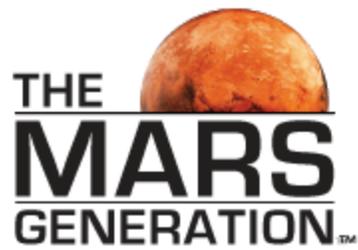


The Mars Generation

Press Kit



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About The Mars Generation

The Mars Generation is a one-of-a-kind nonprofit organization founded by 18-year-old Abigail Harrison, known to many as **Astronaut Abby**. At 13 years old, Abby was embraced by the space community as a leader of her generation, the Mars generation. At the age of 15, Abby built an outreach program now called the Future of Space to excite kids and adults about space and STEM. Abby credits the forming of The Mars Generation to the massive support she has received these past few years from her online community of almost million people. With the support of many professional advisory board members, Abby launched The Mars Generation.

The focus of The Mars Generation is building a stronger tomorrow by energizing our youth today about space and STEM, educating kids and adults about the importance of deep space human space exploration to humankind. The Mars Generation will serve as a catalyst to identify students with an interest in STEM and nurture their study in STEM education.

The Mars Generation is volunteer-driven with **executive and advisory boards** of leaders from the space industry as well as nonprofit, education and business sectors. Collaborating with many other space and STEM organizations, The Mars Generation reaches a broad audience, creating a groundswell of support for space exploration and compelling funding of space exploration benefitting the future of the Mars generation.

The Apollo era inspired generations to dream big and act big. The Shuttle era allowed us to build a massive orbiting world class research laboratory and maintain a constant human presence in space. **Now, we have the Orion Era ready to inspire today's youth to venture further than ever before.** Human space exploration has and will continue to inspire scientists, engineers, policy makers, artists and writers to change our lives on earth. The Mars Generation will renew the importance of and the investment in space exploration to help move us toward the next major goal in space travel: Mars.

Description of The Mars Generation Programs

The Future Of Space Outreach Program

This popular, worldwide outreach program is designed to inspire dreaming big, gaining excitement about STEM, and supporting space exploration. Developed in 2013 by Astronaut Abby, the program continues to thrive, serving Abby's online community of over 400,000 people with ongoing space and STEM news to fuel their own excitement. **The Mars Generation will now operate the Future of Space Program to empower space enthusiasts to share their own passion for space and advocate for human space exploration to continue and grow.** Abby will continue to speak at schools and keynotes for events, host web chats and write for science, space and mainstream publications as part of the program.

Student Space Ambassador Program

This mentorship program inspires teens and young adults to share their own excitement about space exploration with their own communities. This program is free and is available for anyone ages 13-24. Parents and teachers may also sign up to use the resources available.

Mars Generation Student Space Ambassadors (SSA) are inspirational forces in their own communities. They share their own excitement and love for space. By sharing that excitement with others and sharing their own goals and dreams, they inspire others to dream big, act big and go out to make a change in the world. From formal presentations, to reading story books to young kids, to answering questions at an event there are many ways to be a SSA. The Mars Generation will provide ideas and resources to students evolve their own outreach efforts.

Space Camp Scholarship Program

A scholarship program to provide 100% funding (including airfare) for kids with aptitude in STEM and with financial need to attend Space Camp®. Providing exceptional, inspirational experiences to talented kids can help shape their future educational and career choices. Students will be nominated by teachers for this scholarship and must qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program to be considered.

The Mars Generation Board of Directors and Advisory Board

Board of Directors

[Abigail Harrison](#) – Board President, The Mars Generation and STEM and Space Advocate, Astronaut Abby

[Yvonne Hundshamer](#) – Board Secretary, The Mars Generation and Nonprofit Strategist, Blue Grotto, Inc.

[Gordon Russell](#) – Board Treasurer, The Mars Generation and Huntsville Operations Manager for the Propulsion Systems Division, Orbital ATK

[Nicole Harrison](#) - Executive Director, The Mars Generation and Digital Marketing Consultant

Advisory Board

[Kent Rominger](#) - VP Business Development, Orbital ATK and Former Astronaut

[Captain Wendy Lawrence](#) - Retired Naval Aviator and Astronaut

[Dorothy Metcalf-Lindenburger](#) - Former Astronaut and High School Teacher

[Robert Pearlman](#) - Space Historian, Editor and Founder, collectSPACE.com

Sean Costello - Technology Entrepreneur and Photographer, SpaceFlight Insider

[Kathleen Butts](#) - Urban Educator, North Philadelphia Schools

[Myron Fletcher](#) - SLS Rocket Propulsion Engineer, Boeing

[Kristin Maija Peterson](#) - Art Director, Grand Ciel Designs

Michael Seeley - President Health First Foundation

[Mike Johnson](#) - State of Minnesota Transportation Department Management

[Morgan Irons](#) - Duke University

[Kate-Maddona Hindes](#) - PR/Media Director

About Abigail Harrison 'Astronaut Abby' 18-year-old founder and Board Chair of The Mars Generation

Abigail Harrison is a girl with a dream. She wants to someday be an astronaut. But it doesn't stop there--she plans to be the first astronaut to Mars. With a dream that big, it takes setting goals and working hard each day to make it a reality.

She is one step closer, having witnessed several groundbreaking launches: At age 13 she attended the last launch of Endeavour, at age 15 she traveled to Russia to witness a legendary Soyuz launch, and at age 17 she reported on the first test launch of the Orion spacecraft. The opportunity to witness history being made and **also witness the past, present and future of human space exploration** has been inspirational and motivational for Abby. Reporting these experiences to the world and serving as an ambassador for the future of space and the Orion Era continues to be a great honor.

At the age of 15, Abby served as her mentor Astronaut Luca Parmitano's Earth Liaison while he lived on the International Space Station. She created a worldwide outreach program to expand her work with Luca. This program continues to thrive today. The program is geared at igniting passion and excitement about space, STEM and dreaming with kids around the world. Her program includes classroom visits and web chats, keynote speaking at events and sharing with her community of over 400,000 people on her social media channels and blog.

In 2015 Abby founded The Mars Generation (at age 18), a 501c3 nonprofit **focused on empowering others to excite people about human space exploration, STEM and advocacy for support.** Abby serves as chair the board of The Mars Generation, helping to direct the overall programming while also leading the organization's public outreach..

Currently attending the prestigious Wellesley College in Massachusetts studying astrobiology and Russian with expected graduation in 2019. Abby plans to enter directly into a doctoral program after completing her undergrad degree. Along with studying Russian, Abby continues her formal Chinese study. Abby participates in several sports at Wellesley including ruby, hockey and curling. She is also a part of the astronomy club and the Society of Physics Students. Abby is an avid scuba diver working towards becoming a scuba master and working on her private pilot license.

Abby has completed a summer of biological research in Siberia with Wellesley College during 2016 and an astrobiology research internship specific to proving life on Mars at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida during 2017 and is now in her junior year at Wellesley.

The Mars Generation Launch Press Release (1/2)

Eighteen-Year-Old Launches 'The Mars Generation' to Raise Excitement for Human Space Exploration

College Freshman Credits Worldwide Support of Her Dream to be First Astronaut to Mars as Inspiration Behind New Organization

SEPT. 15, 2015 – WELLESLEY, MA – College freshman and aspiring astronaut Abigail Harrison, known on social media as Astronaut Abby, announced today the founding of a new organization that aims to renew the nation's recognition of and investment in human space exploration.

The Mars Generation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit, will focus its efforts on advocating for NASA's Journey to Mars and advancing public interest in space exploration.

"The mission of The Mars Generation is to excite young people and adults about space and science education and to help people understand the importance of these two elements to the future of humanity on Earth," Harrison said. "I am looking forward to helping my generation, the Mars generation, make our journey to the Red Planet happen during this new era of human space exploration."

In addition to Harrison's leadership, The Mars Generation launches today with an accomplished board of advisors, including:

- Wendy Lawrence, retired Navy Captain, NASA Astronaut and veteran of four space shuttle missions (STS-67, STS-86, STS-91, STS-114)
- Kent Rominger, Vice President of Strategy and Business Development at Orbital ATK and retired NASA Astronaut (STS-73, STS-80, STS-85, STS-96, STS-100)
- Dorothy Metcalf-Lindenburger, retired NASA Educator-Astronaut (STS-131) and aquanaut commander on the NEEMO 16 mission
- Dr. Phil Metzger, Planetary Scientist, University Central Florida, Founder of NASA Swamp Works Laboratory
- Myron Fletcher, Space Launch System (SLS) Rocket Propulsion Engineer at Boeing
- Dawn Brown White, Nonprofit CEO, Compas Inc.
- Robert Pearlman, Founder and Editor of collectSPACE.com
- Sean Costello, Canadian Technology Entrepreneur
- Kathleen Butts, Urban Educator, North Philadelphia Schools
- Kristin Maija Peterson, Creative Director, Grand Ciel Design
- Elizabeth Bierman, Aerospace Engineer, Honeywell Aerospace

The Mars Generation Launch Press Release (2/2)

"The Apollo Program inspired many in my generation to get an education in a STEM-related field. I firmly believe human exploration of Mars can have the same impact," said Wendy Lawrence, retired naval aviator and NASA astronaut. "That's why I'm honored to be joining The Mars Generation as an advisor, focusing on the new Student Space Ambassador Program and Space Camp Scholarship Program."

True to Astronaut Abby's own personal mission statement: Dream Big, Act Big and Inspire Others, The Mars Generation will have three core programs designed to meet the mission of the organization:

1. Student Space Ambassador: Will inspire teens and young adults to share their own excitement about space exploration with their communities.
2. Space Camp Scholarship: Will provide 100% funding (including airfare) for kids with aptitude in STEM and financial need to attend U.S. Space Camp.
3. The Future Of Space Outreach: Will help excite kids and adults to support space exploration and inspire them to dream big.

In 2011, Harrison joined Twitter as Astronaut Abby, looking for a quote from a NASA employee for a school project. She was immediately embraced by the space community online as a leader in her generation. In 2013, Harrison decided to start a worldwide outreach program as part of her role as Earth Liaison to her mentor, European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Luca Parmitano, while he was living on the space station. The outreach program continues to thrive as part of the new nonprofit. Harrison has built a community of over 400,000 members on Twitter, Facebook, Google+ and Instagram with a potential reach of over 15 million people each month.

"I am committed to helping ensure that NASA makes it to Mars in the 2030s, whether or not I am part of that first mission," Harrison said. "Making it to Mars is essential to our economic well-being. Our ability to dream big and work towards the impossible pushes us beyond what we think we are capable of as we evolve new technologies and innovations that have real life applications. This is what human space exploration does and why it is so important to the future of humankind. With a rate of return of approximately \$8 for every \$1 the U.S. spends on space exploration, it makes sense to work toward sending humans to explore the next frontier, Mars."

Harrison is a 2015 graduate of South High School, a Minneapolis Public School, and completed a dual-credit program through the University of Minnesota during high school.

Harrison is currently attending the prestigious Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She is studying astrophysics and microbiology with a goal to enter directly into a doctoral program after graduation. Her goal is to become a scientist, her dream is to eventually become a NASA astronaut and be chosen as part of the first mission to Mars.

Quotes For Media Use

"I see a little bit of Abby in every young person – the intrinsic inquisitive nature of young people empowered to think big, dream bigger, and act boldly." - Yvonne Hundshamer, The Mars Generation Board Member

"Encouraging girls and young women to pursue careers in science, including space, medicine, and research is critical to building creative solutions to our country's most pressing challenges. Overcoming barriers, girls and young women develop persistence, courage and pride in their accomplishments and real results we benefit from and will be proud of.

I support Abby in her quest because she understands she has the power to inspire youth, and adults too frankly, to explore and accelerate action to achieve their Mars. It's a message we all need – pursuing dreams is at the heart of the American experience and culture and it's refreshing to hear a new, vibrant voice challenging all of us to think bigger." – Dawne Brown White, Executive Director, Compas inc.

"From the first time I met Abby, I have been impressed by her determination. I wish I had been that motivated at her age!" – Penny Pettigrew, ISS PAYCOM, NASA

"I went into a STEM career because I had several mentors that believed in my abilities and goals. Now I have a chance to mentor and pay it forward, and watch our youth launch us into the solar system. " -Dottie Metcalf-Lindenburger, Retired NASA Astronaut

"It is exciting to think that the first people to walk on the Mars are alive today. Who will make those historic first steps? The Mars Generation will help pave their way to the Red Planet and, while doing so, give us all a role in that journey — as ambassadors bringing the mission to our communities." – Robert Pearlman, Space Historian and Journalist

"Space is inspiring and educational, but it is also necessary for our future. This is the century where we must overcome the boundaries of our planet. I believe the Mars Generation will play a pivotal role in making that happen." - Dr. Phil Metzger, Planetary Scientist, University Central Florida, Founder of NASA Swamp Works Laboratory

Suggested Interview Questions

General

What is the Orion Era? Are we in it now?

Why The Mars Generation? Why not The Space Generation? Or The Moon Generation?

What ages does this Mars Generation include? Is it the same people as Millennials?

Why is the Mars Generation different from other generations?

Why do we want to go to Mars so bad? Isn't there enough to do on Earth?

Why should students want to get involved with The Mars Generation? Why should adults?

Who does The Mars Generation serve?

What does it mean to be an advocate for space?

Astronaut Abby

For those not familiar, who is Abigail Harrison and who is "Astronaut Abby"?

How are you balancing being a college student and the leader of a non-profit organization?

Do you still want to be the first astronaut on Mars?

Why do you want to be the first astronaut to Mars?

How does someone become an astronaut? What type of training and schooling is required?

Links to Video and Notable Press

Videos

[Astronaut Abby Guest on STEMin30 show National Air and Space Museum](#)

[NASA Digital Learning Network Virtual Expert: Astronaut Abby](#)

[Astronaut Abby Speaking At United Arab Space Agency Project Space Forum](#)

[Astronaut Abby TEDx Talk - "What's Your Mars?"](#)

[Astronaut Abby and Astronaut Luca Parmitano Interview with MPR](#)

[Myron Fletcher, Engineer, Boeing, Discusses Space Launch System \(SLS\)](#)

[Astronaut Abby Interview with the Weather Channel](#)

[Astronaut Abby Harrison 'I want to be the first to mars' BBC World News](#)

Press

[2017 Eureka! Innovation award winner: The Mars Generation](#) Minneapolis / Saint Paul
Business Journal

[19-Year-Old Shoots for the Stars](#), Capital Campus

[Meet Abby Harrison, the college sophomore headed for Mars](#), USA Today College

[On Her Way to Mars](#) Code Like A Girl

[20 Under 20: Meet the Next Generation Of STEAM Pioneers](#) Huffington Post

[The Mars Generation: Why We Must Go To Mars](#) Huffington Post

[TMG and Astronaut Abby Logos for Download Click Here](#)