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Dr. Christine Darden Discusses NACA/NASA 2017 Hall of Honor Inductees at Hampton History Museum on November 5

Hampton, Virginia- Retired NASA mathematician and engineer, Dr. Christine Darden, one of the “Hidden Figures” in the book by Margot Lee Shetterly, will present an overview of the 2017 NACA/NASA Langley Research Center Hall of Honor as part of the Hampton History Museum’s Port Hampton Lecture Series on Monday, November 5, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Inducted on June 1, 2017 as part of the Langley Research Center’s Centennial Celebration, these 18 individuals, who worked at both The Langley Research Center National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) or at only one, are being recognized for leadership, design

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of facilities, work in Atmospheric Sciences, flight testing, refinement of designs of vehicles for various flight environments, and military aircraft. This was the second class of inductees, the first induction was held in 2015, as part of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the NACA, which became NASA in 1958.

Darden worked at NASA Langley on supersonic flight and reducing the sonic boom for nearly 25 of her 40 years of service. She served on the selection team for the 2017 inductees. Among the inductees are fellow “Hidden Figures” Mary Winston Jackson, Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson and Dorothy J. Vaughan, along with honorees Clinton E. Brown, Robert A. “Bob” Champine, Norman L. “Norm” Crabill, Smith J. “Smitty” DeFrance, Charles J. “Charlie” Donlan, Cornelius “Neil” Driver, Roy V. Harris Jr., Harvey H. Hubbard, Dr. Joel S. Levine, James S. Martin, Jr., Dr. M. Patrick McCormick, Edward C. “Eddie” Polhamus, Dr. James H. Starnes, Jr., Dr. James H. Starnes, Jr., Dr. Floyd L. Thompson, and Charles H. “Charlie” Zimmerman.

More about the 2017 Inductees from the NASA website:

Clinton E. Brown (1920–2008) was a brilliant experimentalist and theoretician who contributed legendary advancements to the aeronautics and space programs of the NACA and NASA.

Robert A. “Bob” Champine (1921–2003) was an outstanding research test pilot who made significant contributions to NASA’s aeronautics and space programs. He was a notable contributor to the understanding of phenomena that occur during transonic and supersonic flight. He logged over 11,300 flight hours in over 155 different aircraft.

Norman L. “Norm” Crabill (1926 -) had an extraordinary 36-year career at the NASA Langley Research Center, during which he made major contributions to the research activities of the NACA and NASA in aeronautics and space programs. These accomplishments included key roles during critical Langley programs including rocket-boosted supersonic model research, satellite launches, lunar observations, missions to Mars, and characterization of phenomena in severe storms.

Smith J. “Smitty” DeFrance (1896 -1985) spent 18 of his 43 years with the NACA and NASA working at the NACA Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory, where he

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gained fame as a test pilot in flight projects and as designer and manager of unique wind tunnels that helped gain worldwide recognition of the laboratory at the leading edge of technology. He was selected to become the first Engineer-in-Charge (Director) of the new NACA Ames Aeronautical Laboratory at Moffett Field, California, in 1939 and transferred to begin operations there in 1940.

Charles J. "Charlie" Donlan (1916–2011) retired from the NASA Langley Research Center after a 38-year career in which he was a successful researcher, a key manager, and leader who was extensively involved in the development of unique facilities and research techniques, and the formulation, implementation, and direction of technical programs in support of NASA's manned and unmanned exploration of space.

Cornelius "Neil" Driver (1925–2009) was a visionary of advanced aeronautical systems, especially supersonic civil transports, for which he was NASA's chief advocate, technical expert, and spokesman.

Roy V. Harris Jr. (1935-) is an internationally recognized authority in the field of supersonic aerodynamics. In his roles as a researcher and manager, he contributed pioneering computer-based tools for rapid analysis of advanced configurations, participated in many high priority U.S. civil and military programs, and has been a vital figure in support of NASA's aeronautics programs.

Harvey H. Hubbard (1921–2012) was an international leader in the field of noise generation and reduction. His research and leadership had, and continues to have, a profound effect in the aircraft industry—where noise is an international issue affecting the development, growth, and regulation of air transportation. His seminal research on aircraft noise provided fundamental information on the understanding of noise sources, as well as noise reduction techniques through vehicle design and operation.

Mary Winston Jackson (1921–2005) successfully overcame the barriers of segregation and gender bias to become a professional aerospace engineer and leader in ensuring equal opportunities for future generations.

Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson (1918 -) is an African-American mathematician who made valuable contributions to critical aeronautics and space programs of the NACA and NASA. Overcoming the constraints of segregation and gender bias, she progressed from mathematical tasks, such as computing experimental flight and ground-test data using a mechanical Frieden calculator for the NACA, to the application of spacecraft trajectories and spacecraft control calculations for NASA. Her life, 33-year career, and contributions are discussed in the best-selling 2016 book "Hidden Figures" by Margot Lee Shetterly and the Academy-Award nominated motion picture of the same name. Her story has become widely known and is a stimulus for the interests of young people in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities across the nation.

Dr. Joel S. Levine (1942-) is an internationally recognized planetary scientist, with exceptional expertise in the atmospheres of Earth and Mars. His 41-year career as a senior research scientist in the Langley Science Directorate resulted in vital contributions to many NASA programs.

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James S. Martin, Jr. (1920–2002) was the NASA Program Manager for the Viking Project that successfully landed the robotic Viking I and Viking II spacecraft on Mars in 1976. The Viking landers made the first successful soft touchdowns by spacecraft on another planet, and their companion orbiters sent the first global maps of Mars back to Earth the following year. Martin led this unprecedented effort and the 750-member nationwide team of NASA, industry and academia. The highly successful Viking mission was accomplished after many years of hard effort by Jim Martin and his team.

Dr. M. Patrick McCormick (1940 -) is recognized worldwide as a leader in satellite remote sensing. His research has led to many discoveries and contributions in the field of atmospheric sciences in the areas of aerosols, clouds, and ozone, and their impact on the Earth's climate and atmospheric chemistry.

Edward C. "Eddie" Polhamus (1923–2001) was a brilliant aerodynamicist and engineer who contributed three revolutionary advances in aeronautics – the first practical concept for variable-sweep wings, a methodology for the prediction and control of vortex flows, and applications of cryogenic technology to wind-tunnel testing.

Dr. James H. Starnes, Jr. (1939 –2003) is internationally recognized for his lasting technical and leadership contributions to advance aerospace structures and composite structures. He provided outstanding service to NASA and the nation as a leading structures expert, mentored a generation of engineers; and contributed extensive service to professional societies.

Dr. Floyd L. Thompson (1898–1976) was the third Director of NASA Langley Research Center, serving in that capacity from 1960 to 1968. He was an outstanding Center leader during the challenging beginning of the crewed space flight era. He guided research leading to programs of international importance, including Project Mercury, the concept of erectable space vehicles which led to the development of Echo, the world's first passive communications satellite; and the first solid-fueled launch vehicle, Scout, to propel a satellite into orbit.

Dorothy J. Vaughan (1910–2008) was the first African-American female supervisor of the NACA, advancing to become an expert in digital computers and their applications in NASA programs.

Charles H. "Charlie" Zimmerman (1908 –1996) was an innovative designer of revolutionary research facilities, unconventional aircraft, and advanced flying vehicles. He was an expert in the field of stability and control of aircraft, as well as in flight dynamics. In addition to his aeronautical contributions, Zimmerman also participated in early studies that stimulated the NACA research on spaceflight. He became a participant in Project Mercury and led advanced studies of vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft.

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About Dr. Christine M. Darden

Dr. Christine M. Darden, a native of Monroe, North Carolina, was employed by the NASA Langley Research Center on June 27, 1967 and assigned to the Re-Entry Physics Branch of the Laboratory's High Speed Aerodynamics Division as an Aerospace Technologist (AST) Data Analyst. Darden worked in the Computer Office of this Branch supporting the engineers until 1972, when she was reassigned to an Engineering Section to work on minimizing the sonic boom of aircraft flying at supersonic speeds. As her first assignment in the engineering section, Darden developed a computer code to give guidance on designing airplanes to generate a minimized sonic boom. Darden later facilitated a group of industry, academia and government engineers, who coordinated the NASA approach to reducing the sonic boom. She also personally lead the Design and Operation element of this approach—where analytical and computational methods were used, and models were designed, built, and tested in the supersonic wind tunnels, and reports written as the research progressed. In 2002, after years of research, a successful flight test validation of the design approach was held in California. During her career, Darden authored 52 technical reports and articles and was awarded a NASA Gold Medal for her contributions to the NASA Sonic Boom Program.

In 1999, Darden was appointed to the Senior Executive Service at NASA Langley as Director of the Aero-Performing Center Management Office. She subsequently served as the Langley Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and the Director of the Office of Strategic Communications and Education. In March 2007, 3 months shy of 40-years of service at NASA Langley, Darden retired from Federal Service.

Dr. Christine M. Darden has a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics Education from Hampton Institute (now University), a Master's Degree in Applied Mathematics from Virginia State College (now University), and the Doctor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering from George Washington University in Washington, DC.

Dr. Darden served on the Joint Langley Alumni Association (LAA)/ NASA Langley Team which recommended the 2017 Inductees into the NACA/NASA Hall of Honor.

Hampton History Museum

Admission to the talk is free for museum members, \$5 for non-members. The Hampton History Museum is located at 120 Old Hampton Lane in Downtown Hampton. There is free parking in the garage across the street from the museum. For more information call 757-727-1102 or visit www.HamptonHistoryMuseum.org.

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Partially bordered by the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay, Hampton, with the 344,000 sq. ft. Hampton Roads Convention Center and the award-winning Hampton Coliseum, is located in the center of Coastal Virginia and the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. Hampton is the site of America's first continuous English-speaking settlement, the site of the first arrival of Africans in English North America, and is home to such visitor attractions as the Virginia Air & Space Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, harbor tours and cruises, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.

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