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FRANKLIN R. CHANG DÍAZ

Chairman and CEO



Dr. Franklin Chang Díaz @franklinchangd is Chairman and CEO of [Ad Astra Rocket Company](http://www.adastrarocket.com/), a US Delaware Corporation domiciled in Webster, Texas developing advanced plasma rocket technology. Ad Astra also owns and operates a subsidiary in Guanacaste, Costa Rica that focuses on green hydrogen energy storage and fuel-cell electric transportation.

A former NASA astronaut, Dr. Chang Díaz is a veteran of 7 space missions and has logged over 1,600 hours in space, including 19 hours in three space walks.

Dr. Chang Díaz initiated the VASIMR[®] rocket engine project in 1980. Throughout his 25-year NASA career, in conjunction with astronaut duties and training, he and his team at the Advanced Space Propulsion Laboratory (ASPL) at the Johnson Space Center developed the controlling physics of the VASIMR[®]. In 2005 Dr. Chang Díaz retired from NASA and founded the Ad Astra Rocket Company to continue to mature the VASIMR[®] technology through the private sector.

In the corporate world, Dr. Chang Díaz also serves on the Board of Directors of [Cummins Inc.](http://www.cummins.com/) (NYSE-CMI), a global power leader headquartered in Columbus, Indiana, and [EARTH University](http://www.earthuniversity.edu/), an international sustainable development educational institution in Costa Rica. He also leads the “Strategy for the XXI Century, a master plan, aimed to transform Costa Rica into a fully developed nation by the year 2050.

Dr. Chang Díaz received a PhD degree in applied plasma physics from MIT and a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Connecticut. He holds six US Patents including four key patents on the technology of the VASIMR[®] engine.

Dr Chang Díaz is a four-time recipient of NASA’s Distinguished Service Medal, the agency’s highest honor and was inducted in the US Astronaut Hall of Fame on May 4, 2012. He holds honorary doctorates from several universities in the United States and Latin America and has continued to serve in academia as an Adjunct Professor of Physics at Rice University and the University of Houston.