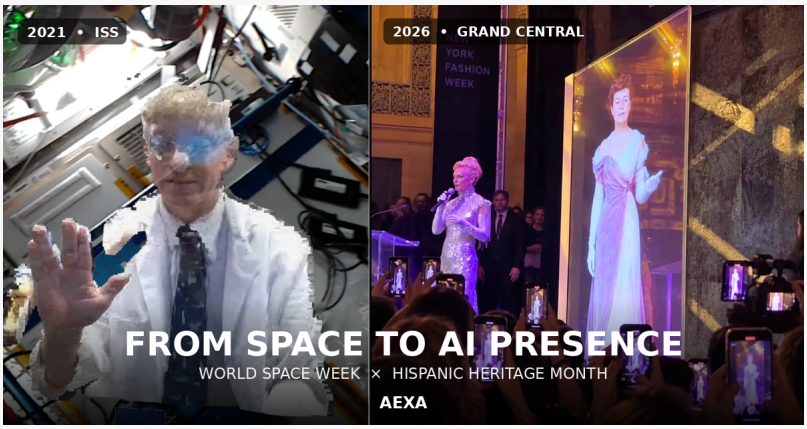
World Space Week Meets Hispanic Heritage Month: AEXA From Space to AI Presence

Houston founder Dr. Fernando De La Peña Llaca connects the ISS holoportation milestone, Grand Central and the next generation of human-centered AI.



AEXA's journey from the International Space Station to Grand Central Terminal, highlighting the evolution of holographic presence into AI-powered human interaction during World Space Week and Hispanic Heritage Month.

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, October 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- During World Space Week and National Hispanic Heritage Month, Houston aerospace innovator Dr. Fernando De La Peña Llaca is opening private media briefings and demonstrations of HoloConnect AI while marking nearly five years since helping pioneer the first holoportation handshake from Earth into space.

On October 8, 2021, De La Peña Llaca, NASA flight surgeon Dr. Josef Schmid and their teams became the first humans holoported from Earth into space, communicating with European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Pesquet aboard the International Space Station. NASA later described the demonstration as the first holoportation handshake from Earth in space.

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>
> *Dr. Fernando De La Peña Llaca*

Last month, on September 15, AEXA brought a new generation of that idea into Vanderbilt Hall at Grand Central Terminal through a collaboration with the House of Vanderbilt and Vanderbilt & Seewald Global Studio.

There, Consuelo Vanderbilt Costin interacted with life-size holographic AI portrayals of figures from her family's history inside Vanderbilt Hall, demonstrating how artificial intelligence and digital presence can connect generations across time.

"Space taught us that presence can change the way people communicate across enormous

distances," said De La Peña Llaca, founder and CEO of AEXA. "Now artificial intelligence gives us the opportunity to take that idea much further. The next era of AI will not live only on a screen. It will have presence."

"What if you could have another conversation with someone from history whose story should never disappear?"

That question is helping define AEXA's next chapter.

HoloConnect AI combines life-size visual presence with conversational artificial intelligence, creating an interface through which people can engage with AI agents, historical personalities and interactive digital experiences in physical environments including museums, airports, healthcare, hospitality, education and enterprise settings.

AEXA is also developing Aexa Aware, an interaction-aware AI layer designed to respond to observable signals such as gaze, attention, speech timing, vocal characteristics and behavioral context. The goal is to allow an AI agent to adapt not only to the words being spoken, but also to aspects of how a person is interacting with it.

Together, HoloConnect AI and Aexa Aware are part of AEXA's broader vision of moving artificial intelligence beyond conventional screens and chat interfaces toward more natural human interaction.

The timing carries particular meaning for De La Peña Llaca, a Hispanic entrepreneur whose aerospace journey has been rooted in Houston.

"America's space program has always been built by people bringing different backgrounds, ideas and experiences to extraordinarily difficult problems," De La Peña Llaca said. "I hope our journey inspires the next generation of Hispanic engineers, entrepreneurs and students to understand that they can help build what comes next."

World Space Week is observed globally October 4 through October 10. National Hispanic Heritage Month is observed in the United States September 15 through October 15.

Private media briefings and demonstrations of HoloConnect AI and Aexa Aware are available by request. In-person and virtual options are available for journalists, technology leaders, investors and potential partners.

Photos and video from the 2021 International Space Station demonstration, Grand Central Terminal and HoloConnect AI are available for media use upon request.

ABOUT AEXA

Founded in Houston in 2012, AEXA Aerospace develops technologies spanning immersive communication, artificial intelligence and human-centered digital presence. Its work includes software used during the historic 2021 holoportation demonstration aboard the International Space Station and the continued development of AI-powered holographic experiences for commercial, cultural and enterprise applications.

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