



Sally Ride

S.S. Sally Ride

NG-18 Cargo Delivery Mission to the International Space Station

It's Northrop Grumman's tradition to name each Cygnus spacecraft in honor of an individual who has made substantial contributions to human spaceflight—those who forged new paths for their successors. For the NG-18 mission, Northrop Grumman is proud to name Cygnus after a true hero to millions of people around the world—Sally Ride, America's first female astronaut.

Ride was born on May 26, 1951 in Los Angeles. As a young adult, she pursued a professional career in tennis but ultimately decided that her second passion, science, was the path she wanted to take. Ride earned her bachelor's degree in physics and English, as well as a master's degree and PhD in physics, from Stanford University.

In 1978, Ride became one of the 35 astronaut candidates selected from more than 8,000 applicants to join NASA's Astronaut Group 8. She served as the first female CAPCOM, the astronaut on earth that communicates with the crew members in their spacecraft. In 1983 she became the first American woman to fly in space for STS-7, the Space Shuttle Challenger's second mission. Her second foray into space came in 1984 for the STS-41-G mission.

After her retirement from the astronaut program, Ride and her partner Tam O'Shaughnessy founded Sally Ride Science, a nonprofit aimed at improving STEM literacy for children.

Ride passed away on July 23, 2012, at the age of 61. In 2013, she was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, by President Barack Obama.

Northrop Grumman is honored to name the next Cygnus spacecraft in celebration of the life and legacy of astronaut Sally Ride.