

CAPTAIN KAY HIRE

U. S. Navy (retired)



Captain Kay Hire is the 34th woman to travel in space. As a NASA Astronaut, she flew two Space Shuttle missions (STS-90 and STS-130) for a total of 711 hours in space.

On the STS-90 mission, she served as the Flight Engineer, science experiment operator, and test subject for the Neurolab mission. STS-90, the last flight of the “Spacelab”, focused on the effects of space on the brain and central nervous system. The crew performed 26 complicated life sciences experiments on themselves and more than 2000 animals, insects and fish. Many of the experiments now continue onboard the International Space Station (ISS).

On STS-130, Captain Hire flew the Space Shuttle to the ISS for an assembly mission. Using the robotic arms she installed Node 3 (Habitation Module) and the 7-windowed Cupola onto the ISS. She also led the transfer of 4500 pounds of cargo onto the ISS, and installed water recycling, air cleaning, and crew exercise equipment into the new Node 3 and the Cupola.

Captain Hire is originally from Mobile, Alabama. She graduated from the U. S. Naval Academy with the second year to include women. After earning her wings, she flew aboard specially configured Navy P-3 aircraft, conducting research missions to 25 countries worldwide.

When combat exclusion laws were changed in 1993, she became the first woman in the United States of America to be assigned to a military combat position, flying combat-missioned maritime patrol P-3 Orion aircraft.

Captain Hire worked as a Space Shuttle Engineer at the Kennedy Space Center supporting various phases of processing the Shuttle from landing through next launch for 40 missions. Upon selection by NASA to join the 15th Astronaut Group, Captain Hire transferred to the Johnson Space Center in 1995. In-between her training and spaceflights, she served in many positions for Space Shuttle and ISS operations, ranging from CAPCOM in Mission Control to Closeout Crew on the launch pad.

Captain Hire interleaved her U. S. Navy and NASA careers for 30 years. She holds a Master of Science in Space Systems from Florida Institute of Technology; is an MIT Seminar XXI Fellow, Foreign Politics, International Relations, and the National Interest; and Syracuse University, Maxwell School, National Security Management Fellow. Her awards include Defense Superior Service Medal, NASA Exceptional Service Medal, and USO Liberty Award.

As founder and president of Astra Portolan Corporation, Captain Hire now shares her NASA and Navy experience to guide individuals and organizations towards emerging space-related opportunities.