



Lieutenant General Susan J. Helms, USAF (Ret.)

Member, Board of Trustees
The Aerospace Corporation

Lieutenant General Susan J. Helms, USAF (Ret.), was elected to the Board of Trustees of The Aerospace Corporation on March 9, 2017.

Lt. Gen. Helms graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1980, and was in the first class to admit women into the cadet corps. She served as an F-15 and F-16 weapons separation engineer, and as an assistant professor in the Department of Aeronautics of the U.S. Air Force Academy. Helms was then selected to attend the USAF Test Pilot School Flight Test Engineer Course. Upon graduation as a Distinguished Graduate, she served as project officer on the CF-18 as an exchange officer with the Canadian Air Force at the Aerospace Engineering Test Establishment, Cold Lake, Alberta.

In January 1990, then Major Helms became a NASA astronaut and in 1993, became the first U.S. military woman in space. She flew on five human spaceflight missions, including a tour as a member of the International Space Station Expedition 2 crew. Helms logged 211 days in space, and accomplished a spacewalk of eight hours, 56 minutes, a world record that stands today.

After 12 years at NASA, Helms transferred to Air Force Space Command. She commanded the 45th Space Wing at Cape Canaveral, and held positions at Headquarters Air Force Space Command, Air Education and Training Command, and U.S. Strategic Command. Upon promotion to Lieutenant General, she commanded the 14th Air Force (Air Force Space Command) and the Joint Functional Component Command for Space in a dual-hat role. Lt. Gen. Helms retired from military service in 2014.

Helms currently serves as a member of the NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel, and was appointed by President Obama to the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center (2014-2016). She is also a board member of the Association of Space Explorers, and has established her own consulting company, Orbital Visions, LLC, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Among Helms' many awards are the Gen. James V. Hartinger Award, Thomas D. White Space Award for Outstanding Contributions to Space, Dr. Kurt H. Debus Award, Women in Aerospace Outstanding Achievement Award, NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, and induction into the Astronaut Hall of Fame.

Lt. Gen. Helms earned a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1980, and a Master of Science degree in aeronautics and astronautics from Stanford University in 1985. She completed the Air Force Flight Test Engineer course at USAF Test Pilot School, Edwards Air Force Base in 1988, and the Senior Executive Course, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, in 2005.