

THE NATIONAL SPACE SOCIETY TO RECOGNIZE FORMER ASTRONAUT CHRIS FERGUSON WITH ITS INAUGURAL ANITA GALE MEMORIAL AWARD

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, FL, UNITED STATES,
March 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National

Space Society will honor former NASA and Boeing astronaut Chris Ferguson with the inaugural Anita Gale Memorial Award for exemplary service to the space community at its [International Space Development Conference](#)® (ISDC®), which will be held in Orlando, Florida from June 19-22, 2025. Ferguson will keynote at the conference.

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*Karlton Johnson, NSS CEO and
Chairman of the Board of
Governors*

Ferguson was selected as a NASA astronaut in 1998 and was the Deputy Chief of the Astronaut Office prior to his first space shuttle mission. He was the pilot for STS-115 in 2006 and commanded STS-126 in 2008. His final mission for NASA was also the final flight of the shuttle program, STS-135, which he also commanded. All three missions were in support of the International Space Station.

Ferguson retired from NASA in 2011 and became the Director of Crew and Mission Operations for Boeing’s CST-100/Starliner program and was later selected to command

its first test flight but retired from the program before the flight occurred. Prior to his NASA career, Ferguson served with the U.S. Navy, flying F-14s and attending the highly selective Top Gun program. He further attended and taught at the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School. He holds a B.S. in mechanical engineering from Drexel University and an M.S. in aeronautical engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School.

“The inaugural Anita Gale Memorial Award is being awarded to Mr. Ferguson for his long and outstanding service to the space community, both at NASA and beyond,” said Karlton Johnson, NSS CEO, Chairman of its Board of Governors, and retired Air Force colonel. “Beginning with a sterling military record, he commanded three highly successful missions in the space shuttle, including its final flight. His efforts on Boeing’s Starliner helped to advance NASA’s Commercial Crew program in its earliest days. It is our honor to name him as the recipient of the very first

Anita Gale Memorial Award.”

The Anita Gale Memorial Award is named after former NSS CEO and long-time NSS board member Anita Gale who had a long and outstanding career as an aerospace engineer. She started working on the space shuttle program in 1974 with Rockwell International in Downey, California, and held three U.S. patents on launch vehicle payload interface standardization and containerization. With her husband, Dick Edwards, she founded the Space Settlement Design Competitions in 1984, which have exposed many thousands of young people from across the globe to a rigorous aerospace design experience. She was a member of the NSS for many decades and served on its Board of Directors, and later as its CEO, until her untimely death in 2024. This award serves as a reminder of her generous contributions to the space community, especially with regard to young people.



Chris Ferguson. Credit: NASA

The ISDC is the National Space Society’s premiere annual event, bringing together NASA leaders, newspace luminaries, academics, scientists, engineers, and motivated space enthusiasts from all over the world. Join Ferguson, private astronaut and mission commander Jared Isaacman, philanthropist and United Therapeutics CEO Dr. Martine Rothblatt, Space.com Editor-in-Chief Tariq Malik, former NASA Chief Scientist Dr. James Green, and dozens of other top space professionals at the International Space Development Conference in Orlando, FL, from June 19-22. More information and early bird registration can be found at the ISDC website.

ABOUT THE NSS

The National Space Society is the preeminent non-partisan citizen's voice on space exploration, development, and settlement, reaching millions through its membership, numerous outreach channels, and media activities. The organization was founded in 1987 via a merger of the National Space Institute and the L5 Society. To learn more about the NSS and its mission to establish humanity as a spacefaring species, visit us on the web at nss.org.

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