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# Business Advocate

## Space Travel Starts in Alabama

Alabama's own United Launch Alliance (ULA) and the Boeing Design Center - South are responsible for the rocket and spacecraft that will return astronauts to space from U.S. soil.



ULA's Atlas V departs Decatur



Boeing's CST-100 Starliner

## Launching astronauts to space from the U.S. starts in Alabama

**A**labama's role in the space program was on full display in Decatur this past May. The United Launch Alliance (ULA) Atlas V Dual Engine Centaur and first stage Booster that will launch astronauts to the International Space Station aboard Boeing's Starliner capsule departed ULA's Decatur facility.

The rockets were loaded into the Mariner, a 312-foot ship that transports the rocket stages from Decatur to the launch sites in Cape Canaveral, Florida, for the Starliner Crew Flight Test. The journey is approximately 2,000 miles and takes 8-10 days to complete, depending on weather.

The Atlas V rocket is built at the ULA facility in Decatur. ULA employs 600 people in its Decatur factory and every individual plays a part in the next steps of U.S. human spaceflight.

ULA has launched 133 missions to date.

### ULA's Atlas V

The Atlas V rocket that departed Decatur will be part of the Crew Flight Test of Boeing's CST-100 Starliner that is targeted for later this year. A trusted, proven rocket, the Atlas V has had 79 successful launches to date and has established itself as a reliable launch vehicle.

At its Decatur facility, ULA manufactures all parts of the rocket including fabrication, machining, welding, testing, engine installation and all of the thousands of intricate details that go into assembling an Atlas V rocket.

The Atlas V consists of two separate stages. The first stage is the booster and the upper stage is the Dual Engine Centaur. Both stages departed Decatur for the Cape and will begin processing for the Crew Test Flight currently planned for late 2019.

The CFT Dual Engine Centaur began production in June 2017 as a raw coil of stainless steel. It was completed in March 2019. The CFT booster fabrication began in 2017 as raw, flat stock aluminum and was completed in May 2019.

### Boeing's CST-100 Starliner

The Atlas V booster is not the only part of this mission to come from Alabama. The Boeing Design Center – South, located at the Huntsville Jetplex Center, is also responsible for all of the mechanical design engineering of Boeing's Starliner Capsule.

It's also where the Starliner spacecraft gets its power. The Boeing Huntsville Phantom Works team assembled, tested, and delivered the world's largest and most complex rechargeable battery system for human spaceflight.

By transporting astronauts to and from the International Space Station safely, reliably and affordably from U.S. soil, Boeing's Starliner and ULA's Atlas V will ensure NASA and the United States remain a leader in space exploration.



The co-founders of Intuitive Research and Technology Corporation, Rey Almodóvar (left) and Harold Brewer (right), make remarks at INTUITIVE's 20th anniversary celebration.



Previous issues available at [bcatoday.org](http://bcatoday.org).

## INTUITIVE Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Intuitive Research and Technology Corporation (INTUITIVE) celebrated its 20th Anniversary last month in Huntsville, Alabama. The evening recognized the impact that INTUITIVE's culture, services, and innovation has had on its employees, customers, and community. The co-founders of the INTUITIVE, Rey Almodóvar and Harold Brewer, were in attendance as guests of honor for the night.

More than 700 guests gathered to celebrate INTUITIVE's successes over the last two decades and to pay tribute to the company's co-founders. Employees shared personal stories and experiences through working at INTUITIVE during an open mic and special video production. The culture of the company was on display as employees described being a part of the INTUITIVE family with pride.

Special video messages featuring Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle and University of Alabama Head Coach, Nick Saban, were presented during the ceremony. Both mentioned their respect and support of the mission and vision of the organization. Saban said that INTUITIVE was a leader of innovation across the nation, and he commended Almodóvar and Brewer for their success in leading a team of champions.

Coach Saban commented, "From the beginning,

you were determined to build your organization on ethics and integrity; and you set that process in motion and never looked back. These are some of the same values we strive to instill at our football team at the University of Alabama." He added, "Through healthy competition, your team has cultivated personal honor, virtue, and character. 20 years ago, you may have been the underdogs, but today you are leading a team of champions." At the end of the video, Almodóvar and Brewer were presented with INTUITIVE championship rings to honor their leadership, drive, and success.

Almodóvar and Brewer each spoke about their experiences and what led them to where they are today. Both co-founders expressed their gratitude to those who have helped them throughout their INTUITIVE journey.

Brewer said, "I am grateful and humbled to be sharing this day with you. Because when it's all said and done, I believe that life is about having incredible experiences with incredible people. And there's nothing more incredible than to be working with the team we have at INTUITIVE." To the INTUITIVE employees he added, "whether you've been here, 20 years, 20 months, or 20 days, this is now your story; your company; your journey."

Brewer concluded the night with a toast commemorating the history and development of INTUITIVE, while looking towards the promising future.

### Executive Editor:

Nancy Wall Hewston

*The Business Advocate is published by the Business Council of Alabama, a non-partisan, statewide business association representing the interests and concerns of nearly 1 million working Alabamians through its member companies and its partnership with the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama. For more information on becoming a member of the BCA, contact Elaine Fincannon, 334-240-8749, or [elainef@bcatoday.org](mailto:elainef@bcatoday.org).*





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