

# SPACE4ALL



**LELAND MELVIN**

Shuttle Astronaut / NFL Wide Receiver

# Leland Melvin

## “Hey There – Space, STEM and Science Fans!”

I'm Leland Melvin! Here's a look at my amazing voyage from star athlete to explorer floating in the stars!

- **NFL to NASA:** Before becoming an astronaut, I was a wide receiver at the University of Richmond and played in the NFL.
- **Space Shuttle Missions:** I flew twice—STS-122 and STS-129. I spent over 565 hours in space, orbiting Earth more than 374 times!
- **Engineering Projects:** Worked on the X-33 Reusable Launch Vehicle program and have a Master's in Materials Science Engineering.
- **Creative Pursuits:** I love playing piano, painting, and even serving as a guest judge on the reality-TV shows, “Top Chef” and “Dog Whisperer with Cesar Millan.” I'm an author too, “Chasing Space: An Astronaut's Story of Grit, Grace, and Second Chances.”

## What Excites Me About Space and STEM:

- **Technology Advancements:** Innovations developed for space missions lead to improvements in technologies like satellite communications, GPS, and advanced medical imaging.
- **Earth Observation:** Satellites provide crucial data for weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and managing natural disasters.
- **Medical Breakthroughs:** Space research contributes to new medical technologies, including better treatments for bone density loss, muscle atrophy, and even new ways to detect cancer.

“I discovered two things from my time on the ISS as part of NASA's Space Shuttle program: how beautiful and fragile our planet is and how connected we are. To help our civilization advance technologically, we must be curious, inquisitive, and allow kids to be connected to the possibilities of space. I believe by working together as one interracial, intercultural, intergender, inter-everything family of people, we can fuel the dreams of future space explorers and ensure the progress of humanity.”

## Leland's Faves in Space and STEM:

### CLUB FOR THE FUTURE

Get hands on with exciting space lessons and even send your own postcard to space (and back!).

### EXPLORATION GENERATION (ExGen)

AIAA, NSTA and Estes Rockets bring exciting rocketry-based education experiences.

### STEAMPOWER

A collection of activities and resources to help you harness all the STEAM Power you can, with personal anecdotes of my own STEAM discoveries from my childhood in Virginia as the son of two schoolteachers.



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