

Leland D. Melvin, NASA Associate Administrator for Education

Leland D. Melvin, NASA Associate Administrator for Education, is responsible for the development and implementation of the agency's education programs that strengthen student involvement and public awareness about its scientific goals and missions. In this role, he leads the agency in inspiring interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, through NASA's unique mission, workforce, facilities, research and innovations.

As associate administrator for education, Melvin chairs the Education Coordinating Committee, or ECC, an agency-wide collaborative structure that maximizes NASA's ability to manage and implement its education portfolio. The ECC works to ensure that the agency's education investments are focused on supporting the nation's education efforts to develop the skilled workforce necessary to achieve NASA's goals and objectives.

Melvin currently serves on the White House National Science and Technology Council's Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education, or CoSTEM. CoSTEM coordinates the STEM education activities and programs for all federal agencies, encourages the teaching of innovation and entrepreneurship as part of STEM education, reviews STEM education activities and programs to ensure they are not duplicative within the Federal government and develops and implements a five-year STEM education strategy for all federal agencies. He is the United States representative on the International Space Education Board, or ISEB, a global collaboration in space education between NASA, the Canadian Space Agency, the European Space Agency, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and the Centre National d'Études Spatiales. The ISEB shares best practices and unites efforts to foster interest in space, science and technology among the student community worldwide.

Melvin began his NASA career in 1989 as an aerospace research engineer at the agency's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va. He entered NASA's astronaut corps in 1998 and served as a mission specialist operating the robotic arm on two space shuttle missions to the International Space Station: STS-122 in 2008 and STS-129 in 2009.

Melvin earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Richmond, where he also excelled as a wide receiver for the Spiders' football team. He became a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Academic All American and University of Richmond Athletic Hall of Fame Inductee. He was then drafted into the National Football League, or NFL, by the Detroit Lions in 1986 and also spent time with the Dallas Cowboys and the Toronto Argonauts. After injuries sidelined his football career, he returned to academia and earned his Master of Science degree in materials science engineering from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He holds honorary doctorates from Centre College, St Paul's College and Campbellsville University.