a team to ensure that our mission was accomplished. Testing the engine section as well as the other test articles being built at Michoud help provide the opportunity for SLS to take astronauts on missions that have never been achieved before.

As we continue to support the schedule for delivering critical hardware for the first SLS mission, we are expanding our S3 workforce who support SLS activities. With additional personnel onsite, I cannot stress enough the importance of safety in the workplace. The work at our facility requires vigilance every day in following our safety guidelines.

We also need to be especially focused on safety and preparedness with hurricane season upon us June 1. Each tenant and contract company should also review their own emergency preparedness plans. Safety must always be kept at top of mind.

With Congress approving our supplemental funding request to repair and rebuild from the tornado that hit Michoud in February, we are working on a plan to ensure those funds are put into action immediately. We are looking forward to approximately 350 USDA employees rejoining us by the end of June, totaling their workforce at Michoud to 600. Although not everyone is returning yet, this is a sign of progress. We are working to have the remaining USDA employees back on site by the end of the fiscal year.

On April 20, we had a full house at our first tenant interchange meeting of 2017. It was great to see this level of participation from our tenants and service representatives. The meeting served to enhance the lines of communication between NASA and our tenants. I encourage all of our tenants to regularly communicate with your assigned NASA Production Support Systems Manager (PSSM), as well as your Production Support Lead Engineer (PSLE). The more we understand your business needs, the better we can serve you. It was a pleasure to personally meet so many attendees, and I look forward to the next meeting within the coming months to build upon this success and continue the momentum.

The positive work and achievements we continue to see since the tornado touched down earlier this year is enormous. I truly appreciate your patience during this time of rebuilding and applaud everyone's continued dedication to making Michoud a great place to work every day.

- Keith Hefner,
Director of Michoud
Assembly Facility

Editor's Note: If you have a question or topic you'd like to see Keith address in his column, please email him at keith.hefner@nasa.gov.

NASA Day in Baton Rouge at the State Capitol

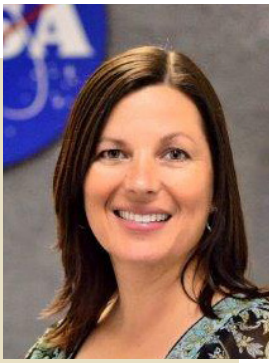
On May 4, NASA hosted "NASA Day in Baton Rouge," an event at the Louisiana Capitol. NASA officials and team members from NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans and NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, which manages the Michoud facility for the agency, along with astronaut Andrew Morgan, met with state officials and the public to highlight the space agency's strong economic partnerships in Louisiana and the state's role in human space travel.

The event included NASA exhibits on public display in the Capitol rotunda, a scale model of the Space Launch System, and experiments conducted by A2Research, an onsite science laboratory that provides a variety of services to NASA at both Michoud and nearby Stennis Space Center.

Representatives from NASA met with lawmakers at the Louisiana State Capitol to show off the program's Space Launch System. Visitors also got a sneak peek at the role Louisiana plays in the next stage of space exploration with NASA Day.

Modern Figures

Vickie Schmersahl



Candice Talley

Congratulations to Candice Talley and Vickie Schmersahl here at Michoud Assembly Facility on their selection as honorees featured in the Women's History Month display entitled "Marshall's Modern Figures, a Celebration of Women Making a Difference Today." This display is sponsored by the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity's Federal Women's Program and was on display at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center throughout the month of March. A photo and biography of each honoree was part of the display. Talley is a NASA procurement support specialist who just celebrated one year here at MAF. Schmersahl is the site services manager and has been employed at MAF for 34 years. They work hard each and every day to make a difference here at Michoud.

Earth Day 2017

Earth Day has come a long way since the inception in 1970. More than 1 billion people worldwide celebrate every year. The most common practice of celebration is to plant new trees for Earth Day. For over 30 years, to the left of gate seven at the Michoud Assembly Facility, a monument and grove of seven mag-nolia trees has stood to commemorate the Challenger astronauts who died in the space shuttle launch accident on Jan. 28, 1986. During the tornado that hit MAF this past February, two of those trees were destroyed. This year in honor of Earth Day 2017, two trees were planted in their place.

No Hurricane yet? Start Planning NOW!

Hurricane season begins June 1 and continues until November 30. Do not wait until then to make a plan. Before the threat of tropical systems begins to ramp up, now is a good time to refresh your memory on hazards and how to prepare for an approaching storm. Remember the season's dates are just a guideline to when the conditions are right for a storm.

- Know your hurricane risk. Talk to your local emergency management agency.
- Make an emergency plan, and do not forget to include your pets.
- Build or restock your basic disaster supplies kit, including food and water, a flashlight, batteries, chargers, cash, and first aid supplies.
- Store supplies so you can grab them quickly if you need to evacuate; know in advance what else you will need to take such as personal needs, prescriptions, important papers, valuables etc.
- Consider buying flood insurance.
- Familiarize yourself with local emergency plans. Know where to go and how to get there should you need to get to higher ground or to evacuate.
- Stay tuned to local wireless emergency alerts via your phone apps, TV, or radio for weather updates, emergency instructions, or evacuation orders.

FIRST Bayou Regional

Michoud's Mobile Machine shop supported the Bayou Regional Competition this year was: Jeremy Lebouef, Ricky Lyons, Arlan Cochran, Scott Curet and Susan Wilson.

NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility mobile machine shop trailer and team was on hand to support the 2017 FIRST Robotics Competition Bayou Regional event this past March at the Ponchartrain Center in Kenner, Louisiana. Sixty high schools from around the world competed for a spot in the World Championship Robot Competition in Houston. This year, Team Phenomena 3616 ranked first and was named the 2017 Bayou Regional winner.

FIRST Robotics Competition combines the excitement of sports with the rigors of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). It is as close to engineering as students can get. The FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) program is not just about robots. Teenagers also learn about project management, leadership skills, public speaking, deductive reasoning, business planning, fundraising, marketing, safety management, community service and the importance of working as a team.

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May 2017
Volume 8, Issue 3

The Michoud Messenger is the official publication for the NASA Michoud Assembly Facility. Each issue is published bi-monthly for civil servants, contractors, and site tenants. For suggestions or submissions, please contact Susan Wilson at mary.s.wilson@nasa.gov.

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