Dr. Jeanette Epps Biography



Dr. Jeanette Epps was born and raised in Syracuse, New York, She obtained her Bachelors of Science in physics from LeMoyne College and later received a Masters and PhD in aerospace engineering from the University of Maryland. During her graduate studies she was part of the rotor-craft research group and selected as a NASA Fellow. Her research focused on the comprehensive testing of composite swept-tip beams, comparison of analytical models with experimental results for shape memory alloys, and the use of shape memory alloy actuators for tracking helicopter rotor blades in-flight.

After graduating, Dr. Epps worked as a researcher at the Ford Motor Company where she was awarded two patents for her work in vibration dampening and front collision location detection. Following her work at Ford, Dr. Epps joined the CIA, serving 7 years as a Technical Intelligence Officer, which included a tour in Iraq supporting the search for weapons of mass destruction.

In June 2009, Dr. Epps was selected as one of 14 candidates for the 20th class of NASA astronauts. Her training included spacewalk training, robotics, geology, outdoor leadership and wilderness survival, Russian language immersion, and extensive flight time in the T-38, an aircraft in which she has accumulated over 830 hours. Dr. Epps was flight qualified on the Russian Soyuz vehicle and cross-trained on the Boeing Starliner before being assigned to the SpaceX Dragon capsule as part of NASA's Crew-8 mission to the ISS. Along the way she participated in numerous training events that included a 9-day stint in an underwater habitat with a NASA team developing techniques for asteroid mining; and later conducted nearly three weeks of mountaineering and spelunking training that culminated in a five day exploration of a Slovenian cave system.

On March 3rd 2024, Dr. Epps launched to the International Space Station as part of SpaceX Crew-8 and NASA's Expedition 71. During her almost eight months in orbit, she served as a flight engineer working on numerous scientific research projects as well as supporting routine ISS operations and maintenance. Following a successful and highly eventful mission, she and her crew splashed down on October 25th, off Pensacola, Florida.