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**Former astronaut Chris A. Hadfield to receive Space Communicator Award**

HOUSTON, Texas (February 18, 2014).  The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation has selected former [Canadian Space Agency astronaut, author, and musician Chris A. Hadfield](http://www.asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/missions/expedition34-35/profile.asp) to receive the prestigious 2014 Space Communicator Award.

The citation reads “Astronaut, test pilot, engineer! Space walker, scientist, musician!  Tweeter extraordinaire and social media phenomenon!  Global celebrity! Expedition 35 International Space Station Commander, Chris Hadfield, is all these things and more!”

Jim Crocker, Vice President - General Manager Civil Space, Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, who nominated Hadfield, said “His credentials to serve as the RNASA Space Communicator Award winner for 2014 are impeccable, persuasive, unquestionable and unmatched.  The opportunity to recognize a genuine space hero who in every respect personifies the qualities and standing of the Space Communicator Award now belongs to RNASA”.

Hadfield said, “It is a thrill to be recognized for something that I enjoy doing so much.  Sharing the experience and the importance of human space flight with people around the world has been, for me, both a duty and privilege.  Technology has lowered barriers to communicating to and from anywhere on or off our planet, making it easy to connect on a variety of levels.  I hope my efforts will inspire others to take up the calling to share their part in the unfolding story of human space exploration”.

Hadfield received his glider pilot license in high school, became a test pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and earned a mechanical engineering degree at the Royal Military College

During his military career, Hadfield attended the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School and also received a Masters in Aviation Systems from the University of Tennessee Space Institute.  He retired from the military as a Colonel in 2003 with 25 years’ service, having flown more than 70 different types of aircraft.

Hadfield is a veteran of three space missions:  Shuttle missions STS-74, STS-100, and International Space Station mission Soyuz TMA-07M.  He was the first Canadian to operate the Space Shuttle's Canadarm in space, the first [Canadian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_people) to walk in space, and the first Canadian commander of the International Space Station.

Hadfield retired from the Astronaut Corps in July 2013, following his third trip to space and his five months as ISS Commander.  He will be a professor at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, in the fall of 2014.

Hadfield’s awards and military decorations include the Appointment to the [Order of Ontario](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_Ontario) in 1996, receipt of the Vanier Award in 2001, [NASA Exceptional Service Medal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NASA_Exceptional_Service_Medal) in 2002, Meritorious Service Cross, the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 and the [Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Queen%27s_Diamond_Jubilee_Medal&action=edit&redlink=1) in 2012.  He is the only Canadian to have received both a military and civilian [Meritorious Service Cross](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meritorious_Service_Cross), the military medal in 2001 and the civilian one in 2013.

In 1988, Hadfield was granted the Liethen-Tittle Award (top pilot graduate of the [USAF Test Pilot School](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USAF_Test_Pilot_School)) and was named US Navy Test Pilot of the Year in 1991.  He was inducted into Canada's [Aviation Hall of Fame](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Aviation_Hall_of_Fame) in 2005.  Upon taking command of the International Space Station, Queen [Elizabeth II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_II), [Queen of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchy_of_Canada), sent Hadfield a personal message of congratulations.  Hadfield was commemorated on [Royal Canadian Mint](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Mint) silver and gold coins for his spacewalk to install [Canadarm2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadarm2) on the [International Space Station](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Space_Station) in 2001.

Hadfield is also an author, musician, and a social media expert.  His new book is entitled “An Astronaut’s Guide to Life on Earth”.  Hadfield has a Twitter account with more than 1,000,000 followers, and also a Tumblr blog.  He has had multiple YouTube releases of songs and performances.  Forbes magazine described Hadfield as “perhaps the most social media savvy astronaut to ever leave Earth”.

The RNASA Space Communicator Award was created in 1997 in honor of KTRK, Houston Channel 13 space reporter and long-time RNASA Advisor Stephen Gauvain who was tragically killed in a car accident in 1996.  The Award is presented to an individual or team that makes exceptional contributions to public understanding and appreciation of space exploration.  Previous recipients include: William Harwood of CBS; Miles O'Brien, formerly of CNN; Elliot Pulham of the Space Foundation; the NASA-Contractor Communications team that responded to the Columbia accident; and Mark Carreau, formerly of the Houston Chronicle; and Neil deGrasse Tyson of the Hayden Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and Veronica McGregor, Manager of News and Social Media at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

Hadfield will be honored with the 2014 Space Communicator Award in at the RNASA annual black-tie gala to be held on Friday, April 11, 2014, at the Hyatt Regency Houston.  The Master of Ceremonies will be American [news correspondent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/News_correspondent) John Zarrella.  Zarrella was the principal correspondent for CNN’s coverage of the U.S. space program from 1981-2013, and he covered the final flights of the Space Shuttle program.  The Honorable Charles F. Bolden, Jr., NASA Administrator, retired Major General United States Marine Corps and former NASA astronaut, will receive the prestigious 2014 National Space Trophy at this event.

Corporate tickets can be obtained by contacting Bill Taylor at [sales@rnasa.org](mailto:sales@rnasa.org), or by using this link**-**[**http://www.rnasa.org/tables.html**](http://www.rnasa.org/tables.html).  To make a hotel reservation at the Houston Hyatt Regency, please use this link - [**http://www.rnasa.org/houston.html**](http://www.rnasa.org/houston.html), or call 713-654-1234.  For more information about the RNASA Foundation and the RNASA Gala on April 11th, the RNASA website is [**http://www.rnasa.org/**](http://www.rnasa.org/).

Caption for photo:

The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation has selected former [Canadian Space Agency astronaut, author, and musician Chris A. Hadfield](http://www.asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/missions/expedition34-35/profile.asp) to receive the prestigious 2014 Space Communicator Award.