U. S. Astronaut Hall of Fame® at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex to Welcome Veteran NASA Astronauts Bernard Harris and Peggy Whitson to the 2025 Class of Honorees

Induction scheduled for May 31, 2025

CAPE CANAVERAL (January X, 2025) – KENNEDY SPACE CENTER – The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation's Curt Brown has announced the 2025 U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame inductees. Veteran NASA astronauts Bernard Harris and Peggy Whitson will join the 109 astronauts who have been inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame, located at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

"The U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame welcomes two exceptional and trailblazing veterans of the space program who contributed significantly to NASA's mission and program," said Curt Brown, board chairman of the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation, which stewards the selection process. "Harris and Whitson continue to serve as exemplary role models in their post-NASA careers. What a tremendous honor to induct them into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex."

An official ceremony and gala will take place at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex on May 31, 2025. Set against the historic and stunning backdrop of the Space Shuttle Atlantis®, the ceremony will be attended by a number of astronaut legends. Following the induction, the newest Hall of Fame members will be celebrated at an evening black-tie event hosted by the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation.

Both Harris and Whitson had careers with NASA beyond the time they served as astronauts, with Harris working with NASA for 10 years and Whitson for 37 years. Currently, Harris works in the venture capital field, while Whitson has continued her passion for space and exploration as astronaut and director of human spaceflight at Axiom Space.

Bernard Harris, MD, MBA, FACP, STS-55 & STS-63

Since 1986, Dr. Harris has served the space program, at NASA Ames Space Flight Center, NASA Johnson Space Flight Center and NASA Headquarters in various roles as research scientist, flight surgeon, astronaut, and advisor. During his NASA career, Dr. Bernard Harris conducted research in musculoskeletal physiology and clinical investigations of space adaptation, where he developed in-flight medical devices to extend Astronaut stays in space.

A veteran astronaut for more than thirty years, Harris served as mission specialist on STS-55 and was the Payload Commander on STS-63. He has logged more than 438 hours and traveled more than 7.2 million miles in space.

On February 9, 1995, Harris became the first African American to perform an extra-vehicular activity during the second of his two Space Shuttle flights.

Harris is currently CEO & Managing Partner of Vesalius Ventures, Inc. – a venture capital firm, that invests in early to mid-stage Healthcare technologies and companies. Previously, he served as CEO and Executive Director of the National Math & Science Initiative, leading the organization's efforts to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement in communities across the country. He has been involved in math and science education for more than 25 years through his philanthropy as founder of the Harris Institute & Foundation.

A member of the Board of Directors for Raytheon Technologies, MassMutual, Solventum and U.S. Physical Therapy, Harris also served as a Board Director/Trustee for Salient Midstream & MLP Fund and Salient MF Trust, Barings Fund and BBDC. Additionally, he is on the nonprofit boards of the Texas Medical Center (past Chair), the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation and the Harris Institute & Foundation.

Harris earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Houston, a Master of Medical Science from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, a Master of Business Administration from the University of Houston and a Doctorate of Medicine from Texas Tech University School of Medicine. Harris completed a Residency in Internal Medicine at the Mayo Clinic, a National Research Council Fellowship in Endocrinology at the NASA Ames Research Center and trained as a Flight Surgeon at the Aerospace School of Medicine, Brooks Air Force Base. He is also a licensed private pilot and certified scuba diver.

Harris has received numerous prestigious awards. Among them are nine honorary doctorates, two NASA Space Flight Medal, the NASA Award of Merit, the National Space Grant Distinguished Services Award and the James Bryant Conant Award. He also is a fellow of the American College of Physicians, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the recipient of the 2000 Horatio Alger Award and 2024 Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award.

In addition to his other notable accomplishments, Harris is the author of “Dream Walker: A Journey of Achievement and Inspiration” and “Embracing Infinite Possibilities: Letting Go Of Fear To Find Your Highest Potential”.

Peggy Whitson, Ph.D., STS-111, ISS Expedition 5, STS-113, ISS Expedition 16, ISS Expedition 50/51/52

Peggy Whitson, Ph.D., grew up on a farm outside of Beaconsfield, Iowa, with her siblings and parents, who were farmers. She decided to become an astronaut after she watched the first moon landing on television as a child in 1969.

As an astronaut, she flew on three NASA long-duration space flights and served as commander of Axiom Mission 2 (Ax-2), accumulating 675 days in space, more than any other American astronaut or woman astronaut in the world.

Whitson has more than 38 years of space and science experience combined with NASA and Axiom Space. Throughout her career, she has held various positions, including NASA’s Chief of the Astronaut Office, two-time Commander of the International Space Station (ISS), Chair of NASA’s Astronaut Selection Board, NASA Operations Branch Chief, NASA Deputy Division Chief for both Medical Sciences and the Astronaut Office, and co-chair of the US/Russian Mission Science Working Group.

During her three NASA missions to the ISS (Expeditions 5, 16 and 50/51/52), Whitson conducted 10 spacewalks – totaling more than 60 hours – and performed hundreds of research experiments. On her first long-duration ISS mission on Expedition 5, she was named the first NASA science officer, conducting 21 investigations in human life sciences and microgravity sciences, as well as commercial payloads. Throughout her career she has contributed to hundreds of experiments in biology, biotechnology, physical and Earth science and welcomed several cargo spacecraft delivering tons of supplies and research experiments.

On Axiom Mission 2 (Ax-2), she became the first female commander of a private astronaut mission, adding to her accomplishments as the first female commander of the ISS and the first female and nonmilitary Chief of NASA’s Astronaut Office. Whitson will command her second commercial human spaceflight mission to the ISS, Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4), targeted to launch no earlier than spring 2025 from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Whitson received degrees in biology and chemistry from Iowa Wesleyan University and a doctoral degree in biochemistry from Rice University. She has been honored with various NASA medals in leadership, outstanding leadership, and exceptional service, as well as National Air and Space Museum’s Micheal Collins Lifetime Achievement Award (2024), Forbes 50 Over 50, Innovation (2023), Glamour's

Woman of the Year (2017), TIME 100 Most Influential People in the World (2018), and Women in Aviation Lifetime Achievement Award (2017) among numerous other prestigious awards.

U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction Process and Eligibility

Each year, inductees are selected by a committee of Hall of Fame astronauts, former NASA officials, flight directors, historians and journalists. The process is administered by the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation. To be eligible, an astronaut must have made his or her first flight at least 15 years before the induction. Candidates must be a U.S. citizen and a NASA-trained Space Shuttle Commander, Pilot, Mission Specialist, or an International Space Station (ISS) Commander or Flight Engineer who has orbited the Earth at least once.

The U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame was spearheaded more than 30 years ago by the six surviving Mercury 7 astronauts. In November 2016, a new U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame opened at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex, as part of the Heroes & Legends attraction.

The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation (ASF) participated in creating a venue where space travelers could be remembered – the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame, which opened in 1990. Today, the foundation serves as a consultant for the Hall of Fame, which includes conducting the selection process of astronauts for enshrinement by an outside committee. The Foundation's mission is to aid the U.S. in retaining its world leadership in science and technology by providing scholarships to extraordinary college students who exhibit motivation, imagination and exceptional performance in these fields, and facilitate programs to educate the public about the impact and importance of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education in the United States. Since the inception of ASF, more than $9 million in scholarships have been distributed to more than 850 exceptional students in the fields of STEM at 48 university partners across the country with support from astronauts from the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab, Space Shuttle and Space Station programs who participate in this educational endeavor. For more information, visit www.AstronautScholarship.org.

About Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

Go beyond imagination and into something real at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. Get up-close to real flight flown artifacts, meet a veteran NASA astronaut, feel the rumble of a rocket launch and so much more. Just 45 minutes from Orlando, Fla., Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex opens daily at 9 a.m. with closing times varying by season. The popular, two-day ticket, which can be used for up to six months from purchase and averages a cost of less than $45 per day, is now available for $89 per adult and $79 per child. Single-day admission is $75 per adult, $65 per child. For more information, call 877-313-2610 or visit www.KennedySpaceCenter.com.

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Media Contacts:
Lauren Eisele Walbert, lwalbert@kopublicaffairs.com, 443-683-0294

Russell Bruhn, RBruhn@delawarenorth.com, 321-213-5926