

TTU GRAD HEADS TO SPACE

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Wilmore Family Ready For Son's Next Soaring Achievement:

TTU – Space shuttle Atlantis pilot Barry Wilmore has spent a lifetime preparing for Monday – the day he takes off in the space shuttle Atlantis. And so have his parents, Eugene and Faye Wilmore of Mt. Juliet.

For Eugene and Faye, the preparation began when Barry was just a child. He didn't merely climb trees; he had to get to the highest branch. It was only the beginning of a



lifetime of goal setting followed by achievement.

“When you have a son like Barry who has always done very dangerous things, each new thing prepares you for the next,” said Faye Wilmore. “I have a peace with it, and that

knowing that he's going to be able to get to the next level.”

(Pictured: Tennessee Tech graduate Barry Wilmore, center, Robert Satcher, left, and Leland Melvin attired in training versions of their shuttle launch and entry suits, await the start of a Full Fuselage Trainer (FFT) mock-up training session in the Space Vehicle Mock-up Facility at NASA's Johnson Space Center).

The couple left Mt. Juliet for NASA's Kennedy Space Center Thursday, anticipating a full schedule of activities. They'll attend receptions, a beach house barbecue, view the shuttle at night and, importantly, have some private family time with Barry and the opportunity for another hug before he flies.

The launch and mission of STS-129 is especially significant for the Tennessee Tech community. Barry Wilmore, a Navy captain, is a graduate of TTU (electrical engineering 1985, 1994). So is his wife, Deanna. His father is a 1958 graduate in industrial management as is his brother, Jack, a 1984 graduate in industrial technology, and Jack's wife, Selena, is a 1985 graduate as well. Add to that two Wilmore grandchildren, Jack's children – Lucas, a senior, and Elizabeth Ann, sophomore – and TTU is much more than family tradition for the Wilmore family.

“I’ve got a number of cousins who attended as well,” Eugene Wilmore said. “We grew up in Carthage, and Tech was close so we went there.” Faye Wilmore is a 1959 graduate of Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, where she studied biology and education. She worked as a teacher and then an administrator for Metro Public Schools in Nashville. She’s retired now, as is Eugene, who was an accountant.

Jack Wilmore and his family are expected to attend the Nov. 22 videoconference downlink from the International Space Station to TTU. Wilmore and the other members of the STS-129 shuttle crew will speak with and answer questions asked by selected students from TTU and area D-12 schools.

Barry Wilmore credits his education and sports participation at Mt. Juliet High School and TTU for preparing him for success.

After Barry Wilmore earned his bachelor’s degree, he applied to the U.S. Navy, but he failed the physical because of a knee injury. He used his remaining year of eligibility to play football and attend graduate school.

After several more physicals, the Navy gave him a shot. By 1987, he was in Corpus Christi, TX, flying A-4s for the Navy. He flew 21 missions in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, then conducted initial flight tests for the T-45, and later spent a year as a Navy Test Pilot School instructor.

After five years of flying F-18s and two more deployments, Wilmore became a test pilot instructor at Edwards Air Force Base as part of a Navy/Air Force exchange.

Chosen as an astronaut candidate in 2000, he spent two years in training and evaluation before being assigned technical duties representing the astronaut office on all propulsion systems issues including the space shuttle main engines, solid rocket motor and external tank. He also served on the astronaut support team that traveled to the Kennedy Space Center, FL, in support of launch and landing operations.

Eugene and Faye Wilmore have been to one other shuttle launch. Two years ago they were Barry’s guests for a launch.

“It was great! The ground even shakes,” Eugene said.

Said Faye: “It was an awesome experience to see that much power. All you want to say is, ‘Please keep going, please keep going.’ I know others have done it, but not in our family!”

Eugene said he was more worried about his son’s safety when he was flying missions in Iraq and Kuwait than he is about the shuttle launch. Still, the launch of STS-129 is worrisome too.

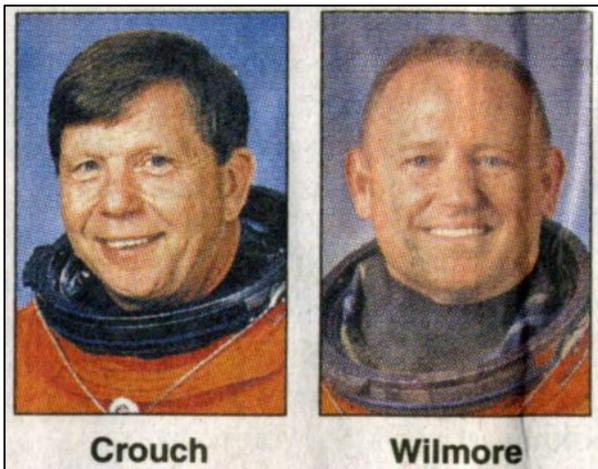
“He’s fulfilling his dream to go into space. We’re glad for that,” he said.

**TTU TO AWARD FIRST TWO HONORARY DOCTORATES
TO ASTRONAUTS SATUDAY**

By Megan Trotter, Herald-Citizen Staff
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TTU – Tennessee Tech University will have two commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 5, in Hooper Eblen Center.

With an increasing number of graduates and guests, TTU began having two spring commencement ceremonies a couple of years ago. In all, nearly 1,300 students will receive degrees Saturday, May 5.



Graduates of the colleges of Agricultural and Human Sciences, Arts and Sciences, and Business will participate in a ceremony that begins at 9:30 a.m., as will graduates of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies.

The commencement ceremony for graduates of the colleges of Education and Engineering will begin at 2 p.m.

Each commencement will mark a first for the university, the awarding of honorary doctorates. Presiding over his final commencements, TTU President Robert Bell will present honorary doctorates to two TTU alumni, retired NASA astronaut and scientist Dr. Roger Crouch and U.S. Navy pilot and astronaut Capt. Barry Wilmore.

“Wilmore and Crouch are TTU graduates who have distinguished themselves among all mankind, and they have done it superbly,” said Bell.

“I can’t think of any two individuals who are better suited to receive the first honorary doctorates from TTU.”

Crouch will accept his honorary doctorate and address graduates during the morning ceremony.

A native of Jamestown, TN, Crouch earned a bachelor’s degree in physics from Tennessee Polytechnic Institute in 1962 and master’s and doctoral degrees in physics from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. He was a visiting scientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1979 to 1980.

Crouch has done research on semi-conductor crystal growth, electrical and optical properties of materials, electronic devices for remote sensing and flat panel displays, and

heat shield protection for re-entry space vehicles, resulting in more than 60 publications in peer reviewed scientific journals.

As the chief scientist for the Micro-gravity Sciences program for NSAS, he established the research program for the space shuttle and the pioneering work on the International Space Station in the 1980s and 1990s. He helped organize and co-chaired Microgravity Science Working Groups between NASA and space agencies from the European Space Agency, France, Germany, Japan, Canada and Russia.

In addition, Crouch served as program scientist on five Spacelab flights in the 1990s. Selected for flight on the Microgravity Science Laboratory mission in 1997, he carried out research aboard space shuttle Columbia on the STS 83 and STS 94 missions. He took a CD into space with the names of about 70,000 TTU students, alumni, faculty, staff and donors.

Wilmore will accept his honorary doctorate during the afternoon ceremony and deliver the commencement....*article continues*.....

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