



Alex Apyan, left, and Perry Storey, right, congratulate June Scobee Rodgers, center, for receiving the Alan Shepard award.

DR. JUNE SCOBEE RODGERS RECEIVES ALAN SHEPARD TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION AWARD

June Scobee Rodgers, Ph.D., Founding Chair of Challenger Center for Space Science Education, and patron of the UTC Challenger STEM Learning Center, was named the 2015 recipient of the Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award. The award is given annually in recognition of creative and innovative use of technology by K-12 educators or district-level education personnel; recipients are selected by the Astronauts Memorial Foundation (AMF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Space Foundation. The award was presented to Dr. Rodgers during the opening ceremony of the Space Foundation’s 31st Space Symposium at The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The award, named in honor of astronaut

Alan Shepard, recognizes excellence, quality, and innovation in the development and application of technology in classrooms or in the professional development of teachers.

Dr. Rodgers is the widow of Francis Richard “Dick” Scobee who was killed commanding the Space Shuttle Challenger on January 28, 1986, after booster failure during launch of the STS-51-L mission. From the moment following the Challenger tragedy, Dr. Rodgers dedicated her time, energy, and passion to continuing the Challenger crew’s education mission. She founded the Challenger Center for Space Science Education as a place to foster a new generation of “star-



Dr. Scobee Rodgers Entertains Space Tots

Children attending the Challenger Center’s summer camp Space Tots program listen as Dr. Rodgers talks about the historical significance of the Challenger Shuttle.

challengers” – young people who will reach for the stars no matter their circumstances. Today there are over 44 Challenger Centers throughout the United States as well as Canada, Great Britain, and South Korea. The UTC Challenger STEM Learning Center opened in 1995 as the 20th facility in the Challenger Center network, and was the first to be located and operated by a University.

Educator, Advocate, and Author

While best known for her tireless efforts on behalf of Challenger Center, Dr. Rodgers has also gained attention for her work as an author. Together with co-authors Rebecca Moesta and Kevin J. Anderson – both international bestselling writers - Dr. Rodgers created “Star Challengers,” a science adventure series for young readers. The three books transport readers on a journey to the future (and a real moon base in trouble) where they

learn skills to save the human race. The books are designed to spark student interest in space and careers in science and technology.

Dr. Rodgers’ book, “Silver Linings: My Life Before and After

Challenger 7,” is the expanded story of her book, “Silver Linings: Triumph of the Challenger 7,” first published in 1995. It is a coming of age story that shows how a struggling, but determined, teenager overcomes adversity and, through perseverance fueled by dreams to soar, experiences personal triumph over a wide range of issues.

An active and prominent leader in education throughout her

professional life, Dr. Rodgers has been a classroom teacher and university professor, served as a consultant to local, state, and federal education agencies, and become a nationally recognized advocate for the advancement of science and math education. She is married to retired Lt. General Don Rodgers; they reside in Chattanooga and together have three adult children.



Alex Apyan holds Space Tot Jackson Smalley as they pose in front of the shuttle simulator.

NASA FLIGHT CONTROLLER RETURNS TO CHALLENGER CENTER

Alex Apyan flew missions at the Challenger Center when he was a young student in the Hamilton County school system. He was so inspired by his experience at the Center that he pursued a career in science and space. Following

graduation from Hixson High School in 2007, he attended the University of Cincinnati and graduated with an engineering degree in 2012. He started working at NASA about two and a half years ago, and was recently certified as a flight controller at Johnson Space Center in Houston, and works in the Flight Operations Directorate. Houston is the mission control center for the International Space Station and Apyan communicates daily with astronauts aboard the station. He

enjoys sharing his love of space and science with children, and recently spoke to the Space Tot campers about his work with NASA prior to launching them on a Challenger Center shuttle mission. In the past, Apyan has also addressed students at his alma mater Hixson High School, as well as Big Ridge Elementary; he reaches out to kids in the Chattanooga area whenever he returns home to visit family and friends.

His recent trip to Chattanooga coincided with Dr. Rodgers' visit to the Challenger Center, and the two exchanged stories of living in Texas as well as their experiences with NASA. While here, Apyan also reunited with his 9th grade teacher, the Challenger Center's flight director Bill Floyd.

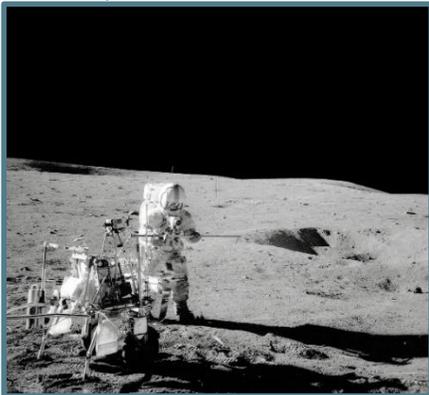


Alex Apyan, left, reminisces with his former 9th grade teacher, the Challenger Center's flight director Bill Floyd, right.

FACTS ABOUT ALAN SHEPARD

- Shepard's Apollo 14 lunar landing was the most accurate of the Apollo missions.
- He was the first American to travel in space, and the second person to do so.
- He was one of only 12 humans who have walked on the moon (all of whom were Americans)
- He was the oldest person, at 47 years old, to walk on the moon.
- He hit two golf balls during his moon walk.
- He was a descendant of a Mayflower passenger.

JULY 21, 1969 FIRST MOON WALK



DECEMBER 13, 1972 LAST MOON WALK (NASA Image of Alan Shepard)



SPACE FOUNDATION IMAGE OF AWARD

THE ALAN SHEPARD TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION AWARD

In 1984, Alan Shepard co-founded The Mercury Seven Foundation (later renamed the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation) to raise scholarship money for science and engineering college students. The Space Foundation, NASA, and the Astronauts Memorial Foundation created the award in Shepard's memory. The award recipient demonstrates exemplary use of technology in the classroom, either to foster lifelong learners or to make the learning process easier.