



Ellison Onizuka

## S.S. Ellison Onizuka

### NG-16 Cargo Delivery Mission to the International Space Station

Northrop Grumman is proud to name the NG-16 Cygnus spacecraft after NASA astronaut Ellison Onizuka. It is the company's tradition to name each Cygnus spacecraft after an individual who has played a pivotal role in human spaceflight. Onizuka was selected in honor of his status as the first Asian American astronaut to reach space.

Onizuka was born in Kealahou, Kona, Hawaii on June 24, 1946. He received a bachelor's and master's degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Colorado. While studying at Colorado, Onizuka was a member of the United States Air Force ROTC.

After completing his education, Onizuka continued his Air Force career as a flight test engineer and test pilot at McClellan Air Force Base in California. He later trained at the Flight Test Center at Edwards Air Force Base, and later led engineering support for the training resources division. Ellison logged more than 1,700 flight hours during his time at the flight school.

His NASA career began in January 1978, when he was selected for the astronaut program. Completing his training in August 1979, Onizuka went on to work on orbiter test and checkout teams, as well as launch support crews at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. He later worked on the software test and checkout crew at the Shuttle Avionics and Integration Laboratory, and held supporting roles as an astronaut crew equipment/orbiter crew equipment coordinator. He also worked on systems and payload development.

Onizuka's first spaceflight experience came on January 24, 1985, when he flew as a mission specialist aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery for STS 51-C—the first space shuttle mission for the Department of Defense. During this mission he was responsible for primary payload activities, and the STS 51-C crew completed 48 orbits of the Earth. By the time the flight had been completed, Onizuka logged 74 hours in space.

Onizuka, who spent nearly his entire life flying in air and in space, lost his life during the STS 51-L mission when the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded 73 sec. after launch. He made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the space program, and his legacy lives on in his fellow astronauts and all who he has inspired and taught to fly. Northrop Grumman is honored to name its next Cygnus spacecraft in celebration of the life and legacy of astronaut Ellison Onizuka.