

Gustavo Martinez
Propulsion Engineer



1
00:00:07,822 --> 00:00:10,398
One of the hardships that I had to get

2
00:00:10,433 --> 00:00:12,454
through in order to get a good, quality

3
00:00:12,489 --> 00:00:16,301
education was to cross the border, every

4
00:00:16,336 --> 00:00:20,029
day, from Ciudad Juarez to El Paso, Texas.

5
00:00:20,064 --> 00:00:22,318
Because I have a dual citizenship, I was

6
00:00:22,353 --> 00:00:24,750
living in Mexico. Therefore, as a 16 year

7
00:00:24,780 --> 00:00:26,945
old, I had to wake up every day at 4 a.m.

8
00:00:26,985 --> 00:00:28,854
in the morning in order to go through

9
00:00:28,889 --> 00:00:31,558
customs, back and forth, everyday. My

10
00:00:31,593 --> 00:00:33,790
name is Gustavo Martinez and I work in

11
00:00:33,825 --> 00:00:35,470
the Liquid Engines System Branch here

12
00:00:35,505 --> 00:00:37,910
at Marshall Space Flight Center. My first

13
00:00:37,945 --> 00:00:40,422

memory of NASA as a kid was when my

14

00:00:40,457 --> 00:00:42,182

father took me to Johnson Space Center

15

00:00:42,217 --> 00:00:45,558

around my sophomore year of high

16

00:00:45,593 --> 00:00:47,710

school. They took us to see Building 9,

17

00:00:47,745 --> 00:00:50,862

which is called the mockup facility. Where

18

00:00:50,897 --> 00:00:52,838

they have a lot of mockups of the shuttle

19

00:00:52,873 --> 00:00:55,710

and the International Space Station. I

20

00:00:55,745 --> 00:00:58,446

remember, well, Johnson Space Center is

21

00:00:58,481 --> 00:01:01,870

where they train astronauts. So, it was

22

00:01:01,905 --> 00:01:05,702

very exciting. I was always interested in

23

00:01:05,737 --> 00:01:08,374

math and science. It was always the two

24

00:01:08,409 --> 00:01:10,094

subjects that I paid most attention in

25

00:01:10,129 --> 00:01:12,534

high school, or in middle school or in

26
00:01:12,569 --> 00:01:15,590
elementary school. I remember I was

27
00:01:15,625 --> 00:01:17,734
never really good at reading or, you

28
00:01:17,769 --> 00:01:22,790
know, Spanish. But, math, it was such

29
00:01:22,825 --> 00:01:24,598
a natural thing for me. One of my

30
00:01:24,633 --> 00:01:26,622
biggest inspirations was Mr. Ralph Shock,

31
00:01:26,657 --> 00:01:28,886
my chemistry teacher in Las Cruces,

32
00:01:28,921 --> 00:01:31,463
New Mexico. He introduced us to Carl

33
00:01:31,498 --> 00:01:34,670
Sagan and Stephen Hawking. He instilled

34
00:01:34,705 --> 00:01:39,230
the love for space and space travel and

35
00:01:39,265 --> 00:01:40,630
thanks to that I started researching

36
00:01:40,665 --> 00:01:43,310
about NASA and that's how I really got

37
00:01:43,345 --> 00:01:47,141
hooked into space travel and propulsion

38
00:01:47,176 --> 00:01:49,278

and thanks to that I'm a propulsion

39

00:01:49,313 --> 00:01:52,262

engineer now. My most rewarding

40

00:01:52,297 --> 00:01:54,030

experience here at NASA has been

41

00:01:54,065 --> 00:01:56,206

being part of the team that is testing

42

00:01:56,241 --> 00:01:58,214

the RS-25 engines for the Space Launch

43

00:01:58,249 --> 00:02:00,598

System. It's always exciting to see how

44

00:02:00,633 --> 00:02:03,510

everyone, or even me as an individual,

45

00:02:03,545 --> 00:02:05,958

can contribute to the journey to Mars.

46

00:02:05,993 --> 00:02:08,918

I would totally go on the journey to

47

00:02:08,953 --> 00:02:11,678

Mars. Its always been my dream to be

48

00:02:11,713 --> 00:02:13,470

an astronaut. I actually applied to the

49

00:02:13,505 --> 00:02:16,166

astronaut corps a couple years ago and

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00:02:16,201 --> 00:02:18,910

I am planning to apply again, for sure.

51
00:02:18,945 --> 00:02:23,605
Daniel Olivas, the astronaut, is a good

52
00:02:23,640 --> 00:02:25,766
example of what I would like to

53
00:02:25,801 --> 00:02:28,622
become. He is a role model to me.

54
00:02:28,657 --> 00:02:31,942
Being of Hispanic descent, he represents

55
00:02:31,977 --> 00:02:35,718
what a lot of Hispanic-descent people

56
00:02:35,753 --> 00:02:38,110
in the STEM fields would like to become.

57
00:02:38,145 --> 00:02:40,590
I'm very thankful for my mother. I was

58
00:02:40,625 --> 00:02:43,351
raised in a single-parent household.

59
00:02:43,386 --> 00:02:46,318
And, thanks to that, my mother was

60
00:02:46,353 --> 00:02:49,078
able to teach me the values of hard

61
00:02:49,113 --> 00:02:52,654
work and resilience. And I'm the person

62
00:02:52,689 --> 00:02:55,830
who I am right now thanks to her. As a

63
00:02:55,865 --> 00:02:57,775

first generation American of Hispanic

64

00:02:57,810 --> 00:03:00,006

descent, of Mexican descent, Hispanic

65

00:03:00,041 --> 00:03:01,806

Heritage Month means to me the

66

00:03:01,841 --> 00:03:03,982

recognition of all the hard work and

67

00:03:04,017 --> 00:03:07,526

all the successes that Hispanic Heritage

68

00:03:07,561 --> 00:03:10,846

people have had here in the U.S. My

69

00:03:10,881 --> 00:03:12,822

advice for anyone that wants to pursue

70

00:03:12,857 --> 00:03:16,661

a STEM career would be to never give

71

00:03:16,696 --> 00:03:19,574

up. It's always great to be able to block