

■ The loss of *Columbia* only brought me hurt for a while. Time is replacing that pain with awe and wonder at the courage and heart of true explorers willing to risk their earthly lives for the joy of discovering and enlarging the limit of humanity's knowledge. I will more passionately pursue the explorations and endeavors important to me the risky but soul-stirring adventures I've dreamt about for a long time. I am, as always, committed to space exploration as an adventure that benefits our planet and humanity in both a physical and spiritual sense. True joy is worth the risk.

Karen Borski, Data Archivist/Experiment Support Scientist, Space and Life Sciences Directorate

■ As a quality engineer for the NASA Space Shuttle Program, I have true regard for the crew of *Columbia*. Their vision, strength of purpose and sheer determination to conduct their mission has inspired me to continue my work. Even though many critics have derided the space programs for the risks involved, I fully understand that risks are necessary for endeavors as valuable as our missions to space. The fruits of space exploration shall continue to enrich and bring meaning to the lives of all Earth's inhabitants. We must continue the process for which our noble astronauts gave their lives.

Joyce Osterhus, Sr. Quality Engineer, West Coast S&MA Office, SAIC

■ They were just so gracious, inquisitive and nice to work with. I had helped Kalpana design her first mission patch. She was a first-time astronaut, and yet she was the most polite, most patient, most like a kid with a new toy of anyone with whom I have had the pleasure to work. She asked about the design process, not wanting to "cause any trouble," willing to come to Graphics to talk about it. She had the positive attitude to which I'd most like to aspire – a genuine explorer of new things, no matter what the subject. I'll miss that.

David Russell, Senior Graphic Design Specialist IV, IMPASS contract

■ After the STS-107 tragedy, I went to Toronto to talk to kids about NASA. When I looked into the audience, I saw a diversity of faces all interested in space. The STS-107 crew mirrored that same diversity. A friend of mine who lives in Toronto reminds me of Kalpana Chawla with the mixture of Eastern and Western culture that comes when one emigrates from India. The STS-107 crew looked like America. They worked so well together in space in spite of, or because of, their diversity. I hope that we can continue that legacy here on the ground.

Stacey E. Morrison, Deputy CIO, Space and Life Sciences Directorate

■ The *Columbia* crew should serve as an inspiration to every person who has ever looked to the heavens and dreamed of what might be. Dreamers seem to be in short supply these days. Each crewmember will be remembered as one who dared to act on their dreams. "Great it is to dream the dream / When you stand in youth by the starry stream / But a greater thing is to fight life through / And to say in the end that the dream is true." –John Osteen

Ernest Marsh, Senior Engineer, Software Safety

■ It's human nature that good things will arise from tragedies that affect our lives. The last few years, there have been a lot of them, whether personal or national. Although I'm not an engineer or an astronaut, I have wondered "Did I do a good job for STS-107? Could I have done something better? Did I serve them well?" I've taken time to rededicate myself to NASA's mission of space travel and that I'm a part of our country's pride. This has led me to push my team toward perfection to ensure that we're serving the astronauts who have chosen this perilous path.

Gyla Whitlow, Special Event Coordinator, IMPASS contract

The Columbia crew inspired me with their positive attitude and unconditional love and respect for every person who crossed their paths. These seven accomplished souls took the time to embrace me and everyone else who supported their mission, and treated us as a part of their crew. They showered me with praise and always offered positive guidance. This crew insisted that I wasn't "just their secretary," but an integral part of the team, which is how they treated all who contributed to their efforts towards this mission.

A few of my thoughts on each individual crewmember:

Rick's faith was present in his everyday life. It was easy to understand why he was chosen as Commander for this very demanding 16-day mission. He sang in his church choir and invited me to come to special services. To see and hear him sing his solo with a special grace and love, backed by this large choir, never failed to bring tears to my eyes.

Willie's charm and thoughtfulness not only touched those he knew but also reached out to organizations that make a difference throughout the world. He brought items into space for the U.N.'s World Food Program, Doctors Without Borders, and Interplast – all organizations that transcend borders to help the less fortunate. His wife and sons were his heaven here on Earth.

Dave enjoyed sharing many adventures and hobbies, from his past days as a gymnast and circus performer, to the present (last year) when he called me with a live second-by-second account of the crew's approach to the launch pad during the Terminal Countdown Demonstration Test. He was detailed and full of enthusiasm. I can still feel the wave of excitement and hear him say over the cell phone, "There she is. Oh Roz, she is beautiful!" referring to the Columbia as she stood on Launch Pad B.

Michael was confident and intellectual – a deep thinker. Humble, quiet and professional, he had the most incredible smile. He was a wonderful husband and father. He took pride in his African-American heritage with a strong affection and appreciation for the forefathers who led the way like the Buffalo Soldiers and the Tuskegee Airmen.

Kalpana had a quest for knowledge. She was always studying and preparing to soar over and above what was required, with special attention to detail. Even with her demanding schedule and time constraints, she would stop what she was doing to lend a hand or guide me in the right direction. She had special love for birds and nature. Children adored her and she even made it a point to get to know my children, Jacques and Kristina.

Laurel glowed from deep inside with honest and nurturing love. Her greatest passion was her son Iain and her husband Jon. She was observant, caring and at peace. She had a wealth of information – a natural instructor, she was always willing to share her knowledge. Always thoughtful, while in space, she made a special effort to say 'thank you' from her entire family with an e-mail and flowers delivered to my home.

Ilan was one of the nicest men you could ever meet. Very patient and capable, he would show me different cultural items from Israel, carefully explaining the details and its history. He made it a point to compliment me for my ability to bridge time zones while working with the Israeli Embassy and various Israeli government agencies. Ilan was already a hero who stood up for his beliefs to protect his beloved country of Israel.



Since their passing, I continue to feel an extension of their kindness through their colleagues, friends and especially their families. When one has been graced with the privilege of being in the presence of such an exceptional group, I am inspired to pass onto others all that they have shared with me: unconditional love and respect, and never taking one moment, one person or the smallest kind gesture for granted.

Rosalind Hobgood,
STS-107 Crew Secretary

Rosalind Hobgood, STS-107 Crew Secretary, went to India in November with some of the crew's family members. They were invited by Astronaut Kalpana Chawla's husband J.P. Harrison to distribute copies of CDs highlighting Chawla's career at NASA. The group of 10 arrived in Delhi and then departed to their assigned cities to make presentations at universities, planetariums and schools. Hobgood's group, which visited Bombay, included Rona Ramon and Lani and Cameron McCool.