

ASTRONAUT ROBERT SATCHER

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(House of Representatives - November 17, 2009)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Davis) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Yesterday, as STS-129 lifted off, there was a very definite glint of pride in my eyes and spring in my step because one of the astronauts on board was Mission Specialist Robert Satcher, doctor, chemical engineer, and native of Oak Park, Illinois, and the Seventh Congressional District.

Dr. Satcher is the second astronaut to hail from Oak Park on the western border of Chicago. Any community to boast of such a record of producing astronauts deserves a second look, but for a community with just over 50,000 residents to accumulate such a record, something must be going on that is very right. But, of course, in the end, it is up to the individual to determine what to do with the circumstances of their lives.

Dr. Robert Satcher has done some amazing things with his life. An orthopedic surgeon who practices at Northwestern Memorial and Children's Memorial hospitals, teaches at Northwestern University Medical School, does research at the Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern and the Institute for Bioengineering and Nano technology in Advanced Medicine at Northwestern, Dr. Satcher is a nephew of former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher. He is married to Dr. D'Juanna Satcher, and they have a daughter, Daija.

Dr. Satcher was a Schweitzer Fellow at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in Lambarene, Gabon, completed numerous medical missions for outreach care to underserved areas in Nicaragua, Venezuela, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Gabon. He held internships at DuPont in the Textile Fibers Research Group and the Polymer Products Division.

Growing up, he was a National Merit Scholar and received the Monsanto Award and the Albert G. Hill Award from MIT, fellowships from both the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the UNCF/Merck Research Foundation, and is a member of the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society. He is a Leadership Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, ABC Fellow of the American Orthopedic Association, Bloomberg Leadership Fellow, and has completed 12 research grants and has 15 peer-review publications and over 25 presentations at national and international research meetings.

He has been active in the Big Brother for Youth at Risk Counseling Program; Department of Corrections, San Francisco, California; a tutor for the Black Student Union tutorial program at MIT; the National Society of Black Engineers; the American Institute of Chemical Engineering; a supervising adult for Cub Scout Camp for Boys in Nashville, Tennessee; and he is a lay Episcopal minister with primary responsibility for visiting the sick and shut-in members of the church at St. Edmonds Episcopal Church in Chicago and St. James Episcopal Church in Houston.

He was selected for Astronaut Candidate training by NASA in May of 2004 and completed training in February of 2006. On STS-129, Dr. Satcher is scheduled to perform two EVAs--space walks--among other assignments. For those who want to follow Dr. Satcher on Twitter, he will be tweeting as astro Xbones and ZeroG XMD.

Godspeed to you, Dr. Satcher. Bobby, you have a lot of fans back on Earth, and especially those in Oak Park, Illinois.