

Section Members Tour United Launch Alliance Facility in Decatur

*By
Naveen Vetcha*

On November 10th The Greater Huntsville Section organized a tour of United Launch Alliance (ULA) rocket manufacturing facility located in Decatur AL. Section chair, Naveen Vetcha arranged the tour. The tour was limited to members only. Eighteen members participated in the tour. Tour group comprised of both professional and student members. Members from Tennessee valley and Birmingham participated in the tour.

The tour group was welcomed by ULA representative Anton Kolomiets at the lobby. Anton provided a short safety briefing and a list of do's/don't's during the tour. Following this, the tour group entered into a room with scaled displays of various launch vehicles that ULA produces. Anton provided a brief description of each vehicle. The group then entered the production floor. The tour was conducted in such a way to show various steps (manufacturing → assembly → Testing → Ready for delivery) involved in the production of a launch vehicle. The tour culminated with observation of several completed launch vehicles on transporters ready to be rolled out. Anton also gave a special tour of an underground tunnel network designed for unhindered transport of various parts throughout the plant. This tunnel network is also used as a safety shelter during Tornadoes.

The group returned to the lobby after a 2 hour long walking tour of the plant. Anton provided more information about various displays available in the lobby. Several student members spoke to Anton about internship opportunities at ULA. The tour group got together and took a picture at the lobby. Section chair Naveen Vetcha thanked Anton for providing the tour and presented him a section challenge coin as a token of appreciation.

The Greater Huntsville Section thanks Anton and ULA for supporting AIAA.



Section group at the end of the tour