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UNIFYING MEASURES IN A DIVERSE WORLD

Abstract

World Space Week Association (WSWA, a registered non-profit organization with permanent observer status at the United Nations Committee On the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space promotes the United Nations (UN) declared World Space Week (WSW) celebrated each year on October 4-10. When UNISPACE III established World Space Week in 1999, the mandate was to become a yearly week-long world-wide celebration that would celebrate “the contribution that space science and technology can make to the betterment of the human condition”. It is a difficult task, given the many international challenges facing the space industry politically, economically, culturally and systematically.

Since then World Space Week events have been held all over the world, in schools, government agencies, science centers, planetaria, museums, companies and many other venues. Throughout the years the participation has steadily increased, providing an avenue for more organizations to celebrate the benefits of space, fostering cooperation within and outside of borders and giving a local and global perspective to the contribution of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

The uniqueness of the events has been as broad as the cultures that participate in them. Making the celebrations universal enough to transcend borders and culturally specific enough to be meaningful to the almost 80 nations that participate can be a challenge. WSWA manages this carefully, always with cultural and political sensitivity, meanwhile keeping the mandate as outlined by the UN in mind.

The theme for World Space Week 2015 will be “Discovery.” The paper will use this general theme as an example of how ideas can be adapted to a global and local audience. It will show how it can inspire event ideas and be a bridge for organizations that may not otherwise work together. How ideas and the exchange of ideas between local and international educators and event organizers are fostered will be demonstrated. The key factor of sharing educational materials throughout the world has also proved to provide novel ideas for educators, event organizers, companies and activists to raise public awareness about space sciences and STEM. Finally, through activity in IAF, all the above individuals and organizations can instigate a revolution of collaboration which would benefit all those involved.