

AIAA names UTSI paper best in '04

A technical paper written and presented by a team from the University of Tennessee Space Institute, has been named the "2004 AIAA Best Paper" by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Solid Rockets Technical Committee.

Entitled "Nonlinear Rocket Motor Stability Prediction: Limit Amplitude, Triggering and Mean Pressure Shift," the paper was unanimously nominated as the best paper of the 40th Joint Propulsion Conference organized by AIAA in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., last summer.

"AIAA proudly presents Certificates of Merit to recognize such technical and scientific excellence," wrote Carol Stewart, honors and awards liaison with AIAA in Reston, Va., in a letter notifying two UTSI professors, a current student, and a two-time Institute graduate of the honor.

Cited as co-authors on the paper were Dr. Gary A. Flandro, who holds the Boling Chair of Excellence in Space Propulsion, Dr. Joseph Majdalani, Jack D. Whitfield professor of high speed flows, both of Tullahoma, Sean R. Fischbach, graduate research assistant from

Bloomington, Ill., now residing in Manchester, and Dr. Jonathan C. French, a UTSI graduate now with Software and Engineering Associates Inc., Carson City, Nev.

The four were invited to an awards luncheon on July 13 during a Joint Propulsion Conference at the Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, Ariz. Represented at the conference in addition to AIAA will be the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), the Society of Automobile Engineers (SAE), and the American Society of Electrical Engineers (ASEE).

"We are thrilled at the news of this award," said Dr. John E. Caruthers, UT associate vice president and the institute's chief operating officer. "It not only speaks volumes about the professionalism of these individuals, but it also is a welcome recognition of the quality of research and academe that has been a hallmark of the Space Institute during its 40-year history."

Flandro, principal author of the winning paper, was chosen in 1991 as the first to fill the Boling chair. A professor in the

Department of Mechanical, Aerospace and Biomedical Engineering, he was recently picked by Caruthers to give the Quick-Goethert Lecture at UTSI in October and next year at the Technical University of Aachen, Germany.

"I am delighted that AIAA has recognized our research in this way," Flandro said. "This makes the many months of hard work worth while."

The paper drew high praise at last year's conference including Dr. Herman Krier's comment that "This paper was worth the price of attending the conference." Krier is "Richard W. Kritzer Distinguished Professor of Propulsion" at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and was session chairman at the conference.

The winning paper was one of 16 technical papers presented at last year's conference by Flandro, Majdalani, Fischbach, French, and three other UTSI students.

French earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering at UTSI in 1993 and a Ph.D. in engineering science in 1996 with Dr. Caruthers as his major professor.