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November 2003

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Affirmative Approaches to Ensuring Diversity

Dorothy Hayden-Watkins, Ph.D.

Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs, NASA Headquarters

Dorothy Hayden-Watkins is the Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs, NASA Headquarters. She assumed this position in January, 2003. In her role as Assistant Administrator, she provides corporate executive leadership for building coalitions with NASA to achieve the mission of ensuring equal opportunity and diversity. She has oversight responsibility for the Agency's policy and programs in discrimination and complaints processing, affirmative employment, civil rights compliance and diversity.

Dr. Hayden-Watkins was Principal of Hayden-Watkins & Associates from 2001-2002. From 1998-2002, she worked at Hilton Hotel Corporation, Beverly Hills, California, as Senior Vice President for Diversity. She was responsible for leading the Hilton Corporate Diversity Initiative. During her tenure, Fortune Magazine rated Hilton among the "50 Best Companies for Minorities to Work For" in 1999. Also in 1999, Travel Agent Magazine named Dr. Hayden-Watkins one of the Most Powerful Women in Travel.

Hayden-Watkins previously held the position of District Director for the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in California and Ohio. She had multi-state responsibility for enforcing (through investigation, litigation, and mediation) federal laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace. Dr. Hayden-Watkins also administered EEOC educational and technical assistance programs to provide private employers with proactive and voluntary measures to ensure equal opportunity. From 1981-1989, Dr. Hayden-Watkins served as Director of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission.

Dr. Hayden-Watkins has more than 25 years of extensive experience with equal opportunity and diversity. She has published articles on diversity and education, hosted a public affairs talk show, and served as a university lecturer. Hayden-Watkins has chaired or served as independent director on a variety of boards and commissions including the National NAACP Board of Directors, the NAACP Education Excellence Task Force and the Southern California Leadership Network. She has received numerous awards and honors to include the Outstanding Woman of the Year and the UNC Trailblazer Awards. Dr. Hayden-Watkins has also participated in the U.S. Government Reinvention Initiative, and the White House Conference on Welfare to Work.

Hayden-Watkins holds a Ph.D. in Community and Human Resources and a M.Ed. in Education and Administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her keynote lecture is titled, "Affirmative Approaches to Ensuring Diversity."