

A stylized graphic with a purple and orange gradient background. A satellite is shown in the upper left, emitting a bright light. A large, dark purple sphere is on the left. A series of curved, glowing lines in shades of purple and orange sweep across the lower half of the image. The text "GRAVITY ASSIST" is centered in white, bold, italicized capital letters.

***GRAVITY
ASSIST***

1

00:00:00,320 --> 00:00:06,560

My first summer internship at Kennedy Space Center, I got to see one of the shuttle launches,\h\h

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00:00:06,560 --> 00:00:10,080

and that first shuttle launch and watching that spacecraft go into the air and\h\h

3

00:00:10,080 --> 00:00:12,480

hearing the noise and watching the alligators jump out of the\h\h

4

00:00:12,480 --> 00:00:16,160

water because it was so noisy for them was just so inspiring.

5

00:00:17,200 --> 00:00:23,760

How did Earth become what it is today, and is it really special? Why do we exist here today?\h\h

6

00:00:25,280 --> 00:00:28,960

These are the types of questions that made me the scientist that I am now.

7

00:00:28,960 --> 00:00:34,720

Hi, I'm Jim Green, NASA'S Chief Scientist, and this is Gravity Assist podcast.

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00:00:36,640 --> 00:00:39,760

In this season of Gravity Assist, we're going to go behind the scenes\h\h

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00:00:39,760 --> 00:00:44,160

at NASA and we're going to hear from the scientists engineers and others that work\h\h

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00:00:44,160 --> 00:00:48,182

so hard to make these amazing space missions happen.

11

00:00:48,182 --> 00:00:54,513

And I always like to ask my guests to tell me what that person, place or thing

12

00:00:54,513 --> 00:00:58,438

or event that happened to them that got them so\hexcited

13

00:00:58,438 --> 00:01:03,840

about being the space professional they\h
are today. I call that their gravity assist.

14

00:01:05,600 --> 00:01:11,600

When I was about seven, I was riding in the\h
family car with my father. And on the radio,\h\h

15

00:01:11,600 --> 00:01:17,240

we heard about John Glenn orbiting the Earth. And\h
I remember asking my Dad, what's that mean? And\h\h

16

00:01:17,240 --> 00:01:21,920

and he explained it to me. And I thought, I want\h
to do that. I want to be an astronaut someday.

17

00:01:23,040 --> 00:01:28,080

There was in the course catalog, "Ices\h
and Oceans in the Outer Solar System"\h\h

18

00:01:28,080 --> 00:01:34,960

taught by Carl Sagan, where I first learned\h
about Europa and about Titan and Triton.

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00:01:36,560 --> 00:01:40,640

If there was a sort of pivotal gravity assist for me,\h\h

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00:01:40,640 --> 00:01:44,560

it was in my senior year when\h
I took my first geology course.

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00:01:44,560 --> 00:01:49,440

I'm a farm boy from Southern Indiana.\h
So we had dark skies on that farm.\h\h

22

00:01:49,440 --> 00:01:53,840

And all you had to do is look up
and see all those stars and wonder.

23

00:01:54,480 --> 00:01:59,680

I would say that my gravity assists are not
engineer or scientists but actually my parents.

24

00:01:59,680 --> 00:02:04,720

So i would say that's the gravity
assist in my life getting to NASA,

25

00:02:04,720 --> 00:02:08,080

is the people who loved and
supported me through the years.

26

00:02:08,080 --> 00:02:14,960

What was your gravity assist? Tell us on
social media using the hashtag gravityassist