Doug Lowenstein
President, ESA

It is a pleasure to join Henry Kelly and Donald Thompson in welcoming you all here this morning.

In the last few years, there have been several conferences built around game industry events where the subject of video games and education was front and center, including the Education Arcade events we've been privileged to host at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles.

But when organizations with the stature and gravitas of the Federation of American Scientists and the National Science Foundation come together to stimulate a dialogue <u>not</u> about whether games <u>can</u> contribute to learning, but rather to focus on concrete steps required to <u>realize this potential</u>, then we have truly arrived at a signal moment in the modern day educational games movement.

Today's event marks a beginning, the date when we take the first steps to move beyond conferences and on to action. As you may know, FAS intends to develop a strategic plan after this conference to ensure that government, the industry, and the educational establishment all take the steps necessary so video games take their place along side traditional forms of pedagogy in our classrooms.

None of us underestimate the task ahead. We know there will be resistance within the educational establishment; we know there are financial challenges; we know there are R&D challenges; we know that games carry a stigma among many in authority, whether in government, schools, or the foundation world; we know there is skepticism in the game industry which saw the bottom fall out of the educational games market some years ago.

But I really believe momentum is building behind this movement. I really believe there is inevitability to it. An en[t] generation of kids is growing up interactive; for them, video games are as much a part of their lives as TV was for me or radio for my parents. Everywhere we turn we hear more about visionary people recognizing how games can help trai[n] first responders, how they can help prepare surgeons, how t[h] can help kids manage pain, how they can help prepare air traffic controllers, and software engineers. Does it make an[y] sense to you that we can acknowledge all of this, but we can'[t] acknowledge that games can also help kids learn about the American revolution or the Middle Ages, that they can't hel[p] kids learn biology and physics, or that they can't help kids understand economics?

It doesn't make sense to me. And it doesn't make sense to Henry Kelly and Donald Thompson, and to many of you. A[nd] that's why this conference matters. It matters because the people here will form the advanced guard of a movement which will ensure that video games are integrated into the digital learning environment of the future. As I said, I am honored to welcome you at the start of such a noble cause.