Boeing Executive Inducted Into Astronaut Hall of Fame

Richard Covey, vice president of Support Operations for Boeing [NYSE: BA] Integrated Defense Systems, was inducted Saturday into the Astronaut Hall of Fame at a special ceremony at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Honorees were selected by a blue-ribbon committee composed of former NASA officials and flight controllers, journalists, historians and other space authorities. The Astronaut Hall of Fame honors astronauts for their accomplishments in space and contributions to the advancement of space exploration.

"We are honored to have Dick Covey on our team," Boeing President and CEO Harry Stonecipher said. "The entire Boeing Company salutes his achievements and we congratulate him on being inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame."

Covey is a veteran of four space flights, beginning his astronaut career in August 1979. He flew on Discovery in 1985 and Atlantis in 1990. In 1993, Covey commanded Endeavour on a mission to repair the Hubble Space Telescope -- one of the most difficult missions ever attempted. In 1988 Covey piloted Discovery, when he and four other veteran astronauts were the first to fly the redesigned spacecraft following the Challenger accident.

"I have always felt extremely fortunate to be a member of America's Astronaut core," Covey said. "To be selected by my peers to join the Astronaut Hall of Fame -- to join those early astronauts who preceded me -- is truly a privilege."

Covey joined The Boeing Company in 1996 as division director for McDonnell Douglas' Houston Operations. He has served as vice president of Boeing Houston Operations and vice president of Boeing Space Operations. In 2002, he became vice president of Boeing Support Operations, an organization providing system engineering, facility/system maintenance and operations, spacecraft operations support and logistical support to the U.S. Department of Defense, other U.S. government agencies and commercial businesses at more than 20 locations worldwide.

Covey currently serves as co-chairman of the Stafford-Covey Return to Flight Task Group, which is making an independent assessment of NASA's implementation of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board Space Shuttle return to flight recommendations.

Prior to joining NASA, Covey was the U.S. Air Force Joint Test Force Director for F-15 electronic warfare systems developmental and production verification testing. He is a highly decorated combat pilot, whose honors include two Defense Distinguished Service Medals, the NASA Distinguished Service Medal and five Distinguished Flying Crosses.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $27 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer and a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services. For more information, visit the IDS website.

The Astronaut Hall of Fame opened in 1990 by the Mercury Seven Foundation, a foundation established in 1984 by the six surviving members of America's original Mercury astronauts and Mrs. Betty Grissom, widow of the seventh, to create a site where space travelers could be remembered. The Foundation seeks to preserve the United States' leadership role in science and technology through the provision of scholarships to college students pursuing degrees in the fields of science and engineering. In 1995 the Foundation broadened its membership to include astronauts from the Gemini, Apollo, Skylab and Space Shuttle programs and changed its name to the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation. Today, the foundation funds $144,500 in scholarships annually.

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