

ASTRONAUT BIOGRAPHY



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Houston, Texas 77058

March 2016



Josh A. Cassada

(LT. Commander, U.S. Navy, Ph.D) NASA Astronaut

Summary:

Josh A. Cassada was selected as an astronaut by NASA in 2013. His astronaut candidate training included intensive instruction in International Space Station systems, spacewalks, robotics and T-38 flight training among other classes. Dr. Cassada was born in San Diego, California but considers White Bear, Minnesota as home. He completed his Ph.D. at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in 2000, and was commissioned as a naval officer in 2000, earning his wings of gold as a naval aviator in 2001. Cassada has accumulated more than 2,700 flight hours in 40 different aircraft and 23 combat missions. He currently serves in the International Space Station Integration Branch working issues in support of station crews.

Personal Data:

Born in San Diego, California, but considers his hometown to be White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Married to the former Megan Friedly of Charlevoix, Michigan. They have two children. Cassada's parents, Jack and Darlene Cassada, live in Punta Gorda, Florida.

Education:

Graduated from White Bear Lake Area High School, White Bear Lake, Minnesota in 1991. Earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Physics from Albion College, Albion, Michigan in 1995. He earned a Master of Arts Degree (1997) and a Doctorate (2000) in Physics with a specialty in high energy particle physics from the University of Rochester, Rochester, New York.

Experience:

Following completion of his Ph.D. thesis at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Dr. Cassada was commissioned as a naval officer in June 2000 and earned his wings of gold as a naval aviator in 2001. He began his operational flying career in 2002 with the Fighting Tigers of VP-8, stationed in Brunswick, Maine. As P-3C patrol plane commander, mission commander and instructor pilot, he was deployed to the Western Pacific, Mediterranean Sea and Central America, serving in various operations including Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and multiservice tsunami relief during Operation Unified Assistance. Following graduation from the U.S. Navy Test Pilot School in 2006, Dr. Cassada served as a developmental test pilot for the P-8A and P-3C in Patuxent River, Maryland. He was the P-8A Airworthiness Project Officer and lead test pilot for various Maritime Patrol & Reconnaissance Aircraft programs. Cassada then completed a tour as a T-38C and T-6A instructor pilot at the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, providing instruction in every phase of the fixed-wing curriculum. In 2011, he was assigned to DCMA Boeing Seattle as the Chief of Flight Operations, leading all aircraft operations and contract oversight for P-8A, KC-46, AWACS and USMC UAV while also executing the Navy's flight test acceptance of P-8A aircraft. He later co-founded Quantum Opus, LLC, providing high-speed, low-loss photon detectors to enable next-generation experiments in quantum optics, optical quantum computation, single-photon communication, low-flux biophotonics, and remote sensing. He has accumulated more than 2,700 flight hours in over 40 different aircraft and 23 combat missions.

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NASA Experience:

Dr. Cassada was selected in June 2013 as one of eight members of the 21st NASA astronaut class. His astronaut candidate training included scientific and technical briefings, intensive instruction in International Space Station systems, Extravehicular Activity (EVA), robotics, physiological training, T-38 flight training, and water and wilderness survival training. He completed astronaut candidate training in July 2015, and is now qualified for future assignment.

Awards/Honors:

Awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, including a Combat V, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and various unit commendations. Graduated summa cum laude from Albion College. Albion College Distinguished Alumnus. Recipient of U.S. Department of Education Teaching Fellowship and the University of Rochester Department of Physics and Astronomy Graduate Teaching Award.