

Astronaut Coming To Liberal

A rare opportunity to hear one of the members of NASA space crew will be provided to students and community members this week in Liberal. In a collaborative project to promote science, technology, engineering, and math USD480, Seward County Community College/Area Technical School, and Liberal Convention and Visitors Bureau has made arrangements for Colonel Jeffrey Williams to spend time visiting schools and providing a public presentation. Colonel Williams' public presentation will be on Wednesday, April 3 at 5:30 pm. in the SCCC/ATS gym. Because of the collaboration of the sponsoring organizations, the public presentation there is no charge for admission.

Colonel Williams is a graduate of the US Military Academy and has a degree in aeronautical engineering from the US Naval Postgraduate School. He has been awarded numerous academic and performance honors as a member of the NASA space team and has logged over 2,500 hours in more than 50 different aircraft. Col. Williams served as pilot in the Shuttle Avionics Integration Laboratory, and chief of the Operations Development Office,

Williams has performed various technical duties in both the Space Shuttle and International Space Station Programs. In July 2002, Williams commanded a nine-day undersea coral reef expedition operating from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's Aquarius habitat off the coast of Florida. In November 2002, he began training for a long-duration expedition on the International Space Station (ISS) shuttling between JSC and Star City, Russia. Williams was the backup Commander and Soyuz Flight Engineer for the 12 th Expedition to the ISS launched on September 30, 2005. In 2006 he served as Expedition 13 Flight Engineer aboard the ISS. Between flight assignments, he supported the development and implementation of ISS crew of six. Williams served as a backup crewmember for ISS Expeditions 19 and 20 and then flew as flight engineer on Expedition 21 and commander of Expedition 22.

During his three flights, Williams logged over 362 days in space, including more than 19 hours in 3 EVAs. Williams served as flight engineer and lead space walker for STS-101. STS-101 Atlantis (May 19-29, 2000) was the third Shuttle mission devoted to International Space Station (ISS) construction. Objectives included transporting and installing over 5,000 pounds of equipment and supplies, and included Williams' first EVA (space walk) lasting nearly 7 hours. The mission was accomplished in 155 orbits of the Earth, traveling 4.1 million miles in 236 hours and 9 minutes.

Williams was the Expedition 13 Flight Engineer and Science Officer aboard the International Space Station. The Expedition 13 crew was launched on March 29, 2006 on the Russian Soyuz TMA 8 from Baikonur, Kazakhstan, docking with the station on March 31, 2006. During 6-months tour of duty aboard the ISS, in addition to station maintenance and some science activities, Williams performed two successful spacewalks logging 12 hours and 25 mins of EVA wearing both Russian and U.S. spacesuits, and also saw the arrival of two space shuttle missions, the resumption of construction of the orbiting laboratory, and the restoration of a three-person crew. The Expedition 13 mission concluded on September 28, 2006 with a safe landing in the steppes of Kazakhstan.

Williams served as a Flight Engineer on Expedition 21 and Commanded Expedition 22, launching from Baikonur on Soyuz TMA 16 on September 30, 2009. During his second 6-month stay on board the ISS, Williams again saw the arrival of two space shuttle missions as well as the integration of the Russian Mini-Research Module, the US Tranquility Module, and the Cupola. His third flight concluded on March 18, 2010, with the Soyuz TMA 16 landing in Kazakhstan.

While visiting Liberal he will visit the Cottonwood and Sunflower Intermediate schools and share his experiences in space travel. Colonel Williams will also meet with a group of faculty and staff from SCCC/ATS and Liberal High School who are involved with science, technology, engineering and math. The public presentation will be held in the gym at SCCC/ATS at 5:30 p.m.

