



NEWS

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El Camino College to Present Space Science Day 2014

El Camino College welcomes NASA Astronaut Col. Douglas H. Wheelock to Onizuka Space Science Day 2014, scheduled from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 8 at the college's planetarium and science classrooms.

Sponsored by El Camino College and American Honda Motor Co., Inc., and coordinated by the El Camino College Astronaut Ellison Onizuka Memorial Committee, the event is dedicated to Ellison Onizuka, a Space Shuttle Challenger astronaut who perished along with six other crew members during the tragic events of 1986. It is free and open to serious-minded science students in grades five through 12.

Wheelock began astronaut candidate training in August 1998, assigned to the Astronaut Office International Space Station Operations Branch as a Russian Liaison. In 2001, he became the crew support astronaut for the International Space Station Expedition 2 and Expedition 4 crews. He then became a capsule communicator (CAPCOM) in the Mission Control Center in Houston. In January 2005, Wheelock was assigned to the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center (GCTC) in Star City, Russia, as NASA's Director of Operations - Russia. He was the primary liaison between Star City and NASA operations in Houston, including medical, training, science, contracting, public affairs and administration departments.

Wheelock has flown aboard the space shuttle, the International Space Station and the Russian Soyuz TMA spacecraft. He has accumulated more than 178 days in space and has conducted six spacewalks totaling 43 hours and 30 minutes. His experience outside of the station includes four contingency spacewalks to repair a torn solar array and replace a failed ammonia pump module.

After earning a bachelor's degree in applied science and engineering from the United States Military Academy, West Point, Wheelock went on to earn a master's degree in aerospace engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology.

Wheelock received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Infantry from West Point in May 1983. He completed his military career as the Commander of the U.S. Army Space & Missile Defense Command - NASA Detachment. Wheelock is a veteran of three combat tours and 38 combat missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He is also a dual-rated Master Army Aviator and has logged more than 7,000 flight hours in 46 different rotary and fixed-wing aircraft and spacecraft. He is an FAA-rated commercial pilot in single- and multi-engine land craft, rotorcraft and gliders.

He has received numerous medals for his service to the United States and to the space program.

During Onizuka Space Science Day, Astronaut Wheelock will make a presentation to students before they join classroom activities and demonstrations led by El Camino College professors, students, and guests from JPL and other institutions.

To register, contact SpaceDay@elcamino.edu. For more information go to www.elcamino.edu/academics/naturalsciences/onizuka-space-science-day/ or call 310-660-3487.

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