

Sullivan, Kathryn Encyclopedia Article

Sullivan, Kathryn

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Sullivan, Kathryn

American Astronaut and Geologist 1951-

Kathryn Sullivan became the first American woman to walk in space when she left the space shuttle Challenger in October 1984 to conduct experiments demonstrating the feasibility of satellite refueling. Sullivan received a bachelor of science degree with honors in earth sciences from the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1973 and a doctorate in geology from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia in 1978.

Sullivan was selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in January 1978 as an astronaut candidate and became an astronaut in August 1979. She has flown on three shuttle missions: STS-41G in 1984, on which she performed her history-making space walk;* STS-31 in April 1990, which deployed the Hubble Space Telescope; and STS-45 in March 1992, where she served as payload commander for the first Spacelab mission dedicated to NASA's Mission to Planet Earth. During the Spacelab mission Sullivan and her crewmates measured the chemical and physical properties of Earth's atmosphere, providing scientists with information that has improved our understanding of the planet's climate and atmospheric circulation.

Sullivan left NASA in August 1992 to become chief scientist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). She is president and chief executive officer of the Center of Science and Industry in Columbus, Ohio.

Astronaut Kathryn D. Sullivan, 41-G mission specialist, readies her binoculars for a magnified Earth view through the forward cabin windows of Challenger. Sullivan was the first woman to walk in space.

*A space walk is also known as an extravehicular activity or EVA.

See Also

History of Humans in Space (Volume 3);; Mission Specialists (Volume 3);; Space Shuttle (Volume 3);; Space Suits (Volume 3);; Space Walks (Volume 3);; Women in Space (Volume 3).; Space Shuttle (Volume 3);; Space Suits (Volume 3);; Space Walks (Volume 3);; Women in Space (Volume 3).

Nadine Barlow

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Briggs, Carole S. *Women in Space: Reaching the Last Frontier*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 1988.

Internet Resources

NASA Astronaut Biography. <<http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/sullivan-kd.html>>.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. <<http://www.noaa.gov>>.