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Profile of Nicole P. Stott

Mary Frost

Nicole P. Stott was born on November 19, 1962 in Albany, NY, but she considers Clearwater, FL to be her hometown. She is married to Christopher Stott of the Isle of Man and they are blessed with one beautiful child. Nicole graduated from Clearwater High School, Clearwater, FL in 1980; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 1987; and a Master of Science degree in Engineering Management from the University of Central Florida in 1992. She is an instrument rated private pilot.

After graduating from Embry-Riddle, Nicole worked as a structural design engineer with Pratt and Whitney Government Engines in West Palm Beach, FL where she spent a year with the Advanced Engines Group performing structural analyses of advanced jet engine component designs. In 1988, she moved on to a career with NASA. She started work with NASA at the Kennedy Space Center (KSC) as an Operations Engineer in the Orbiter Processing Facility helping to prepare space shuttles for launch. Nicole held several other positions at KSC including Convoy Commander, Flow Director for Endeavour, Orbiter Project Engineer for Columbia, and ISS Truss Element Project Lead.

In 1998, she joined the Johnson Space Center (JSC) team as a member of the NASA Aircraft Operations Division, where she served as a Flight Simulation Engineer on the Shuttle Training Aircraft (STA). She has been awarded the NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal and NASA Certificates of Commendation. Nicole was selected as a mission specialist astronaut in July 2000 - the 18th class of astronauts, nicknamed the Bugs. After completion of astronaut candidate training, she was assigned technical duties within the astronaut office in support of ISS payloads, as an ISS Capcom, and as a station Crew Support Astronaut. In 2006 she earned the title Aquanaut as a crewmember on the NEEMO 9 mission where she lived and worked with a 6 person crew for 18 days on the Aquarius undersea research habitat. She will launch as a mission specialist with the crew of STS128 and will remain on board the ISS as a flight engineer and member of one of the first 6 person crews as part of Expeditions 20 and 21, and after a long duration mission of about 4 months on station she will return to Earth as a mission specialist with the crew of STS129.

http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/stott-np.html

1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

Though I am not involved directly with the satellite business, as an ISS crewmember I guess I can say that I soon will be a satellite in low Earth orbit. My career with NASA started at Kennedy Space Center working with Shuttle processing. Working primarily in the Orbiter Processing Facility, my job was all about making sure the Shuttle was ready for launch and for it's on-orbit mission and then safe return to Earth.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

As an ISS crewmember, I will be involved with the continuing operation of the ISS and also with the day to day operation of the research activities on board. Every one of these activities is supportive of figuring out how we can move forward with future long duration missions off our planet and utilize innovative technologies in order to most effectively do this.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

Would have to say that being selected as a NASA astronaut was the greates opportunity. I'm thankful every day for the amazing opportunities I had with NASA at the Kennedy Space Center and Johnson Space Center, and for the incredible people that became my mentors and encouraged me to apply for the astronaut office.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

Believing in myself enough to take the advice of my mentors.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

As we move to 6 person crew onboard ISS this month and we transition from the assembly to the utilization phase on ISS, I'm encouraged that we will be learning more and more about humans living and working in space. I think we have the opportunity to learn some amazing things from the science activities on ISS that will help improve our lives both on and off our planet.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

To not think about the choice in terms of being a woman. I've found that opportunities have been available to me every step of the way and I never felt like being a woman had an influence (positively or negatively) on these opportunities.