



1
00:00:01,276 --> 00:00:04,326
>> Dr. Koichi Wakata was
born and raised in Saitama,

2
00:00:04,326 --> 00:00:06,296
a bedroom community of Tokyo.

3
00:00:06,946 --> 00:00:09,916
He remembers watching the first
moon landing on television

4
00:00:09,916 --> 00:00:11,646
and wishing he could
fly in space,

5
00:00:12,216 --> 00:00:14,966
but since there were no
Japanese astronauts then,

6
00:00:15,226 --> 00:00:17,486
he put the dream
aside as impractical.

7
00:00:17,986 --> 00:00:19,186
But he had other interests,

8
00:00:19,286 --> 00:00:21,756
including baseball
and airplanes.

9
00:00:22,436 --> 00:00:26,526
>> I was very fascinated
by airplanes ever

10
00:00:26,526 --> 00:00:30,096
since I was a small
boy, and I always wanted

11
00:00:30,096 --> 00:00:36,786

to become an engineer or a pilot
to make and fly an airplane.

12

00:00:37,226 --> 00:00:40,496

>> Wakata pursued that
dream at Kyushu University

13

00:00:40,496 --> 00:00:42,036

where he earned a
bachelor's degree

14

00:00:42,036 --> 00:00:45,706

in Aeronautical Engineering and
a master's in Applied Mechanics

15

00:00:46,016 --> 00:00:47,346

and then started his career

16

00:00:47,346 --> 00:00:50,166

as a structural engineer
for Japan Airlines.

17

00:00:50,686 --> 00:00:53,626

Two years later when Japan's
space agency advertised

18

00:00:53,626 --> 00:00:58,446

for astronaut candidates, Wakata
applied and was selected in 1992

19

00:00:58,446 --> 00:01:00,026

to begin astronaut training

20

00:01:00,196 --> 00:01:02,426

at NASA's Johnson Space
Center in Houston.

21

00:01:02,426 --> 00:01:06,886

In 1996 he was Japan's
first-ever space shuttle mission

22

00:01:06,886 --> 00:01:10,336
specialist on a flight where
he ran the shuttle's robot arm

23

00:01:10,456 --> 00:01:12,546
to deploy and retrieve
satellites.

24

00:01:13,046 --> 00:01:15,996
In 2000 he used his
robotics expertise again

25

00:01:16,196 --> 00:01:19,076
on the shuttle flight that
installed the Z1 truss

26

00:01:19,076 --> 00:01:20,816
and a pressurized mating adapter

27

00:01:20,996 --> 00:01:22,556
on the International
Space Station.

28

00:01:22,676 --> 00:01:26,266
After he finished his doctorate
in Aeronautical Engineering

29

00:01:26,266 --> 00:01:30,736
from Kyushu University in 2004,
he completed training in Russia

30

00:01:30,736 --> 00:01:33,756
as a Soyuz spacecraft
flight engineer and then

31

00:01:33,756 --> 00:01:37,906
in 2009 became Japan's first
space station crew member

32

00:01:38,136 --> 00:01:41,366

as a part of Expeditions
18, 19, and 20,

33

00:01:41,786 --> 00:01:45,516

and expanded his robotics
repertoire to include Canadarm2,

34

00:01:45,516 --> 00:01:50,326

Dextre, and the robotic arm on
Japan's Kibo laboratory module.

35

00:01:50,956 --> 00:01:53,496

He's eager to keep doing what
he can to prepare the way

36

00:01:53,496 --> 00:01:56,916

for future exploration
and improve life on earth.

37

00:01:57,046 --> 00:02:01,266

>> I think we can gain new
knowledge, new technologies,

38

00:02:01,556 --> 00:02:05,306

that we'd benefit in our daily
life on the ground by going

39

00:02:05,306 --> 00:02:10,706

to space, and also I strongly
believe human space program is a