

Veteran Space Shuttle Astronauts Selected for 2010 U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, Fla. (February 26, 2010) – Guion S. Bluford, Jr., Kenneth D. Bowersox, Frank L. Culbertson, Jr., and Kathryn C. Thornton will join an elite group of American space heroes as they are inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame® during a public ceremony at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex on Saturday, June 5, 2010. They will be welcomed to the ranks of legendary space pioneers like Neil Armstrong, John Glenn, Alan Shepard, Jim Lovell, Sally Ride and John Young – distinguished members of this unique Hall of Fame.

This is the ninth group of space shuttle astronauts named to the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame. Earlier inductees represent the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab and Apollo-Soyuz programs. The addition of Bluford, the first African American to fly in space; Bowersox, pilot of the first maintenance mission to restore the crippled Hubble Space Telescope; Culbertson, commander of the first space shuttle night landing at Kennedy Space Center; and Thornton, a mission specialist during the first three-person spacewalk, will bring the number of space explorers enshrined in the Hall of Fame to 77.

The 2010 inductees were selected by a committee of current Hall of Fame astronauts, former NASA officials and flight directors, historians, journalists and other space authorities. The process is administered by the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation, a non-profit organization established in 1984 to support students seeking degrees in science and technology. To be eligible, an astronaut must have made his or her first flight at least 17 years before the induction year and must be retired at least five years from the NASA astronaut corps. Candidates must be a U.S. citizen, NASA-trained, commander, pilot or mission specialist and must have orbited the earth at least once. Committee members receiving ballots evaluate not only an individual's flight accomplishments but also how he or she contributed to the success and future success of the U.S. Space Program in post-flight assignments.

Guion S. Bluford, Jr. (Ph.D.) (Colonel, USAF, Ret.), was the first African American to fly in space. During his 15 years in the astronaut program, he flew on four space shuttle missions.

As a mission specialist and flight engineer aboard STS-8, the first night launch and landing of the space shuttle, he assisted the commander and pilot in developing techniques for nighttime operations. Dr. Bluford also deployed the Indian National Satellite and operated the Continuous Flow Electrophoresis System.

In 1985, Dr. Bluford served as a mission specialist on STS-61A, and led the international on-orbit payload team in the training and on-orbit operations of 76 experiments in the German D-1 Spacelab.

In 1991, Dr. Bluford flew on STS-39, managing the operation of several experiments in support of the DOD Strategic Defense Initiative Office and then flew in 1992 on STS-53, a classified space shuttle flight.

Dr. Bluford has been a senior executive in several aerospace engineering organizations and has served on the boards of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), the National Research Council's Aeronautics and Space Engineering Board, the Aerospace Corporation, and the Space Foundation. Currently, he is the President of the Aerospace Technology Group, in Cleveland, Ohio.

Five-time space shuttle astronaut **Kenneth D. Bowersox (Captain, USN)** piloted the precedent-setting mission to the crippled Hubble Space Telescope (HST) in December 1993,

STS-61, capturing and restoring it to full capability through a record five spacewalks.

In June 1992, he served as pilot aboard STS-50, the first flight of the United States Microgravity Laboratory and the first Extended Duration Orbiter flight. Over a two-week period, the crew conducted a wide variety of experiments relating to materials processing and fluids physics.

Bowersox also flew three more shuttle missions, including commanding the laboratory's second flight for STS-73 in October 1995 and the second HST maintenance mission for STS-82 in February 1997. Launching on STS-113, he lived aboard the International Space Station as commander of Expedition-6 from November 2002 through May 2003. During the five-and-a-half-month stay, Bowersox performed two spacewalks, continuing the external outfitting of the orbital outpost. Due to the shuttle fleet being grounded after the Columbia accident, Expedition-6 was the first crew of U.S. astronauts to return to earth in the Russian Soyuz spacecraft.

Later, he served as director of Johnson Space Center's Flight Crew Operations Directorate. Currently, he is SpaceX Vice President of Astronaut Safety and Mission Assurance.

Frank L. Culbertson, Jr. (Captain, USN, Ret.) joined the astronaut corps in May 1984 and flew three space shuttle missions before leaving the corps in August 2002.

In November 1990, he piloted the STS-38 classified Department of Defense mission, which was the first space shuttle to land at Kennedy Space Center since 1985. Following the flight, Culbertson became Deputy Chief of the Flight Crew Operations Space Station Support Office and a team member for the early planning for Russian Space Station Mir operations.

He commanded STS-51 in September 1993, which successfully deployed both the Orbiting Retrievable Far and Extreme Ultraviolet Spectrometers/Shuttle Pallet Satellite (ORFEUS/SPAS), the first in a series of Astronomical SPAS missions and the first shuttle payload controlled from Kennedy Space Center, and the U.S. Advanced Communications Technology Satellite (ACTS/TOS). This mission concluded with the first night landing at Kennedy Space Center. Following STS-51, Culbertson served as Chief of the Astronaut Office Mission Support Branch, followed by an assignment as Chief of the Johnson Space Center (JSC) Russian Projects Office.

Culbertson became manager of the Shuttle-Mir Program in 1995 and managed nine shuttle docking missions over the next three years. Following this, he served as Deputy Program Manager of the International Space Station until assigned to the Expedition-3 crew. Culbertson launched on his final space shuttle flight aboard STS-105 in August 2001. The crew spent 129 days in space. Culbertson commanded the International Space Station for 117 days, including during the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and returned to Earth aboard STS-108 in December 2001. He has spent a total of 144 days in space.

Culbertson was employed as a Senior Vice President for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) for six years, overseeing space and climate-related programs. In 2008, he was named Senior Vice President and Deputy General Manager of the Advanced Programs Group at Orbital Sciences Corporation. In this role, he oversees all human spaceflight for the company.

Kathryn C. Thornton (Ph.D.) flew four space shuttle missions during her 12 years in the astronaut corps, from May 1984 through August 1996. During her second flight, she served as mission specialist throughout the first and only three-person spacewalk in May 1992.

Thornton first flew as mission specialist aboard the Department of Defense STS-33 mission in

November 1989, and again in 1992 aboard the maiden flight of space shuttle Endeavour, STS-49.

In December 1993, she served as mission specialist aboard the first Hubble Space Telescope (HST) repair mission, STS-61, alongside fellow inductee Ken Bowersox. Thornton partnered with astronaut Tom Akers on two spacewalks to replace the solar arrays, install corrective optics (COSTAR) and add additional computer memory.

In 1995, Thornton flew aboard space shuttle Columbia on STS-73 as the payload commander of the second United States Microgravity Laboratory mission. In completing her fourth spaceflight, Dr. Thornton orbited the Earth 256 times, traveled more than six million miles, and logged a total of 15 days, 21 hours, 52 minutes and 21 seconds in space.

Thornton has served on several influential boards and councils including the Mars Program Independent Assessment Team, the Stafford-Covey Return to Flight Task Group, and the National Research Council Aeronautics & Space Engineering Board and the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Air University. She has also co-authored an elementary science textbook series in partnership with NASA.

Thornton is currently the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs in the University of Virginia School of Engineering and Applied Science.

About the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony:

The public is invited to witness heroes honoring heroes at the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on Saturday, June 5, 2010. The Induction Ceremony is included with admission to Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

About Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex:

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex opens at 9 a.m. Closing times vary by season. The Visitor Complex is open daily except December 25 and certain launch days. Admission includes the Shuttle Launch Experience, Kennedy Space Center Tour, 3D IMAX[®] space films, Astronaut Encounter, all exhibits, and the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame[®], featuring historic spacecraft, simulator rides and the world's largest collection of personal astronaut mementos. Admission is \$38 + tax for adults and \$28 + tax for children ages 3-11. The Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex Commander's Club Annual Pass is \$50 + tax for adults and \$40 + tax for children ages 3-11. For more information, call 321-449-4444 or visit www.KennedySpaceCenter.com.

About the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation:

The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation participated in creating a venue where space travelers could be remembered – the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame, which opened in 1990. Since 2002, Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts at KSC, Inc., operators of Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex for NASA, has operated the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame. Today, the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation serves as a consultant for the Hall of Fame, which includes supervising the selection of astronauts for enshrinement into the Hall. The Foundation's mission is to aid the United States in retaining its world leadership in science and technology by providing scholarships to exceptional college students pursuing these degrees. To date, the Foundation has awarded more than \$2.8 million to deserving students nationwide. For more information, log on to www.AstronautScholarship.org or call 321-455-7015.

Editor's Note: Individual photos and detailed bios of the Inductees are available at <http://media.kennedyspacecenter.com/presskits/2010AHOFInduction>.

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