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Astronaut Richard Linnehan Will Deliver Keynote Speech at UNH's Spring Commencement

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UNH News Bureau

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Astronaut and University of New Hampshire alumnus Dr. Richard Linnehan will deliver the keynote speech to more than 2,400 graduates celebrating their academic achievements during the 2002 Spring Commencement on Saturday, May 25.

The highlight of a student's academic

career and UNH's largest ceremony, Commencement begins at 10 a.m. at Cowell Stadium, rain or shine. It is expected to last two hours.

Linnehan will be awarded an honorary Doctor of Space Science degree.



Richard Linnehan

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The university also will present Granite State Awards to Manchester, N.H. inventor Dean Kamen and campaign finance reform champion Doris "Granny D" Haddock of Dublin, N.H.

Kamen is president and owner of DEKA Research and Development Corp., and holds more than 30 U.S. patents. He is the inventor of the motorized two-wheel scooter, the Segway HT.

Haddock left Pasadena, Calif., on Jan. 1, 1999, and

walked 3,200 miles across the United States to draw attention to campaign finance reform. Hospitalized once with dehydration and pneumonia, Haddock ended her journey on Feb. 29, 2000, in Washington, D.C.

Linnehan, 46, is a veteran of three space flights and has logged more than 43 days in space, including three EVAs (spacewalks) totaling 21 hours and 9 minutes.

He graduated from UNH in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in animal sciences with a minor in microbiology. He received his degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from The Ohio State University's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1985.

After graduating from veterinary school, Linnehan entered private veterinary practice and was later accepted to a two-year joint internship in zoo animal medicine and comparative pathology at the Baltimore Zoo and Johns Hopkins University.

After completing his internship, Linnehan was commissioned as a captain in the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps and reported for duty in early 1989 at the Naval Ocean Systems Center, San Diego, Calif., as chief clinical veterinarian for the U.S. Navy's Marine Mammal Program. During his assignment at the Naval Ocean Systems Center, Linnehan initiated and supervised research in the areas of cetacean and pinniped anesthesia, orthopedics, drug pharmacokinetics and reproduction in direct support of U.S. Navy mobile marine mammal systems stationed in California, Florida and Hawaii.

Selected by NASA in March 1992, Linnehan reported to the Johnson Space Center in August 1992 where he completed one year of astronaut candidate training qualifying him for space shuttle flight assignments as a mission specialist.

Linnehan initially was assigned to flight software verification in the Shuttle Avionics Integration Laboratory (SAIL). He was subsequently assigned to the Astronaut Office Mission Development Branch, working on payload development and mission development flight support for future space shuttle missions.

He first flew as a mission specialist in 1996 on STS-78, the Life Sciences and Microgravity Spacelab (LMS) mission. The 17-day flight included studies sponsored by 10 nations and five space agencies, and was the first mission to combine both a full microgravity studies agenda and a comprehensive life sciences payload. STS-78 orbited the Earth 271 times, covering 7 million miles in 405 hours and 48 minutes.

In 1998, he served as the payload commander on the STS-90 Neurolab mission. During the 16-day flight, the seven-person crew aboard space shuttle Columbia served as both experiment subjects and operators for 26 individual life science experiments focusing on the effects of microgravity on the brain and nervous system. STS-90 orbited the Earth 256 times, and covered 6.3 million miles in 381 hours and 50 minutes. Both missions served as a model for future life sciences studies on board the International Space Station.

In 2002, he was a member of the four-man EVA crew on STS-109, the fourth Hubble Space Telescope (HST) servicing mission. The crew successfully upgraded the Hubble Space Telescope leaving it with a new power unit, a new camera and new solar arrays. HST servicing and upgrade was accomplished by four crew members during five spacewalks in five consecutive days. Linnehan performed three space walks totaling 21 hours and 9 minutes. STS-109 orbited the Earth 165 times, and covered 3.9 million miles in more than 262 hours.

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