December 13, 2004

Dear Mr. President,

It has been my distinct honor and privilege to serve in your first term. I would like nothing more than to continue to serve at your pleasure. The extraordinary opportunities you have permitted me to assume these last four years have been experiences of a lifetime.

You have often observed that we are all privileged to serve the public for a reason, a term, or a career but we are expected to deliver our very best effort during whatever that time. I have been inspired by your example in pursuit of that responsibility. You have been
Expected anything more of me than you do yourself. In the most challenging moments during my service, I have drawn considerable strength, resolve, and determination to do what's right by the standards you set every day — and that has often been a difficult standard to meet. But every day I have done my best.

Along the way, you have also taught me the extraordinary importance of attending to family. Again, by your regular example with military families — and close to home — with the Columba families, you and the First Lady have set an extraordinary example. The commitment and sincerity of your effort is unmistakable. You have inspired me to always try to do the same.
It is this very commitment to family that draws me to conclude that I must depart public service. The first of these children will begin college next fall. I owe them the same opportunity my parents provided for me to pursue higher education without the crushing burden of debt thereafter. This commitment from them made possible all that I have been able to pursue in my professional life. I owe my children that same option, but I can’t do that if I remain in public service.

As difficult as it is for me in reaching this decision, I have been reinforced by the knowledge that you have motivated this priority.
The tremendous honor to serve you and be part of this procession from her prompted me to hang on as long as possible. I truly wish that could be longer.

In the true stead, my love and I will always be available to assist you, the First Lady and the great Administration, any way you feel we can be helpful. My greatest hope is to pursue opportunities which permit public service contributions and meet obligations to our family.

It is, therefore, with great reluctance that I respectfully submit my resignation as White House Administrator. At your pleasure,
I will continue until you have named a successor and
in the hopes that the Senate
will act on your nominee by
February. But I will be completely
guided by your preference. Having
participated in the effort to formulate
your strategy and secure the Congress'
support of your budget, I want to
affect wherever transition for your
maximizes NASA's prospect for
implementing your vision.

Lauré joins me in wishing you
and the First Lady the very best
for a Merry Christmas and happy
Holiday Season.

With respect,

[Signature]

** TOTAL PAGE 05 **