



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Astronaut Scholarship Foundation Introduces New Board of Trustees Members

Former NASA astronauts Leland Melvin and Joan Higginbotham, and 2011 Astronaut Scholar Zoe Dodge join ASF's Board of Trustees.

ORLANDO – The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation (ASF), a prestigious non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the brightest minds in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), is delighted to announce the appointment of former NASA astronauts Leland Melvin and Joan Higginbotham, and 2011 Astronaut Scholar Zoe Dodge to its esteemed board of trustees.

Melvin, Higginbotham and Dodge, bring a wealth of expertise and passion to support ASF's mission to aid the United States in retaining its world leadership in technology and innovation by supporting the very best and brightest scholars in STEM while commemorating the legacy of America's pioneering astronauts.

"We are thrilled to welcome all three of our new board members to the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation's Board of Trustees," said Lisa Schott, ASF's interim trustees chair. "Their impressive backgrounds, achievements and dedication to STEM education make them exceptional additions to our board. With their support, we are confident that we will continue to empower exceptional students to reach for the stars and make groundbreaking contributions in STEM."

Melvin is a former NASA astronaut, research engineer, and administrator from Virginia who has played an integral role in shaping the future of space exploration. He earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in chemistry at the University of Richmond in 1986 and a Master of Science in materials science engineering at the University of Virginia in 1989. He has a deep-rooted passion for education through his involvement as the head of NASA's education program, the co-chair on the White House's Federal Coordination in STEM Education Task Force, and the United States' representative and chair of the International Space Education board.

"As an astronaut, I've had the privilege of seeing the world from a very unique perspective and experiencing the power of education firsthand," said Melvin. "I am deeply committed to giving students opportunities to search the next frontier. Joining the Board of Trustees for the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation allows me to continue supporting future scientists, engineers and innovators who will shape our future as the next generation of Explorers."

Higginbotham is also a retired NASA astronaut, as well as an electrical engineer and rocket scientist who holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in electrical engineering from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, a Master of Science Degree in management from the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT), and a Master of Science Degree in space systems from FIT. She received numerous awards including World Who's Who of Women, Charlotte's (NC) 50 Most Influential Women, the NASA Exceptional Service Medal, Savoy Magazine's Top Influential Women in Corporate America. Currently, she's the President and CEO of Joan Higginbotham Ad Astra, an aerospace consulting firm.



“Being appointed to the ASF Board of Trustees means I have the good fortune to work with and inspire some of the best and brightest future STEM leaders and innovators; nurturing their potential and empowering them to shape a future where innovation knows no limits,” said Higginbotham.

Dodge is a 2011 Astronaut Scholar and accomplished medical scientist with experience in pharmaceuticals and medical devices and a strong commitment to fostering STEM diversity. After completing her Bachelors in zoology & French at Miami University, she then went on to do her doctorate in neuroscience at The Ohio State University with a focus on spinal cord injury and remyelination repair. Zoe has since then enjoyed a varied pharmaceutical career, starting first as a Medical Science Liaison with Osiris Therapeutics, followed by 5 years at AbbVie Rheumatology in both medical affairs and as a commercial marketing manager. Currently, she is Union Chimique Belge (UCB) Pharma’s first Thought Leader Liaison and has become a true 'scientist-marketer' with expertise in early commercialization and launch excellence.

“I’m honored to be a member of the ASF Board of Trustees,” said Dodge. “The Astronaut Scholarship had a huge impact on my undergraduate education. Beyond the generous financial support, the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation gave me an incredible experience and support network. I’m excited to give back to the next generation of Astronaut Scholars and join an outstanding, dedicated board.”

The ASF recognizes the critical role played by the board of trustees in maintaining the organization's mission, fundraising, and providing strategic leadership. The ASF board is committed to expanding its impact to support the brightest minds in STEM.

ASF was created in 1984 by the six surviving Mercury 7 astronauts (Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, John Glenn, Walter Schirra, Alan Shepard and Deke Slayton), Betty Grissom, William Douglas, and Henri Landwirth. The incredible efforts of these legends have shaped ASF’s mission to support and reward exceptional college students pursuing degrees in STEM. Over the past 39 years, more than \$8.3 million has been awarded to nearly 800 college students. To learn more about ASF, visit www.astronautscholarship.org.

About Astronaut Scholarship Foundation

The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation (ASF) is an Orlando-based, 501(c)3 nonprofit commemorating the legacy of America’s pioneering astronauts. Founded by the six surviving Mercury 7 Astronauts in 1984, ASF partners with industry leaders, universities, and individual donors to achieve its mission of supporting and rewarding exceptional college students pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of the Treasury policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

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