

## *Program Biography*

Eugene Kranz

Eugene “Gene” Kranz is a trailblazer, an engineer, a best-selling author and an inspiration.

The Toledo native and 1951 graduate of Central Catholic High School is perhaps best known for his determination in the face of potential tragedy during the Apollo 13 space mission. The immortal words that characterized the crucial mission on the ground – “Failure is not an option”

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YOU OWE MUCH TO YOUR TEACHERS, YOUR PARENTS AND THE MANY OTHERS WHO HAVE BROUGHT YOU TO THIS POINT ON YOUR JOURNEY.

HOWEVER, YOU HAVE REACHED THIS MILESTONE IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH YOUR OWN SWEAT AND TOIL.

IT IS YOU WHO HAVE DONE THE WORK AND WON THE PRIZE ... AND SO WE CELEBRATE YOU TODAY.

THE EDUCATION YOU HAVE RECEIVED IS ONE OF YOUR MOST ENDURING ASSETS ...

**TREASURE IT, SHARE IT AND INVEST IT WELL.**

NOW THAT YOU HAVE REACHED THIS GOAL, IT IS TIME TO SET NEW GOALS ...

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS BEAR IN MIND...

THE TRAGEDY IN LIFE DOES **NOT** LIE IN **NOT** REACHING YOUR GOAL....

THE TRAGEDY OF LIFE LIES IN HAVING **NO** GOAL TO REACH.

IT IS UP TO YOU TO TAKE CHARGE AND DIRECT THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFE TO THE FUTURE...

**NO ONE WILL DO IT FOR YOU.**

TODAY YOUR FUTURE MAY SEEM UNCERTAIN, HOWEVER YOUR DRIVE TO ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOAL

INDICATES THAT YOU POSSESS THE ENERGY, THE IMAGINATION, AND THE ABILITY TO SURMOUNT ANY OBSTACLES YOU MEET ALONG THE ROAD.

IN MY LIFETIME AS AN ENGINEER, AVIATOR AND IN SPACE I HAVE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THOUSANDS OF YOUNG COLLEGE GRADUATES.

YOUTH IS THE ENERGY FOR SPACEFLIGHT... OUR WORK IS IN AN UNFORGIVING AND HIGH RISK ENVIRONMENT.

WE SELECT NEW MEMBERS FROM COLLEGE GRADUATING CLASSES .... JUST LIKE YOURSELVES.

WE THEN PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 3-5 YEARS TRAINING

TO FURTHER EXPAND THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND TECHNOLOGY

AND APPLY THEIR NEW SKILLS AS AN INSTRUCTOR, CONTROLLER, TRAJECTORY DESIGNER OR SYSTEMS ENGINEER.

I REGULARLY MEET WITH OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS TO GAUGE THEIR PROGRESS, PROVIDE ENCOURAGEMENT... AND LISTEN TO THEIR CRITIQUE

MY JOB IS TO IGNITE THEIR PASSION... AND TO FOCUS THEIR ENERGIES TO THEIR NEW RESPONSIBILITIES AND PREPARE THEM FOR

**THE TIME WHEN THE FATE OF THEIR MISSION IS ON THE LINE... AND THEY ARE THE ONES POSITIONED TO TAKE ACTION.**

I AM BULLISH ON YOUNG PEOPLE... VIRTUALLY ALL OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN WITH THE YOUNG BECAUSE AVIATION AND SPACE IS A YOUNG PERSONS ARENA.

THE DAY WHEN MY TEAMS ANSWERED JIM LOVELLS CALL ... "HOUSTON WE HAVE A PROBLEM" ... MY MISSION CONTROL TEAMS WERE IN THEIR MID 20'S... FLIGHT DIRECTORS MID 30'S.

RESPONSIBILITIES ARE ASSIGNED EARLY IN THEIR CAREER TO CONTROLLERS...

DURING TRAINING THEY LEARN OF THEIR INNER SELF AND THE BOUNDARY OF THEIR ABILITIES.

THEY ALSO LEARN OF THEIR TEAMMATES... THE FRAGILE NATURE OF LIFE... AND THE VAGARIES OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY.

AS I LOOK AT YOU THIS MORNING I SEE THE SAME ENERGIES, TALENT AND STRENGTH THAT I HAVE SEEN IN MY TEAMS FOR ALMOST 50 YEARS

YOU... **LIKE MY CONTROLLERS SEE THE WORLD AS IT CAN BE.**

YOUR STRENGTH, OPTOMISM, AND INITIATIVE ALWAYS CARRIES YOU WHEN YOU FACE CHALLENGES.

**THIS IS YOUR POWER... IT IS THE POWER OF YOUTH.**

FOR A FEW MOMENTS ... LET ME ADDRESS THIS GRADUATING CLASS AS I WOULD SPEAK TO A NEW GROUP OF CONTROLLERS

I WELCOME YOU TODAY TO THE RANKS OF MISSION OPERATIONS.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS SIMPLY TO "TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR CREW SAFETY AND MISSION SUCCESS."



QUIET CONFIDENCE, ABSOLUTE PREPARATION, AND THE RESPECT FROM YOUR TEAM MEMBERS ARE KEY TO YOUR PERFORMANCE.

THE DAY YOU NEED HELP ...TRUST YOUR TEAM TO GIVE YOU HAND.

WHEN YOU LEAVE YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR YOU WILL FIND THAT YOUR LEARNING IS EASIER AND FASTER.

YOUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WILL DEVELOP INTO TRUE FRIENDSHIP, AND RESPONSIBILITIES WILL COME YOUR WAY.

### **3. THE TEAM IS YOUR LIFELINE.**

TEAMWORK IS CENTRAL TO YOUR TRAINING AND EVERY TASK YOU WILL PERFORM IN MISSION CONTROL.





THAT YOUR LIFE'S WORK WILL BRING YOU JOY AND MAKE YOUR FAMILY,  
COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

I WOULD LIKE TO CLOSE WITH A FEW WORDS BY PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENEDY....

“OF THOSE TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN, MUCH IS REQUIRED,

AND WHEN AT SOME FUTURE TIME THE HIGH COURT OF HISTORY SITS IN  
JUDGMENT OF EACH ONE OF US,

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