



**Alicia Simpson**

EXP. 34/35 TRAINING INTEGRATOR

**Kelly Humphries**

NASA PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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00:00:00,556 --> 00:00:02,236  
>> Humphries: Today we have here  
with us a special guest here

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00:00:02,236 --> 00:00:06,346  
in Mission Control, and  
this is Alicia Simpson

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00:00:06,456 --> 00:00:09,486  
who is an Expedition  
34/35 Training Integrator.

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00:00:10,056 --> 00:00:11,506  
Welcome to the console, Alicia.

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00:00:11,506 --> 00:00:11,866  
>> Simpson: Thank you.

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00:00:11,866 --> 00:00:12,306  
Thank you.

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00:00:12,306 --> 00:00:12,806  
Pleasure to be here.

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00:00:12,806 --> 00:00:14,136  
>> Humphries: Really  
nice to have you here.

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00:00:14,236 --> 00:00:14,916  
>> Simpson: Thank you.

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00:00:14,916 --> 00:00:16,276  
>> Humphries: And  
we're very interested

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00:00:16,276 --> 00:00:19,406  
in what an integrator  
for training does.

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00:00:19,896 --> 00:00:22,266

>> Simpson: Well, the increment integrator is the one

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00:00:22,266 --> 00:00:24,446

that we take all of the pieces of the puzzle

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00:00:24,446 --> 00:00:25,356

and we put it together.

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00:00:25,636 --> 00:00:27,556

The crew is assigned, and we have to send them

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00:00:27,556 --> 00:00:30,516

to different parts of the world to train, and so my job is

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00:00:30,516 --> 00:00:33,556

to make sure that I have allocated enough time for them

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00:00:33,556 --> 00:00:37,596

to train in Russia, in the U.S., in Japan, Canada, ISA,

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00:00:37,976 --> 00:00:40,676

and so that's the integrating part of my job.

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00:00:40,826 --> 00:00:43,196

>> Humphries: And that takes place over how long of a period?

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00:00:43,516 --> 00:00:45,416

>> Simpson: It's two and a half years as a training flow.

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00:00:45,466 --> 00:00:47,246

So I actually get  
started prior to the two

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00:00:47,246 --> 00:00:49,096

and a half years building  
the training plan,

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00:00:49,096 --> 00:00:50,556

working with the  
international partners,

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00:00:50,556 --> 00:00:53,936

making sure that we've allotted  
enough time in each country

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00:00:53,936 --> 00:00:55,306

to get the crew trained  
and ready to go.

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00:00:56,016 --> 00:00:57,236

>> Humphries: Okay,  
well the travel part

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00:00:57,236 --> 00:00:59,796

of that must be a lot of fun  
to get that all planned out.

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00:00:59,956 --> 00:01:00,156

>> Simpson: Yes.

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00:01:00,206 --> 00:01:00,296

Yes.

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00:01:01,166 --> 00:01:04,086

>> Humphries: So what did  
you do to prepare this crew

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00:01:04,146 --> 00:01:05,856

for their upcoming launch?

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00:01:06,306 --> 00:01:10,676

>> Simpson: I coordinated  
a lot of international,

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00:01:10,726 --> 00:01:12,566

with the partners with regards

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00:01:12,636 --> 00:01:14,256

to how long are you  
going to be in Russia?

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00:01:14,256 --> 00:01:15,436

What do you need them to do?

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00:01:15,726 --> 00:01:18,576

What do they need to know  
as far as Japan is concerned

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00:01:18,576 --> 00:01:20,466

and Jack's experiments  
and things like that?

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00:01:20,816 --> 00:01:23,626

So I was able to do  
that, negotiate the time

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00:01:23,626 --> 00:01:26,486

because you have to go back and  
forth negotiating because some

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00:01:26,676 --> 00:01:28,986

of these launches don't move if  
you don't finish the training.

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00:01:28,986 --> 00:01:31,276

So you have to make sure  
that you have enough time

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00:01:31,276 --> 00:01:33,916  
to get training in, and so  
that's what I did for this crew.

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00:01:34,326 --> 00:01:34,646  
>> Humphries: Okay.

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00:01:35,326 --> 00:01:37,786  
Well, are you excited  
about the upcoming mission?

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00:01:37,946 --> 00:01:39,926  
>> Simpson: I am very  
excited because I have worked

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00:01:39,926 --> 00:01:42,746  
with these gentlemen  
for almost 3 years.

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00:01:43,046 --> 00:01:45,596  
We've gone through a  
lot of things of trying

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00:01:45,596 --> 00:01:47,466  
to make sure everything  
is ready.

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00:01:47,466 --> 00:01:48,336  
They're comfortable.

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00:01:48,336 --> 00:01:51,216  
They're very excited, and  
so I am very, very excited.

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00:01:51,746 --> 00:01:52,626  
>> Humphries: And were  
they good students?

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00:01:52,626 --> 00:01:53,916  
>> Simpson: They were

very good students.

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00:01:53,916 --> 00:01:54,066

>> Humphries: Okay.

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00:01:54,176 --> 00:01:54,316

Good.

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00:01:54,396 --> 00:01:55,336

>> Simpson: Cream of the crop.

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00:01:55,336 --> 00:01:56,496

>> Humphries: [Laughter]

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00:01:56,496 --> 00:01:59,566

And what's the most  
challenging part of your job?

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00:02:00,666 --> 00:02:04,466

>> Simpson: It is making sure  
that the crew is comfortable

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00:02:04,466 --> 00:02:06,996

and you've given them all  
that you think that they need.

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00:02:07,146 --> 00:02:07,856

You know, you want...

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00:02:07,856 --> 00:02:10,396

you get the requirements from  
the program, and you say,

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00:02:10,396 --> 00:02:12,066

"These are the things  
you need to train to do,"

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00:02:12,066 --> 00:02:13,926

but you also want to make

sure that they're comfortable,

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00:02:14,246 --> 00:02:15,716

and that if they  
feel, you know, "Hey,

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00:02:15,776 --> 00:02:17,386

I think I need a little  
brush up on this,"

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00:02:17,386 --> 00:02:19,736

or "I'd like to see this  
one more time," to make sure

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00:02:19,736 --> 00:02:21,786

that you've allotted  
for time in the schedule

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00:02:22,006 --> 00:02:24,746

so that they can get those  
warm fuzzies and just make sure

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00:02:24,746 --> 00:02:27,316

that they're comfortable  
and ready to go as well.

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00:02:27,806 --> 00:02:29,316

>> Humphries: I imagine  
that you're really happy

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00:02:29,316 --> 00:02:31,846

when they call down  
during the mission and say,

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00:02:32,146 --> 00:02:33,346

"This is just like  
the training."

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00:02:33,546 --> 00:02:33,736

>> Simpson: Yes.

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00:02:34,296 --> 00:02:34,526

>> Humphries: Okay.

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00:02:34,776 --> 00:02:35,006

>> Simpson: Yes.

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00:02:35,436 --> 00:02:36,506

Yes. Very happy

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00:02:37,356 --> 00:02:39,246

>> Humphries: What's the favorite part of your job?

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00:02:39,446 --> 00:02:40,556

>> Simpson: Watching them on the launch pad

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00:02:41,136 --> 00:02:43,256

because that means that they're done.

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00:02:43,726 --> 00:02:46,656

They have gone through the training.

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00:02:46,656 --> 00:02:47,946

They are very comfortable.

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00:02:47,946 --> 00:02:49,356

They are always very excited.

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00:02:49,356 --> 00:02:51,796

They are always smiling, and so that makes me feel like,

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00:02:51,796 --> 00:02:54,246

"Yes I have done everything that I was supposed to do

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00:02:54,246 --> 00:02:56,146

to make sure that they  
are in their happy place

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00:02:56,426 --> 00:02:57,346

and they're on the launch pad."

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00:02:57,566 --> 00:02:57,936

Love it.

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00:02:58,496 --> 00:02:59,016

>> Humphries: Great.

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00:02:59,516 --> 00:03:01,396

Well tell me what...

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00:03:01,516 --> 00:03:02,656

you work for a different  
company.

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00:03:02,656 --> 00:03:03,876

You don't directly  
work for NASA.

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00:03:03,876 --> 00:03:04,416

Who do you work for?

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00:03:04,416 --> 00:03:05,806

>> Simpson: I work for  
the United Space Alliance

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00:03:05,806 --> 00:03:07,736

as a contractor, and I've been

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00:03:07,736 --> 00:03:09,896

with the company  
since March of '99.

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00:03:09,896 --> 00:03:11,256

So I'm coming up on 14 years.

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00:03:11,496 --> 00:03:11,896

>> Humphries: Wow.

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00:03:11,946 --> 00:03:13,106

Congratulations on that.

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00:03:13,366 --> 00:03:13,646

>> Simpson: Thank you.

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00:03:13,906 --> 00:03:15,286

>> Humphries: And how long...

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00:03:15,366 --> 00:03:17,116

So you've been working  
there 14 years.

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00:03:17,116 --> 00:03:19,326

Is that your first experience  
with working with NASA?

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00:03:19,556 --> 00:03:19,726

>> Simpson: Yes.

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00:03:20,186 --> 00:03:21,676

Yes, and I've worked, you know,

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00:03:21,676 --> 00:03:23,516

this is not my first  
job with NASA.

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00:03:23,516 --> 00:03:26,216

So I've worked shuttle flights  
as well as station flights.

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00:03:26,296 --> 00:03:27,296

So it's very exciting.

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00:03:28,106 --> 00:03:29,656

>> Humphries: Well, and  
tell me what got you

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00:03:29,656 --> 00:03:30,766

into the space business.

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00:03:30,766 --> 00:03:31,476

Where are you from?

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00:03:31,476 --> 00:03:32,316

Where did you go to school?

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00:03:32,946 --> 00:03:34,106

>> Simpson: [Laughter]

That's a really funny story

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00:03:34,106 --> 00:03:37,186

because I went to school at  
the University of Minnesota,

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00:03:37,536 --> 00:03:39,916

and my degree is  
actually in criminology.

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00:03:40,116 --> 00:03:40,946

So it's...

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00:03:41,356 --> 00:03:42,366

Yeah, I know.

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00:03:42,596 --> 00:03:46,046

It's not something I hope to  
ever use here, but it does help

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00:03:46,046 --> 00:03:48,996

with negotiating skills

and tactics and being able

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00:03:48,996 --> 00:03:50,906

to put the puzzle together

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00:03:51,026 --> 00:03:52,636

because that's what  
criminologists do.

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00:03:52,746 --> 00:03:54,056

You know, you're  
always trying to figure

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00:03:54,056 --> 00:03:56,656

out how this happened,  
and so it was...

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00:03:57,026 --> 00:03:59,136

it actually was very  
good training to be able

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00:03:59,136 --> 00:04:01,196

to be an integrator and  
put the pieces together.

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00:04:02,156 --> 00:04:02,486

>> Humphries: Wow.

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00:04:02,636 --> 00:04:04,616

That's something I  
wouldn't have expected,

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00:04:05,056 --> 00:04:07,846

and so obviously you've  
learned how to apply that,

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00:04:07,846 --> 00:04:10,026

and being in Minnesota,

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00:04:10,026 --> 00:04:11,776

you probably know a little  
bit what the crew's going

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00:04:11,776 --> 00:04:13,856

through out there in those  
record cold temperatures today.

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00:04:14,196 --> 00:04:14,616

>> Simpson: Oh, yeah.

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00:04:14,786 --> 00:04:17,826

I know exactly what it's like  
being out there in the cold,

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00:04:17,826 --> 00:04:20,646

and frankly I don't  
miss it, and...

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00:04:20,646 --> 00:04:23,116

but, as I said, for them,  
like I said, they're so happy,

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00:04:23,116 --> 00:04:25,556

they're so excited that they  
probably don't even feel

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00:04:25,556 --> 00:04:26,016

the cold.

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00:04:26,406 --> 00:04:28,756

That's how I would be when  
I was at a football game.

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00:04:28,756 --> 00:04:31,756

I just tuned it out because I  
was so excited to be there, but,

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00:04:31,966 --> 00:04:33,156

yes, it is very, very cold.

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00:04:33,156 --> 00:04:33,956

I can only imagine.

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00:04:33,956 --> 00:04:37,656

I think it's maybe minus 30  
in [inaudible] sun right now.

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00:04:37,716 --> 00:04:38,836

So I remember those days well.

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00:04:39,676 --> 00:04:39,936

>> Humphries: Right.

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00:04:40,796 --> 00:04:41,136

All right.

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00:04:41,136 --> 00:04:42,636

Well, is there anything  
else that we haven't talked

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00:04:42,636 --> 00:04:43,836

about that we ought to, Alicia?

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00:04:44,666 --> 00:04:47,946

>> Simpson: No, just, you  
know, what we do is so unique,

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00:04:47,946 --> 00:04:51,406

and I just really want everyone  
to know that this experience is

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00:04:51,456 --> 00:04:54,446

so humbling when you're  
watching them in space

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00:04:54,446 --> 00:04:57,286

and they're doing things that  
are going to help all of us,

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00:04:57,746 --> 00:05:01,426

and it is just such a  
wonderful, vibrant place to work

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00:05:01,426 --> 00:05:03,916

that I could not have  
dreamed being anywhere else.

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00:05:04,196 --> 00:05:04,626

I love it.

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00:05:05,286 --> 00:05:07,286

>> Humphries: Well, thank you  
so much for being with us today,

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00:05:07,706 --> 00:05:11,426

Alicia Simpson, Training  
Integrator for Expedition 34/35,

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00:05:11,426 --> 00:05:13,526

and we're all pulling  
for your crew

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00:05:13,526 --> 00:05:15,616

to have a smooth launch  
and docking and...

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00:05:15,616 --> 00:05:15,906

>> Simpson: Thank you.

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00:05:16,156 --> 00:05:18,326

>> Humphries: Looking forward to  
all those activities as they...

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00:05:18,846 --> 00:05:21,426

and those smiles on their faces  
when we see them on Wednesday.

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00:05:21,696 --> 00:05:22,256

>> Simpson: They'll be big.

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00:05:22,656 --> 00:05:23,206

>> Humphries: Thanks a bunch.