The 2026 Tech Workshop combines presentations, networking opportunities, and discussions on the latest innovations and challenges facing optical manufacturers. As a highlight of the workshop, attendees enjoy an exclusive tour of NASA's Kennedy Space Center, offering a firsthand look at one of the world's most iconic centers for science, engineering, and space exploration.

LOCATION

Beachside Hotel & Suites–Cocoa Beach | 3901 N. Atlantic Ave. | Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Mon. Oct. 26	Tues. Oct. 27	Wed. Oct. 28	Thurs. Oct. 29
Welcome Reception	**Day 1–Talks**	**Day 2–Talks**	**VIP Tour**
5:00 – 7:00 PM	8:30AM – 4:30 PM	8:30AM – 4:30 PM	8:30AM - 2:30PM
Sponsored by Titan International Inc.	*Conference Level*	*Conference Level*	*Kennedy Space Center*
Pool & Lounge Area			

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DAY 1

8:30–8:40	**Opening Remarks** Timothy Kennedy & Yvette Pagano — APOMA
8:40–9:25	**Recent Upgrades on X-ray Optics & Metrology** Mourad Idir, PhD – Brookhaven National Lab
9:25–9:50	**Development of Ultra-Stable, Affordable Mirrors (USAM)** Ted Mooney, Phd – EvolvOptic
9:50–10:05	**Morning Break**
10:05–11:05	**Freeform Optics Fabrication** Tayyab Suratwala, PhD – Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
11:05–11:30	**Well Ground Is Half Polished – Process Improvements for Astronomy and Space Optics** Frank Nürnberg, PhD – OptoTech
11:30–12:30	**Lunch** — Sponsored by SPIE
12:30–1:15	**Owning Your Data: A Locally Hosted RAG and Agentic AI Stack** Kenny Rains – ProtoForge Labs
1:15–1:45	**Choosing the Right Polish for CaF_2** Caroline Wattinez – Pureon
1:45–2:20	**Laser Welding of Glass for Lightweight Mirrors** Stuart Gray, PhD – Corning
2:20–2:35	**Afternoon Break** — Sponsored by OptiPro
2:35–3:00	**Large-Aperture Diffractive Lenses for MWIR/LWIR Imaging** Al Ingold – Oblate Optics
3:00–3:25	**Direct Radius of Curvature Measurements Using Spectrally Controlled Interferometry** Donald A. Pearson II – Apre Instruments
3:25–3:50	**Beyond Compliance: Using ISO 9001 as a Competitive Strategy in Optics Manufacturing** Kelley Plats – North American Coating Labs
5:00–6:30	**Happy Hour** — Sponsored by Bond Optics

DAY 2

8:30–8:40	**Opening Remarks** Timothy Kennedy & Yvette Pagano — APOMA
8:40–9:10	**Choosing the Right Polishing Pad** William Gemmill – Pureon
9:10–9:35	**Advances in Automated Surface Quality Inspection of Modern Space Optics** Kaitlin Dunn – DIOPTIC
9:35–10:00	**CGH-Based Alignment of Complex Optical Surfaces for Space Applications** Jean-Michel Asfour – DIOPTIC
10:00–10:15	**Morning Break**
10:15–10:45	**The Satisloh Plasma Polisher — Rapid Surface Figuring for Space Optics** Jason Wickersham – Satisloh
10:45–11:15	**Cold Blocking – Low-Stress Blocking Technique** Troy Alley – Universal Photonics
11:15–12:15	**Understanding Color in Materials** Tayyab Suratwala, PhD – Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
12:15–1:15	**Lunch** — Sponsored by AccuCoat
1:15–1:45	**Space-qualified Enhanced Gold Optical Coating for 1550nm: Environmental Stability and Performance** — Christopher Harrower, PhD – Omega Optical
1:45–2:15	**Improving Yield Through Cleaning Process Control & Full-Surface Inspection** Tyler Wheeler – Ecoclean
2:15–2:30	**AmeriCOM workforce development tools – recruitment, education, and training** Mike Pomerantz – AmeriCOM
2:30–2:45	**ISO Standards for Precision Optics – Why & How** Rick Plympton – OEOSC
2:45–3:00	**Afternoon Break** — Sponsored by Pureon
3:00–3:30	**X-Ray Mirror Fabrication Challenges & Solutions** David Mohring – OptiPro Systems
3:30–4:00	**Precision Optics Challenges for New Commercial Space Companies** Gregory Hollows – Edmund Optics
4:00–4:10	**Workshop Closing Remarks** Timothy Kennedy & Yvette Pagano — APOMA

VIP Tour Agenda

DAY 3

TRANSPORTATION

Charter buses will transport all guests from the Beachside Hotel & Suites to the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex and return guests at the conclusion of the event.

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Buses depart promptly at 8:00 AM. Guests may bring their luggage aboard buses to depart from Kennedy to the airport via rideshare.

Guests who prefer to drive themselves are welcome to do so; please let us know in advance and plan to arrive at the Visitor Complex at 8:30 am.

DEPARTURE – Please plan to be at the Beachside Hotel at 7:45 AM

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER EXPERIENCE

Due to the number of tour participants, attendees will be divided into two groups. Both groups will enjoy the same tour experience.

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8:30 AM– Guest arrival at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

Group A
Bus Tour – Apollo/Saturn V Center, Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) stop, launch pad views, and Space Shuttle Atlantis

Group B
Presentation from astronaut Donald Thomas with Q&A session (indoor meeting space)

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM — All guests reconvene for lunch (conference facility)

Group A
Presentation from astronaut Donald Thomas with Q&A session (indoor meeting space)

Group B
Bus Tour – Apollo/Saturn V Center, Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) stop, launch pad views, and Space Shuttle Atlantis

2:30 PM — Event concludes – guests may explore the Visitor Complex on their own

Buses depart Kennedy Space Center at 3:00 PM