



National Space Club & Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 6, 2019

NATIONAL SPACE CLUB & FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Washington, DC - The National Space Club & Foundation is pleased to announce its Annual Award Recipients. The Awards are selected by panels of experts from across the aerospace and defense industry, government and academia and are a testament to the inspiring work of individuals across the United States. The Awards were presented at the 62nd Annual Robert H. Goddard Memorial Dinner at the Washington Hilton Hotel on Friday, March 22, 2019.

Recipients are:

Robert M. Lightfoot, Jr. will receive the Club's preeminent award, the **Dr. Robert H. Goddard Memorial Trophy**, in recognition of his exceptional service to this country and its space program. Following an impressive career spanning 30 years at NASA, Mr. Lightfoot retired last April after having served as the Acting Administrator for 15 months, the longest tenure for an acting administrator in the agency's history. Mr. Lightfoot led NASA at a critical time in the history of space - a time with more significant development activity than NASA has seen since Apollo. While Acting Administrator, he retained his permanent Chief Operating Officer role as NASA's Associate Administrator, the agency's highest-ranking civil service position. In addition, Mr. Lightfoot led seamless engagement between the agency and the White House in setting up the first National Space Council in 25 years, and in the development of Space Policy Directive-1 outlining a Moon-to-Mars focus. In his last public remarks before leaving NASA, he imparted some final guidance to the community on managing risk and increasing decision velocity by sharing the following: "My charge to each of you as I depart is 'strive every day to be a risk leader.' This amazing endeavor will never be without risk, however, remember the benefit - we will change the world."

Morgan Kopecky, a senior at Woodbridge High School, a competitive public school in Irvine, CA, is the recipient of the **Goddard Memorial Dinner Keynote Scholarship**. Ms. Kopecky plans to study mechanical or electrical engineering for application in a space-related field at Stanford University starting in the fall of 2019. Throughout high school, Ms. Kopecky has been a dedicated team leader of Irvine CubeSat, a team of students from five district high schools that have successfully assembled, launched, tracked and communicated with two mini-satellites in orbit. She enjoyed presenting the CubeSat communications system design to a team of NASA scientists and the district school board. Ms. Kopecky also enjoys research in the field of genetic engineering and has been working with a team of scientists at University of California-Irvine for the past eighteen months. Her additional interests include mentoring students in science fair competitions and traveling to Sacramento to lobby for additional funding for high school STEM classes. More than anything else, she believes that communication is the future of STEM. Ms.

Kopecky has a passion for communicating complex scientific concepts, as well as her own research, to non-STEM professionals and wants to use this passion to turn fear into curiosity to create change.

The **Delta II Program Team** will receive the **Nelson P. Jackson Award**. From its origin as the launch vehicle for the first GPS satellites to NASA's Earth observing, science and interplanetary satellites to vital commercial communication and imaging satellites, United Launch Alliance's Delta II rocket has earned its place in history. First launching in 1989, the Delta II has been the industry workhorse launching 155 missions, including 57 national security launches, 52 NASA science missions and 46 commercial flights. The Delta II also holds the record for launching more satellites in a 90-day period than any other launch vehicle to date – 5 missions (17 satellites) from June 10 to Aug. 17, 1999. Its resume also touts several interplanetary trips, including NASA's Mars rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, the MESSENGER spacecraft to Mercury, the Phoenix Mars lander, Stardust, as well as the planet-hunting Kepler observatory and the twin lunar-orbiting GRAIL spacecraft. On its most recent and final mission, it delivered NASA's Ice, Cloud and land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2), concluding an illustrious career with 100 consecutive successful launches. Throughout its almost 30 years of service, the Delta II rocket enabled technology to save lives, explore the universe and connect the world, and leaves a key legacy in the aerospace industry.

Claire Porter, Remote Sensing Lead and Co-Investigator at the Polar Geospatial Center, University of Minnesota, is the recipient of the **NOAA David Johnson Award**. Ms. Porter is being recognized for her innovative contributions to the automated production of precision digital elevation models from commercial satellite-based imagery. She constructed time-dependent elevation data for the entire Arctic and Antarctic – in just three years – using “Blue Waters,” the world's largest supercomputer based at an academic institution. Her achievements pave the way for the continuous production of global digital elevation models.

Lt Col Robert Johnson, Division Chief, Strategic Space Systems, Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office (AFRCO), is the winner of the **General Bernard Schriever Award**. Lt Col Johnson's acquisition leadership in 2018 transformed the way the Department of Defense procures its highest sensitivity space systems. He jumpstarted a first-ever resilient space acquisition program when he formed a 10-organization team in only five months; slashed a ten year program plan to deliver in 22 months; and delivered a one-of-kind president-directed strategic space and ground system to operational readiness while increasing the mission capacity by 600 percent. Lt Col Johnson also stood up a brand-new division executing a \$3B+ portfolio with 600+ personnel in over 30 organizations tuned to deliver rapid space capabilities to the warfighter.

Kirk Shireman, Manager, International Space Station Program, NASA Johnson Space Center, will receive the **Astronautics Engineer Award** for his leadership in the development of the International Space Station. Beginning in 2006 as a deputy program manager, he spearheaded the station's design, assembly and the final pressured module in 2011. Through his exceptional talent as an engineer, manager, and leader, Mr. Shireman has successfully led the space station program from assembly to utilization and now in the integration and execution. Mr. Shireman was also presented with the Eagle Manned Mission Award by the National Space Club in 2013.

Koki Machin, Chief Engineer, Orion Parachute System, NASA, will receive the **Eagle Manned Mission Award** for completing Orion's final parachute drop test in September 2018. Orion's parachutes are critical to the safe return of astronauts from deep space missions. Rigorous

ground testing and 47 flight demonstration tests pushed the system to its limits, culminating in the highly successful final qualification test. Knowledge gained through this test program has been shared with commercial spacecraft providers, ensuring reliable parachute system development across the entire portfolio of NASA's new human spacecraft.

Irene Klotz, Space Editor, Aviation Week & Space Technology, will receive the **Press Award**. For more than 30 years, Ms. Klotz has been reporting on America's space program and sharing her deep knowledge of the industry with the world. Currently Ms. Klotz serves as the space editor for Aviation Week. Before joining Aviation Week, she spent 25 years as a wire services reporter covering human and robotic spaceflight, commercial space, astronomy, science and technology for Reuters and United Press International. She also worked with Discovery Communications, Discovery News and was a founding member of Space.com. Ms. Klotz's tremendous background and thorough understanding spans the entire depth and breadth of the complex issues and technical programs of the space industry. From the early days of her career at Florida Today, to her current editorial role at Aviation Week, Ms. Klotz's career has been an example of detailed, professional space journalism at its best.

Colonel Timothy J. Lincoln, United States Air Force, will receive the **Dr. Joseph V. Charyk Award**. In his role as Principal Deputy Director, Mission Operations Directorate, National Reconnaissance Office, Colonel Lincoln consistently delivered transformational outcomes of national significance. His leadership in the stand-up of the National Space Defense Center and the establishment of an integrated enterprise Operations Center have significantly contributed to the resilience and survivability of National Reconnaissance Office missions. The distinctive accomplishments of Colonel Lincoln reflect great credit upon himself, the National Reconnaissance Office, and the United States of America.

Andrew Fraknoi, Professor at the Fromm Institute of the University of San Francisco and Emeritus Chair of the Astronomy Department at Foothill College, San Francisco, will receive the **Space Educator Award** for his career as an award-winning astronomy educator, innovator, author, and key link communicating our expanding knowledge of the universe as it has unfolded over the past four decades. His books, textbooks, virtual curriculum, public activities, and interaction with students and audiences numbering in the thousands have inspired and engaged the American public in the exploration of space and the space enterprise.

Jacob Blocker, student at Oswego High School, Oswego, IL, is the winner of the **Olin E. Teague Scholarship**. Mr. Blocker is being recognized for his research on unconventional rocket propellant combinations. In "Nature of Reverse Hybrid Rocket Engine Combustion," he explored strengths and shortfalls of propellant combinations that use solid oxidizer sources and gaseous liquid fuel seldom used in rocket engines. While he concludes that reverse hybrid rocket propellants theoretically show potential to take the place of ordinary hybrid rockets in the future, more testing is needed especially about the internal engine pressure. His work serves well for future research.

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Individuals and organizations interested in attending the 62nd Annual Robert H. Goddard Memorial Dinner on Friday, March 22, 2019 at the Washington Hilton, may find more information on our website www.spaceclub.org. For specific questions, please contact the Space Club at info@spaceclub.org or by calling 202-547-0060.