

Press Release

Visit to Britain by African American Astronaut Major General Charles Bolden

Astronaut Charlie Bolden is visiting the UK to share his experiences in leadership, motivation, space, science and overcoming personal difficulties to achieve success and fulfilment. Charlie has flown four Space Shuttle Missions and has had a long, distinguished career with NASA and as a Major General in the Marines. He is making a special presentation on Monday 22nd January 2007 at the prestigious Royal Aeronautical Society to help celebrate the anniversary of 50 years in space.

The visit is being arranged and organised by the International Space School Educational Trust, see attached Press Notice, and aims to:

- Provide a personal insight into how Major General Bolden overcame racism and prejudice to become one of the first African-American astronauts, and also a business leader and entrepreneur.
- Demonstrate how space can be used to excite interest in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, enterprise and history.
- Give delegates an opportunity to find about careers within the aerospace and space industries.

Astronaut Charles Bolden will also be visiting schools and communities in **Cardiff**, **Birmingham** and **Liverpool**. He provides a truly inspirational role model and personifies how young people can overcome racial prejudice and social deprivation to fulfil their dreams and ambitions. He will also motivate our girls and boys to consider careers and courses in maths, engineering and science and show them what cool jobs and lifestyles can be achieved.

Please see the attached biography on Charles Bolden and the International Space School Educational Trust or visit www.isset.org.

The visit is being supported by ISSET, the Royal Aeronautical Society, Birmingham City Learning Centres, SETPOINT Wales, BROHP, Space Port in Merseyside and Cardiff LEA

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About The International Space School Educational Trust (ISSET)

The International Space School Educational Trust was founded in 1998 with the aim of utilising space and space exploration to increase student and teacher motivation and to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Since that time ISSET has organised student and teacher space and science experiences at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida and Johnson Space Centre in Houston. Each programme has up to 200 participants per year. The Space Centre programmes are life enhancing and inspirational events.

Mike Tomlinson, Chair of The Learning Trust and Former Chief Inspector of Schools, said:

"ISSET's programmes have provided fantastic inspiration for many of Hackney's young people. The visits that our students have made to NASA and the talks our schools have had from astronauts have not just enriched their education but shown them the only limits are their ambition."

Whilst 17 year old Basim Jafar of Stoke Newington Community School says :

"I am currently in the middle of the exam season, about six more exams to go, and I really wanted to thank you for the opportunity that you gave me, as it has motivated me in a way that I have never thought possible. The trip and the knowledge I gained from visiting KSC and meeting people like yourself and the students really has changed me for the better, I am really confident that I will pass my exams with not less than an A in every single subject."

ISSET also arranges visits from astronaut, rocket scientists and engineers to schools, colleges and universities to provide role models of what it is possible to achieve if you have a dream. These visits help us inculcate the NASA 'you can do it' spirit into some of our most deprived areas. The programmes also promote great student interest in careers and courses in maths, science and engineering by bringing them into first hand contact with people at the heart of the human space programme, the world's biggest scientific and engineering project.

Last year ISSET in partnership with Edge organised the 'Edge into Space' competition for all of the secondary schools in the UK. Over a 1,000 schools entered teams and nearly 5,000 students entered. Winning teams were selected from each of the 12 regions in the UK to enjoy the space experience of a lifetime, including being space shuttle pilot Mark Kelly's guests at the landing of space mission STS 121 last July at Kennedy Space Centre.

This year ISSET is again partnering with Edge to bring the environmental Ice Edge competition to all of the UK secondary schools with a winning team from each region having the environmental adventure of a lifetime in the Arctic Circle. Our other Ice Edge partners include Britain's record breaking Polar explorer Ben Saunders who will be accompanying the winners and the University of Norway in Svalbard, the world's most northerly university.

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Biography: Major General Charles Bolden

As a child, Major General Charles F. Bolden, Jr., U.S.M.C., was full of curiosity. Today, General Bolden is an astronaut and in 1990 piloted the space shuttle mission to launch the Hubble Space Telescope. In 1992, he commanded a crew of seven aboard Space Shuttle Atlantis. Bolden also commanded a crew of six aboard Space Shuttle Discovery in 1994. This was the historic first joint U.S./Russian Space Shuttle mission involving the participation of a Russian Cosmonaut as a mission specialist crewmember.



Born in Columbia in 1946, Bolden grew up during the civil rights struggles. Later he was refused admission into the then-segregated University of South Carolina. Today he holds an honorary degree from the University of South Carolina. His father, the late Charles Bolden, who taught and coached football at C.A. Johnson High School, often told his son that he would overcome the problems of prejudice. And he did. In 1964, Bolden was one of the few blacks to enter the U.S. Naval Academy. A year later, he was elected president of his sophomore class. General Bolden accepted a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps following graduation from the United States Naval Academy in 1968 with a degree in electrical science. He underwent flight training at Pensacola, Florida; Meridian, Mississippi; and Kingsville, Texas; before being designated a naval aviator in May 1970. He flew more than 100 sorties into North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, in the A-6A Intruder while assigned to VMA (AW)-533 at Nam Phong, Thailand, June 1972 to June 1973. Upon returning to the United States, Bolden began a two-year tour as a Marine Corps selection officer and recruiting officer in Los Angeles, California, followed by three years in various assignments at the Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, California. He also earned a master's degree in systems management from the University of Southern California in 1977. In June 1979, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School at Patuxent River, Maryland, and was assigned to the Naval Air Test Center's Systems Engineering and Strike Aircraft Test Directorates. While there, he served as an ordnance test pilot and flew numerous test projects in the A-6E, EA-6B, and A-7C/E airplanes.

In 1980, Bolden joined the space shuttle program. He was pilot of the shuttle Columbia mission on January 12, 1986, the last successful mission before the fiery Challenger explosion. When he first entered the space shuttle program, he felt frustrated. "I walked into NASA mission control and there were no black controllers. There are now. I guess I bit my lip at the time, but I learned it was not NASA's fault. Blacks just didn't apply, so when I talk to young people, I tell them to get with it." General Bolden spends much of his time speaking to students about the importance of staying in school, and he is particularly interested in encouraging black students to join the space program.

In 1995, after successfully completing a one-year tour as the Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., General Bolden served as the Assistant Wing Commander, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing in Miramar, Calif. In July of 1997, he was assigned as the Deputy Commanding General, I MEF, Marine Forces, Pacific. From February to June 1998, he served as Commanding General, I MEF (FWD) in support of Operation Desert Thunder in Kuwait. In July 1998 he was promoted to his current rank and assumed his previous duties as the Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces, Japan.

Mr. Bolden completed a two year tour as Commanding General of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, headquartered in the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, San Diego, CA on August 9, 2002. Mr. Bolden retired January 1, 2003 after completing 34 and a half years of active service as a United States Marine. Mr. Bolden has been awarded a number of military and NASA decorations and has received Honorary Doctorates from several distinguished universities.

From April, 2003 to January, 2005 Mr. Bolden served as senior vice president of TechTrans International, Inc., a woman-owned language services company serving the National

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Aeronautics and Space Administration and other government and commercial entities doing business in Russia and the former Soviet Republics, with offices in Houston, TX, Washington, DC, and Moscow, Russia. He presently serves on the Board of Directors of Marathon Oil Corporation, GENCORP, and Palmetto Government Benefits Associates as well as the Board of Trustees of the University of Southern California.

Bolden now resides in Houston, Texas with his wife, Alexis (Jackie). They are the proud parents of two children, Che', a major in the United States Marine Corps, and Kelly, a medical doctor now in her residency in general surgery. They have two beautiful granddaughters, Mikaley and Kyra.

General Bolden is the recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, the Strike/Flight Medal (8th award), Honorary Doctor of Science Degree from the University of South Carolina (1984), Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Winthrop College (1986), the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal (1992), NASA Exceptional Service Medals (1988, 1989, 1991), the University of Southern California Alumni Award of Merit (1989), and an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Johnson C. Smith University (1990).

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