



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Penn State Homecoming Announces 2014 Honorary Grand Marshal
The Homecoming Executive Committee has selected Michael Paul to represent the community

University Park, Pa. (Apr. 16, 2014) — At Penn State Homecoming's 4th annual Legacy Celebration this afternoon, the Homecoming Executive Committee revealed that Michael Paul, the Team Leader of the Penn State Lunar Lion team, will represent the upcoming Homecoming season as the 2014 Honorary Grand Marshal.

Paul's endless work and dedication with the Lunar Lion mission did not go unnoticed and he was excited to find out that he would serve as this year's Homecoming Honorary Grand Marshal.

"I was thrilled when I found out," Paul said. "Even though I did not graduate from Penn State, I have felt an intense sense of family since joining this University."

Paul, a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and formerly a part of Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory from 2000 to 2008, served as the spacecraft systems engineer for NASA's "MESSENGER Mission to Mercury." Currently, Paul is the Director of Space Systems Initiatives for Penn State's Applied Research Laboratory and has served in this position since 2009.

Now, Paul is leading more than 100 students in the Lunar Lion mission, trying to become the first university to put a lander on the moon and win the Google Lunar X Prize Competition of \$30 million.

When Paul and his wife moved to State College five years ago, he felt a "desire to serve and learn from the Penn State community." For the Lunar Lion mission, Paul leads students from a variety of majors at the University and he is excited to continue working with them on this project while representing the community.

The process of selecting this year's Honorary Grand Marshal began during winter break this past December. The Homecoming 2014 Alumni Relations Director, Madison Benfield (sophomore, Labor and Employment Relations), compiled a list of individuals who embodied Penn State and had characteristics such as giving back and serving the community. Once the list was made, Benfield presented the list to the Homecoming Executive Committee and a vote took place.

Benfield was extremely happy with this year's choice, "I really liked the support from the students. His work is so well-known and the Lunar Lion Launch has the chance of changing space and the world."

The Honorary Grand Marshal is usually a local figure and someone that the Penn State community will recognize. "The Honorary Grand Marshal is a figurehead of Homecoming," Benfield said. "We believe that Mr. Paul is perfect for this role because he really embodies the spirit of Penn State."

About Us

Penn State Homecoming is a student-run organization with aims to celebrate tradition and instill pride in all members of the Penn State family through active engagement of students, alumni, faculty and staff across the community. Our organization is comprised of many student volunteers who donate their time to creating a multitude of events that make the Homecoming celebration a yearlong event.

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