



Genevieve A. Johnson

Through WISE, Johnson was able to do summer internships at JSC. The program provided her with real-world experience and insight into NASA's inner workings while exposing her to possible engineering career opportunities.

"My internship experiences ranged from maintaining astronaut training files to developing a software data download protocol. The experience provided me at Spelman College was, and will always be, immeasurable," Johnson said, who went on to earn dual bachelor's degrees in physics and electrical engineering from Spelman College and the Georgia Institute of Technology.

BRIAN BUTCHER
Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) Product Engineering Branch
Texas Aerospace Scholars and Co-op Program

When Brian Butcher realized he had a knack for writing computer programs, he never thought his journey would take him to the nation's space program.

"I had never considered working for NASA because I never realized how many different skills it takes to run the space program," Butcher said.

That all changed when he participated in the Community College Aerospace Scholars (CAS) program in 2004 to join other Texas community college students to design a Mars rover. There, he met NASA employees and learned about the agency's Co-op Program.

After returning to JSC to help at the next CAS event, he started his first co-op tour in the Information Resources Directorate in spring 2006. He is now in his second tour,

supporting the GFE Product Engineering Branch in the Engineering Directorate.

"I believe that if it were not for the CAS program, I would not be a co-op today," said Butcher.

GINGER KERRICK
Mission Operations Directorate
Summer Internship Program and Co-op Program

Growing up, flight director Ginger Kerrick had two goals: either to become a professional basketball player or an astronaut. A knee injury in junior high led her to focus on becoming an astronaut.

"Even in junior high, I realized that becoming an astronaut was a lofty goal, so I should aim for something that I would truly enjoy if I was unable to achieve that. I knew I wanted to work at NASA," said Kerrick.

After some research, she set her sights on JSC because "it seemed to be the focal point of operations supporting manned spaceflight, and that's what I wanted to be a part of."

It only took her a moment to turn down two other summer internships when she was offered a position in the NASA Summer Internship Program. She started in the summer of 1991 in the JSC Calibration Laboratory, but when she finished her internship, her mentor, Joe Olivarez, recommended that she transfer to the Co-op Program. Kerrick returned the following summer as a graduate co-op.

After spending 14 years at JSC, Kerrick is now a flight director in the Mission Operations Directorate. She is the lead flight director for Expedition 14.

DR. NOREEN KHAN-MAYBERRY
Environmental Factors Division
NASA Fellow

Dr. Noreen Khan-Mayberry had always wanted to discover the unknown and had ambitions to be a scientist at an early age. Like many other young children, she also dreamed of becoming an astronaut. With her parents' encouragement and frequent visits to JSC during her childhood, Khan-Mayberry had all the inspiration she needed.

"When I was in graduate school, I was selected for a NASA fellowship and worked in the Mars High Pressure Laboratory at JSC. After I earned my Ph.D., I heard NASA was recruiting from several universities—two of which were my alma maters—looking for scientists and engineers. I jumped at the opportunity, and here I am today. I love my career and would not trade it," said



Brian Butcher

Khan-Mayberry, who is in her third year as a space toxicologist in the Environmental Factors Branch at JSC.

Her group, Space Toxicology, sets human health standards for chemical exposure aboard spacecraft and evaluates systems and payload materials to determine crew exposure to toxins inherent in the shuttle and station environments. Using lessons learned from the Apollo era, the group is now investigating the possible toxic effects of lunar airborne dust for future trips to the moon.

MICHAEL ZOLENSKY
Space Scientist
National Research Council postdoctoral fellow

At 8 years old, Michael Zolensky had the heart of a scientist. Today, he is a geologist who manages a program at JSC to collect comet and asteroid grains entering Earth's atmosphere in search for clues to the origins of the universe.

Over the past 23 years, he has been part of the science teams for three missions: the Long Duration Exposure Facility, Stardust and Hayabusa—two of which successfully returned samples from space. He has also participated in meteorite recovery expeditions on five continents.

"I didn't set out to work for NASA, but came to JSC after graduate school, where I worked on nuclear waste disposal. In graduate school I became very adept at handling and analyzing microscopic samples, which is essential for my work here at JSC. I came here as a National Research Council postdoctoral fellow and was lucky enough to be working here when they had a need of a new mineralogist/geologist," Zolensky said.

ERIN REED
Mission Operations Directorate, Systems Division
Undergraduate Student Researcher Program and Co-op Program

Erin Reed was hired into the Motion Control Systems Group in May 2006. Since then, she has been training to be an Attitude Determination and Control Officer and will eventually fly the International Space Station from the ground.

However, it wasn't until after high school when she realized what she wanted to do with her life. When she read about the Mars Rover missions, she decided that she wanted to help send people to Mars and began her search for a job at NASA.

"I started in the Undergraduate Student Researcher Program and worked with the Advanced Thermal

Group in the Crew and Thermal Systems Division. I was able to get a lot of hardware and analysis experience in that group, and more than anything, I was able to get to know my management and show them what I was able to do," Reed said.

Then she discovered the Co-op Program.

"I knew if I could get into the Co-op Program I would be able to come back several more times. My manager and mentor were very encouraging and supported me every step of the way. Once I was in the program, there was no looking back!"



Erin Reed



From the spectacular Fourth of July launch to the smooth landing 13 days later, Space Shuttle *Discovery* and its crew made STS-121 look easy. The crew—Commander Steve Lindsey, Pilot Mark Kelly and Mission Specialists Mike Fossum, Piers Sellers, Lisa Nowak and Stephanie Wilson—delivered more than 28,000 pounds of equipment to the International Space Station, as well as a third crew member: European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Reiter. The flight included three spacewalks to test shuttle safety improvements and prepare the station for future assembly missions.

To read more about STS-121, go to: www.nasa.gov/shuttle



'We had a long but very successful mission.'

That's what a smiling Commander Steve Lindsey said of the 13-day, 5.3-million-mile journey to the International Space Station. "This crew sitting before you were just about as perfect as you can be on a flight. As commander, it was a privilege to be on this crew and serve with them."

Hundreds more photos from all aspects of STS-121, including launch, Mission Control support, spacewalks and landing, are available at www.nasa.gov.



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