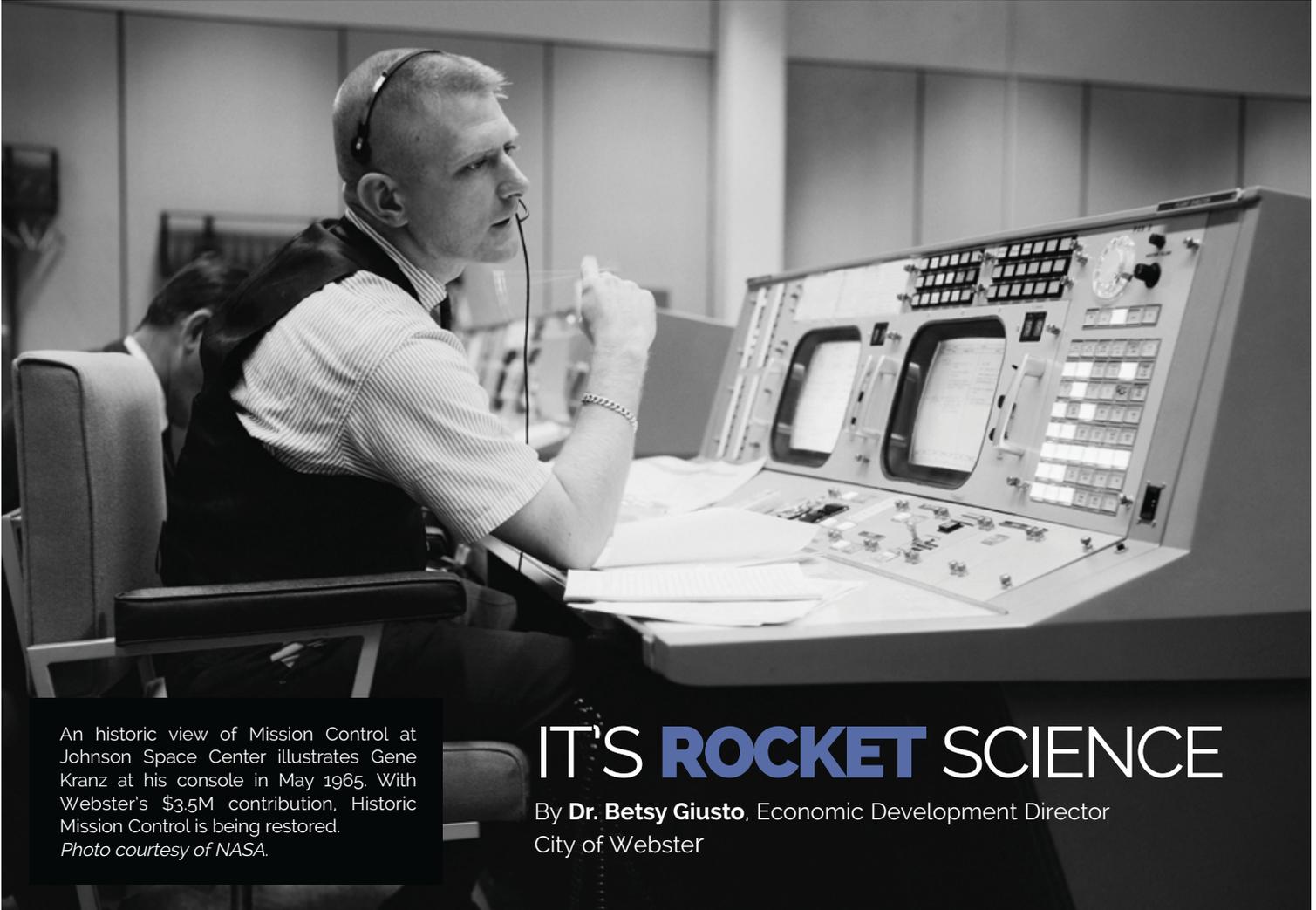

SMALL CITIES' ★ CORNER



An historic view of Mission Control at Johnson Space Center illustrates Gene Kranz at his console in May 1965. With Webster's \$3.5M contribution, Historic Mission Control is being restored.
Photo courtesy of NASA.

IT'S ROCKET SCIENCE

By **Dr. Betsy Giusto**, Economic Development Director
City of Webster

Outer Space plus Aerospace Equal "Space City Webster!"

The City of Webster, located midway between downtown Houston and Galveston, is tethered to space, thanks to its proximity to NASA. As the Johnson Space Center (JSC) celebrates more than 50 years of human space flight, plans missions beyond low-Earth orbit, contributes to the nation's security, and manages operations for the International Space Station, Webster provides a lot in the way of "lift off" and "landing gear" for both JSC and Space Center Houston (SCH), NASA's official visitor center.

Tourism: Outer-Space Fanatics

Space accounts for 40 percent of Webster's tourism market as visitors are drawn to the iconic SCH, which welcomed

more than 1,000,000 visitors last year. Tapping into that tourism stream, Webster has enjoyed a unique 18-year partnership with SCH. That partnership has enabled the City to align itself with Fortune 500 companies like Pepsi, Marvel Comics, and Lucas Films in marketing campaigns while exclusively promoting Webster hotels.

In recent years, SCH has transitioned from its entertainment focus (like Angry Birds, The Avengers, and Star Wars) to science, technology, engineering, and math. Webster has enthusiastically embraced this new educational mission and has even led the charge in funding the restoration of the historic Mission Control.

Last year, the City of Webster approved an expenditure of \$3,500,000 in hotel occupancy tax revenues to restore NASA's historic Mission Control at JSC to its authentic 1960s



TracLabs, with its Webster headquarters, assisted in the development of Robonaut 2 and has achieved many milestones in the areas of robotics and automation.

Photo courtesy of NASA.

appearance for a unique visitor experience. This is the same control room where Apollo 11 Flight Director Gene Kranz uttered his famous words, "Failure is not an option" in reaction to astronauts Jack Swigert and Jim Lovell's, "Houston, we've had a problem."

Aerospace Companies: This Isn't Just the Stuff of Science Fiction

Today, JSC employs more than 13,500 civil servants and contractors, and Webster's 6.7 square mile footprint is home to a burgeoning number of established and entrepreneurial space companies that want to be near the aerospace epicenter. Just a few companies that call Webster home include Ad Astra Rocket Company (developers of plasma rockets for deep space exploration), TRAC Labs (innovators in robotics and automation), and Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies (providers of mission and flight crew operations for the International Space Station and the new Orion crew vehicle).

Well Positioned for a Stellar Future

One great industry sector feeds another in Webster – aerospace fuels tourism, retail, dining, entertainment, medical, and a variety of energy businesses. While Webster's footprint is small, it packs a mighty punch with 19 hotels, more than 100 restaurants and entertainment venues, a major medical center with comprehensive and specialty hospitals, and headquarters for domestic and international companies. As Webster's space is limited on this planet, perhaps one day a Webster outpost on Mars will further strengthen the City's space connection. Until then, the City remains firmly planted in all things outer space here on Earth. ★



The Orion Crew Exploration Vehicle, designed and developed by Lockheed Martin in Webster, will transport astronauts to the International Space Station, moon, Mars, and beyond.
Photo courtesy of NASA.



Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, with a state of the art Webster facility, oversees every aspect of spacesuits – engineering, maintenance, testing, and training.
Photo courtesy of NASA.