

ASTRONAUT BIOGRAPHY



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Houston, Texas 77058

April 2021



Loral O'Hara

NASA Astronaut

Summary:

Loral O'Hara was selected by NASA to join the 2017 Astronaut Candidate Class. She reported for duty in August 2017 and having completed the initial astronaut candidate training is now eligible for a mission assignment. The Texas native earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Kansas and a Master of Science degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University. Prior to joining NASA, her work focused on the engineering and operations of deep-ocean scientific research submersibles and robots.

Personal Data:

O'Hara was born in Houston, Texas, and most recently resided in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Recreational interests include outdoor sports such as sailing, surfing, kayaking, backpacking, and pond hockey. She also enjoys reading, painting, and traveling. She holds a Private Pilot license.

Education:

Graduated from Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas in 2001. Earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, in 2005. Earned a Master of Science degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University, in West Lafayette, Indiana in 2009.

Experience:

At the time of her selection in June 2017, O'Hara was a Research Engineer at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, where she spent eight years working on the engineering and operations of underwater vehicles such as the human-occupied research submersible *Alvin* and the remotely operated vehicle *Jason*. Her experience includes mechanical design and analysis, systems engineering, manned submersible testing and certification, and vehicle operations. She participated in eleven scientific research cruises aboard research vessels as a mechanical technician and data processor. From 2006 to 2007, she worked for Rocketplane in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma as a project engineer on the development of a suborbital space vehicle.

NASA Experience:

O'Hara worked as an intern at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 2003, participated in the NASA Academy at Goddard Space Flight Center in 2004, and participated in the NASA KC-135 Reduced Gravity Student Flight Opportunities Program in 2005. In May 2017, she was selected as a member of the 22nd NASA astronaut class. She reported for duty in August 2017 and completed two years of training as an Astronaut Candidate. She is currently serving as the Astronaut Office's Director of Operations in Russia.

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Awards/Honors:

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (2008).