



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY



1
00:00:01,589 --> 00:00:03,500

Hello, I'm LeVar Burton.

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00:00:03,500 --> 00:00:10,050

And it's my pleasure to salute a man Charlie Bolden -- a man who has devoted his life to

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00:00:10,050 --> 00:00:11,470

public service.

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00:00:11,470 --> 00:00:15,660

And in doing so broke down barriers and help America reach new heights.

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00:00:15,660 --> 00:00:21,500

From the segregated South to space, Charlie Bolden's journey has served to shape a true

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00:00:21,500 --> 00:00:22,800

leader.

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00:00:22,800 --> 00:00:27,020

His service in the military, as an astronaut, and as the Administrator of NASA have created

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00:00:27,020 --> 00:00:30,619

a legacy of breathtaking accomplishments.

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00:00:30,619 --> 00:00:34,460

After a distinguished military career, as a marine aviator, Charlie was accepted to

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00:00:34,460 --> 00:00:36,300

NASA's astronaut corps.

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00:00:36,300 --> 00:00:40,880

One of the first African American astronauts, he flew to space four times aboard the space

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00:00:40,880 --> 00:00:45,760
shuttle, piloting the Hubble Space Telescope
to orbit and commanding the first crew to

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00:00:45,760 --> 00:00:48,149
include a Russian cosmonaut.

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00:00:48,149 --> 00:00:52,789
Resuming his military career, Bolden rose
to the rank of major general before retiring.

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00:00:52,789 --> 00:00:55,780
But that wasn't to last too long.

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00:00:55,780 --> 00:00:59,460
Charlie's reputation caught the attention
of President Barack Obama, who nominated him

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00:00:59,460 --> 00:01:04,839
to become NASA's first African American Administrator.

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00:01:04,839 --> 00:01:09,729
Charlie oversaw the nation's space program
during a challenging transition from the flagship

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00:01:09,729 --> 00:01:13,540
Space Shuttle Program to its ongoing journey
to Mars.

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00:01:13,540 --> 00:01:18,409
For more than 7 years, he led the agency through
a remarkable transformation and toward its

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00:01:18,409 --> 00:01:21,819
most amazing modern accomplishments.

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00:01:21,819 --> 00:01:26,109
His advocacy for the International Space Station
helped extend the mission of the orbiting

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00:01:26,109 --> 00:01:31,999
laboratory through at least 2024 and saw the station begin to reach its full potential

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00:01:31,999 --> 00:01:35,789
as a springboard to the rest of the solar system.

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00:01:35,789 --> 00:01:40,840
Charlie's intrepid support made it possible for NASA to engage private industry with two

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00:01:40,840 --> 00:01:45,889
cargo resupply companies currently providing regular service to the station, with a third

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00:01:45,889 --> 00:01:48,920
to come in the next phase of the program.

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00:01:48,920 --> 00:01:53,810
Resuming launches of American astronauts from the U.S. has been a top NASA priority, and

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00:01:53,810 --> 00:01:58,810
as Charlie ends his tenure, NASA is on the cusp of that achievement, with two commercial

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00:01:58,810 --> 00:02:03,659
companies contracted for crew transport making rapid progress with their systems, and astronauts

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00:02:03,659 --> 00:02:06,759
readying for the first test flight.

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00:02:06,759 --> 00:02:12,569
NASA will return to deep space aboard the most powerful rocket ever built the Space

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00:02:12,569 --> 00:02:17,319

Launch System and the Orion crew capsule that leapt from drawing boards to testing during

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00:02:17,319 --> 00:02:19,209

Charlie's time at NASA.

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00:02:19,209 --> 00:02:23,661

Orion has already traveled to space, and an integrated flight of the SLS rocket and the

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00:02:23,661 --> 00:02:28,159

crew capsule is set for late 2018.

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00:02:28,159 --> 00:02:32,950

Technology continued to drive exploration under Bolden with advances in entry, descent

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00:02:32,950 --> 00:02:37,230

and landing, solar electric propulsion and other capabilities we'll use for tomorrow's

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00:02:37,230 --> 00:02:38,230

missions.

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00:02:38,230 --> 00:02:43,989

And science never slept under Bolden's leadership, with the agency sending the cutting edge Curiosity

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00:02:43,989 --> 00:02:49,260

rover to the Red Planet to search for evidence of conditions favorable to life and prepare

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00:02:49,260 --> 00:02:51,640

for human missions.

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00:02:51,640 --> 00:02:57,000

The astronaut who will take the first human steps on Mars and the scientists who will

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00:02:57,000 --> 00:03:01,599
discover the next great breakthrough that
makes that step possible might very well be

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00:03:01,599 --> 00:03:04,540
sitting in a classroom right here in Washington,
D.C.

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00:03:04,540 --> 00:03:09,599
As New Horizons flew by Pluto in an historic
first encounter, NASA gained images and data

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00:03:09,599 --> 00:03:12,069
from the farthest edge of our solar system.

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00:03:12,069 --> 00:03:18,410
The solar powered Juno is currently gathering
new and intriguing information about our biggest

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00:03:18,410 --> 00:03:20,110
neighbor, Jupiter.

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00:03:20,110 --> 00:03:25,640
The new age of cosmic discoveries that Charlie
helped launch with Hubble will advance in

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00:03:25,640 --> 00:03:32,489
2018 with the James Webb Space Telescope,
whose construction has been completed.

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00:03:32,489 --> 00:03:38,069
Charlie's favorite planet is Earth, and he
championed an unprecedented fleet of Earth

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00:03:38,069 --> 00:03:43,620
observation satellites, including the Orbiting
Carbon Observatory and LandSat 8 as well as

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00:03:43,620 --> 00:03:47,569

instruments aboard the space station, that are helping us better understand our home.

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00:03:47,569 --> 00:03:53,810

A noted pilot himself, Charlie brought new energy to an Aeronautics program that continues

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00:03:53,810 --> 00:03:59,689

to pioneer new air traffic management technologies as well as promising work in green fuel, the

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00:03:59,689 --> 00:04:05,939

next generation of supersonic flight and morphing wings that adapt to conditions.

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00:04:05,939 --> 00:04:10,870

Tomorrow's air and space pioneers have always looked to Charlie for example and encouragement,

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00:04:10,870 --> 00:04:17,250

and perhaps his greatest legacy is the inspiration he has given countless students around the

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00:04:17,250 --> 00:04:22,780

world to help encourage a new generation of explores.

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00:04:22,780 --> 00:04:28,210

Charlie Bolden's impact as an explorer will grow and expand as our nation continues to

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00:04:28,210 --> 00:04:34,400

reach higher in air and space, Sending humans deeper into space than ever before, eventually

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00:04:34,400 --> 00:04:36,000

on to Mars.

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00:04:36,000 --> 00:04:43,570

We'll continue to do what it takes to turn

science fiction into science fact.

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00:04:43,570 --> 00:04:47,640

And to make the impossible, possible.

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00:04:47,640 --> 00:04:54,849

It's because of each and every one of you
that I can say right now with great confidence

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00:04:54,849 --> 00:04:58,030

the state of our NASA is strong.

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00:04:58,030 --> 00:04:59,030

(Applause)

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00:04:59,030 --> 00:05:07,800

Thank you, Charlie Bolden, for propelling
us even farther on our journey of discovery

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00:05:07,800 --> 00:05:08,930

and exploration.