



## Mark K. Craig

Having seen Sputnik as a child and been awakened by his father to watch Mercury and Gemini launches, Mark aspired to work for NASA. Raised in Midland, Texas he began his NASA career in Houston as a Purdue co-op student on the Apollo program in 1967. An expert in spacecraft engineering and analysis, there he subsequently contributed to the Apollo-Soyuz, Space Shuttle, Space Station, Mars Rover Sample Return, and Lunar-Mars Exploration programs in positions progressing from engineer to program manager. At NASA Headquarters in Washington Mark was Acting Assistant Administrator, Exploration and architect of the NASA Strategic Plan. He was Associate Director of the Johnson Space Center, and Deputy Director and Acting Director of the Stennis Space Center. For museums and themed attractions he is an advisor on space exploration. After retiring from a 38 year career with NASA, Mark supported NASA as Vice President of SAIC from which he retired in 2015. At that time he was presented an American flag flown over the U.S. Capitol at the request of Congressman Joe Kennedy III of MA to honor his 48 years of service to the Nation's space program.

Mark earned a B.S. in Astronautical Engineering from Purdue University in 1971, pursued engineering graduate study at Rice University, and completed MIT's Sloan Program for Senior Executives in 1992. He has received numerous awards including NASA medals for Distinguished Service and Outstanding Leadership, the Rotary National Award for Space Achievement Stellar Award, and the NSPE Federal Engineer of the Year Award. Mark is a Distinguished Engineering Alumnus of Purdue, a Fellow of the American Astronautical Society, and a member of the International Academy of Astronautics. He was elected President of the American Astronautical Society in 2005. He is an Elder of the Presbyterian Church and a member of the National Eagle Scout and College Art Associations. He collects old, original prints and volunteers research on prints and drawings for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Mark's mountaintop experiences at NASA include:

- ✓ A one-on-one meeting with Neil Armstrong the day he was named commander of Apollo 11;
- ✓ Conversations over years with Gene Cernan about his thoughts and feelings while on the Moon;
- ✓ Being detained at Apollo 11's launch pad for an hour at T-9 hours, and experiencing its launch;
- ✓ Inspecting the Space Shuttle fueled on its launch pad at T-3 hours and again just after it landed from orbit, and then sitting in its cockpit;
- ✓ In the White House, conversations with the Vice President about Lunar-Mars exploration;
- ✓ Being on console in KSC's Launch Control Firing Room, and experiencing 30 Shuttle launches;
- ✓ Keynoting the 3<sup>rd</sup> UN Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in Vienna;
- ✓ Experiencing weightlessness on NASA's "zero-g" aircraft leading a Space Shuttle test campaign.

Career contributions of which he's most proud include:

- ✓ Helping to create policy and strategy to sustain NASA human space exploration based on its value to America so that, unlike Apollo, reaching a destination does not result in program termination;
- ✓ Leading NASA's first Agency-wide, integrated study of Lunar and Mars exploration;
- ✓ Leading negotiations that resulted in Space Station partnerships with Europe, Japan, and Canada;
- ✓ Leading the design, development, and test of the Space Shuttle booster staging system;
- ✓ Being on the startup teams for Space Shuttle in 1969, Space Station in 1983, and the Lunar-Mars Space Exploration Initiative in 1988;
- ✓ Negotiating and signing for NASA an agreement with the National Science Foundation on Antarctic analogs for Lunar-Mars exploration;
- ✓ Founding, as Chairman, the National Rocket Propulsion Test Alliance with the Dept. of Defense;
- ✓ Being on the creative teams for the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex's *Shuttle Launch Experience* attraction and *Space Shuttle Atlantis Exhibit*.