

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE
AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to award an honorary Doctor of Science degree to Peggy A. Whitson at Fall 2013 Commencement.

Executive Summary: Iowa State University wishes to recognize Dr. Whitson for her many contributions to the United States and international space programs, for her exemplary service involving young people, and as a leader and role model encouraging young people, especially young women, to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Details on Dr. Whitson's Accomplishments:

- ◇ Dr. Whitson, a native of Mt. Ayr, Iowa, received a Bachelor of Science degree from Iowa Wesleyan College and a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from Rice University, where she continued her research as a Robert A. Welch Postdoctoral Fellow. At the same time, she began her studies at NASA's Johnson Space Center as a National Research Council Resident Research Associate.
- ◇ Dr. Whitson served in adjunct faculty positions at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and Rice University. During that time, she became involved in several NASA projects. She worked in payload development, served as project scientist for the Space Shuttle/Mir Program, Deputy Division Chief of the Medical Sciences Division, and co-chair of the U.S.-Russian Mission Science Working Group.
- ◇ In 1996, Dr. Whitson was selected as an astronaut candidate and underwent two years of intensive training while serving in a variety of support capacity positions with NASA.
- ◇ She spent two extended periods in space aboard the International Space Station (ISS). The first was ISS Expedition 5 in 2002, which lasted 185 days and included a nearly 4½ hour spacewalk to install and check equipment. Her second space mission was ISS Expedition 16 in 2007, which lasted 192 days. She was the commander of that mission and she performed five spacewalks. One of the astronauts who rotated in during her six-month stay was ISU alumnus Clayton Anderson. The two missions totaled more than a year in space (377 days) which is the longest for any other woman.
- ◇ Dr. Whitson held other positions at NASA, including lead for the crew test support team in Russia in 1998-99; commander of the 5th NASA Extreme Environment Mission in 2003, Chief of the Station Operations Branch, member of the 2004 Astronaut Selection Board, and chair of the 2009 Board. She also trained as the back-up commander for ISS Expedition 14 in 2005 and 2006.
- ◇ She has received numerous honors and awards, including NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, four NASA Exceptional Service Medals, Russian Medal of Merit for Space; and American Astronautical Society Randall Lovelace II Award. She was inducted into the Iowa Aviation Hall of Fame and she received the First Lady of Iowa Award from the Iowa High School Girls' Athletic Union.

- ◇ Iowa State University wishes to recognize Dr. Whitson's extraordinary accomplishments with an honorary degree. According to faculty members from ISU's Department of Aerospace Engineering, "Dr. Whitson represents the best of what an Iowa upbringing and education can produce. Her contributions to medical science and to the space program are in the best tradition of Iowa State University's mission in science and technology."