Three veteran space shuttle astronauts recently joined an elite group of American space heroes as they were inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame during a ceremony on April 20 at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

Bonnie Dunbar, Curt Brown and Eileen Collins were welcomed to the ranks of legendary space pioneers by Hall of Fame members from the 50-year history of America's human spaceflight programs.

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, who also is a member of the Astronaut Hall of Fame, joined other pioneers such as Buzz Aldrin, Charlie Duke and Bob Crippen in honoring the trio of new Hall of Fame inductees. Kennedy Space Center Director Bob Cabana, who is also a Hall of Fame member,

welcomed the trio back to the Florida spaceport.

Bob Cabana: "Much has changed here at Kennedy Space Center since these three were flying space shuttles. But one thing that hasn't changed is our desire to excel and explore beyond the bounds of planet Earth."