

Dottie Metcalf-Lindenburger

So how does a high school teacher end up orbiting the earth 238 times?

With math and science teachers for parents, Dottie was always drawn to learning and exploration, and at a time when NASA's shuttle program was reaching its highest heights. Watching the hard-won success of legends Sally Ride and Kathryn Sullivan--and later the tragedy of teacher-turned-astronaut Christa McAuliffe--made indelible impressions on Dottie. So did an impassioned visit to Space Camp, where Dottie purchased, and later built, a model of the Space Shuttle Discovery. It was an almost **prophetic choice**: exactly 20 years later, she rode the actual Discovery Shuttle to the International Space Station. During her tenure as a high school science teacher, Dottie found herself on the NASA website, researching a question for a student ("How do astronauts go to the bathroom in space?"). That random inquiry led her to applying to become an astronaut, and--ultimately--to space. All while juggling life as a spouse and mother.

Following space flight, Dottie continued to support fellow astronauts, working as a Cape Crusader for the final three shuttle missions and serving daily operations and planning through the Astronaut Office Station Operation Branch. In 2012, Dottie commanded the NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations (NEEMO) 16 mission, living in an underwater habitat with an international crew of aquanauts and habitat technicians. They simulated spacewalks that can be applied to future space research and exploration.

In 2014, Dottie retired from NASA and returned to the Pacific Northwest, where she enjoys exploring the wonders of Spaceship Earth with her family. During the day, she also works as a licensed geologist for Geosyntec Consultants, where she remediates soil, sediments, and groundwater.

And now she presents virtually and in person to global audiences at companies like **Microsoft**, **BCG**, and **myriad biotech** firms, along with trade associations and schools, about how to **realize bold dreams against a backdrop of uncertainty**.