

Bell, Larry Encyclopedia Article

Bell, Larry

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Bell, Larry

American Space Architect, Professor, and Entrepreneur 1938-

Larry Bell is well known internationally for his contributions to the design of space habitats and systems, including the International Space Station. He founded and heads the Sasakawa International Center for Space Architecture (SICSA) at the University of Houston, where he has taught since 1978.

Bell is a licensed architect and urban planner, and was a successful industrial designer for years before moving to Houston. His entrepreneurial nature has made him a key figure in the drive toward private exploration of space rather than through federally-funded programs. One of the companies he co-founded evolved into Veridian, a high-tech company, which employs more than 6,000 people.

In 1987, Bell founded SICSA with a \$3 million gift from a Japanese philanthropic organization. SICSA is an important gathering place for the next generation of space architects, who have taken on several projects for NASA and leading aerospace companies.

Bell's main challenge is designing for extreme conditions that do not exist on Earth. "It requires some imagination to be a space architect," he said. "I encourage my students to develop their fundamental thinking skills, which are even more important than technical training. If we can learn to plan for the extreme conditions of space, we might be able to prevent our entire planet from becoming an extreme environment."

See Also

Habitats (Volume 3).

Internet Resources

Husain, Yasha. "Designing Our Future in Space." *Space.com*.
<http://www.space.com/people/interviews/space_architects_001117.html>