



Astronaut

at a Glance

1
00:00:04,971 --> 00:00:08,775
We hung out all the time at the
local air park and I got to hang

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00:00:08,775 --> 00:00:12,011
out with flying people which
really kind of got in to my

3
00:00:12,011 --> 00:00:13,012
blood.

4
00:00:13,012 --> 00:00:15,515
My dad shared his passion he had
for flying and our whole family

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00:00:15,515 --> 00:00:18,084
spent time out there with him.

6
00:00:18,084 --> 00:00:20,387
And so I knew somewhere along
the way I was going to do

7
00:00:20,387 --> 00:00:22,122
something with flying.

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00:00:22,122 --> 00:00:25,058
And when it came time to choose
which school I wanted to go to

9
00:00:25,058 --> 00:00:27,794
after graduating from high
school, I was really, really

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00:00:27,794 --> 00:00:32,065
fortunate that the local
community college at the time,

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00:00:32,065 --> 00:00:37,103
Saint Petersburg Junior College

which was in my neighborhood,

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00:00:37,103 --> 00:00:40,740
has this really neat program
called Aviation Administration.

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00:00:40,740 --> 00:00:42,942
And as part of that you could
earn your private pilot's

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00:00:42,942 --> 00:00:43,943
license.

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00:00:43,943 --> 00:00:47,881
And that really set me up nicely
to go on to university where I

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00:00:47,881 --> 00:00:51,484
decided to study aeronautical
engineering because I thought,

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00:00:51,484 --> 00:00:55,388
"Wow, you know I want to fly,"
and ended up at Embry-Riddle

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00:00:55,388 --> 00:00:56,990
Aeronautical University.

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00:00:56,990 --> 00:01:00,293
And it ended up being the best
choice I think I could have ever

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00:01:00,293 --> 00:01:01,294
made.

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00:01:01,294 --> 00:01:05,665
It really I think was one of the
things that set me up best for

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00:01:05,665 --> 00:01:07,634
what I ended up doing later.

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00:01:07,634 --> 00:01:11,604
I have a master's degree as well
from the University of Central

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00:01:11,604 --> 00:01:15,108
Florida and that is really an
industrial engineering based

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00:01:15,108 --> 00:01:16,109
degree.

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00:01:16,109 --> 00:01:18,845
I started working at Kennedy
Space Center after graduating

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00:01:18,845 --> 00:01:23,917
from school, I was with a group
of young folks, young engineers,

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00:01:23,917 --> 00:01:27,387
who were brought in to
the shuttle program.

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00:01:27,387 --> 00:01:29,856
And what our management at the
time discovered was that a lot

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00:01:29,856 --> 00:01:35,128
of us didn't have any real like
project management background

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00:01:35,128 --> 00:01:37,764
that went, you know -- A lot of
engineering schools at the time

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00:01:37,764 --> 00:01:40,400
didn't incorporate that

in to the curriculum.

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00:01:40,400 --> 00:01:44,337

And I was fortunate because Embry-Riddle had done that, but

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00:01:44,337 --> 00:01:48,675

our management decided to work with the University of Central

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00:01:48,675 --> 00:01:54,380

Florida and put together a very kind of focused program that

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00:01:54,380 --> 00:01:57,784

allowed us to get this project management experience.

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00:01:57,784 --> 00:02:02,355

And they offered me a job here at Johnson Space Center in

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00:02:02,355 --> 00:02:06,593

aircraft ops, flying on this really cool airplane called the

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00:02:06,593 --> 00:02:09,863

shuttle training aircraft that basically simulated what the

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00:02:09,863 --> 00:02:12,765

landing profile of the shuttle would be.

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00:02:12,765 --> 00:02:16,503

And after 2 years of doing that job they had another astronaut

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00:02:16,503 --> 00:02:18,838

selection -- Was very

fortunate, actually.

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00:02:18,838 --> 00:02:22,442

I feel blessed, again pinch
myself kind of stuff, to have

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00:02:22,442 --> 00:02:23,977

been selected in 2000.

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00:02:23,977 --> 00:02:28,181

My first flight assignment was
to a long duration space flight.

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00:02:28,181 --> 00:02:30,617

And that was for
Expedition's 20, 21.

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00:02:30,617 --> 00:02:32,752

They kind of overlapped in the
timeframe I was going to be

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00:02:32,752 --> 00:02:33,820

there.

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00:02:33,820 --> 00:02:37,524

And when I flew that first
mission I went up on a shuttle

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00:02:37,524 --> 00:02:38,625

and came down on a shuttle.

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00:02:38,625 --> 00:02:42,962

So I flew up on STS 128 which
was a Discovery flight and a

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00:02:42,962 --> 00:02:47,133

little over 3 months later
came home on Atlantis STS 129.

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00:02:47,133 --> 00:02:49,969

To be parts of those crews
was really important to me.

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00:02:49,969 --> 00:02:52,071

I think I did a good job
while I was up there.