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Dear engineering alumni and friends:

If I haven’t had the chance to meet you personally, please let me introduce myself through this letter. I’m Jim Voss, an Auburn engineering graduate, retired U.S. Army colonel, former astronaut, and now the associate dean of engineering for external affairs here at Auburn.

I wanted to tell you why, after two complete and successful careers, I have returned to Auburn University. I’m here to give something back. Auburn provided me with an engineering education that opened doors, allowing me to fulfill childhood dreams and do some truly remarkable things. I always knew that I wanted to teach when I retired from NASA—to give back something significant to the institution that gave me so much. In this respect, I will be teaching an aerospace design class, helping to educate and hopefully inspire the next generation of engineers.

At the same time, I want to help further Auburn’s role as one of the best universities in America. Although I have a number of responsibilities as associate dean, one of the most important is development—helping to find the resources for the future needs of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering.

When I flew on the space shuttle and worked on board the international space station, I benefited from the great work done by a wide variety of engineers working toward a common purpose. I saw that to support the future technological needs of our country, we need to continue to educate world-class engineers at a level that anticipates today’s ever changing technologies.

Dean Benefield has a vision for the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering that positions us as one of the top 20 in the country—and ultimately into the top 10. He has established benchmarks for faculty, student, facilities and unrestricted endowment support to advance this vision to give us a world-class engineering college ready to meet the challenges of the future. I’m committed to helping him achieve this vision and I hope that you will too.

I loved working in our nation’s space program, but I love Auburn even more. As a result, I made a personal commitment to give up flying in space to help our dean make the College of Engineering what we know it can be. I’m going to share my knowledge and experience with students in the classroom and help develop the resources that will allow us to educate great Auburn engineers. Again, I hope you will join me in supporting the college since it is only through the help and investment of alumni and supporters like you that Auburn Engineering will rise to the next level.

I look forward to meeting you in person and sharing the vision of the future for the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering. War Eagle!

Jim Voss
Associate Dean for External Affairs
Samuel Ginn College of Engineering