



Nicole Mann

First Native American
Woman in Space

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Nicole Aunapu Mann is a U.S. astronaut. She is a member of the Wailacki tribe of the Round Valley Indian Tribes of northern California. Mann is the first Indigenous woman to go into space. Mann is part of NASA's SpaceX Crew-5 mission that launched to the International Space Station on October 5, 2022.



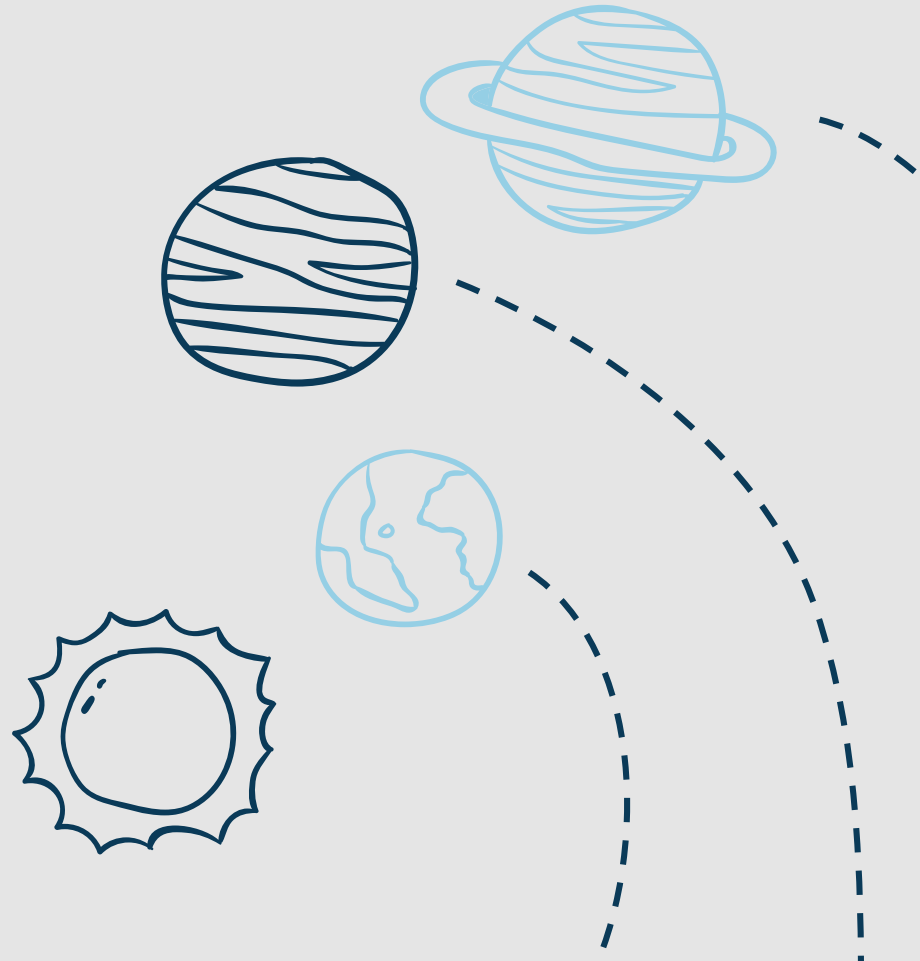
Education



Mann was born in 1977 in Petaluma, California, and grew up in that area. After she graduated from high school in 1995, she attended the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Mann earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from there in 1999. She was given the rank of second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. In 2001 Mann received a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Stanford University. She continued on to the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School.

Career

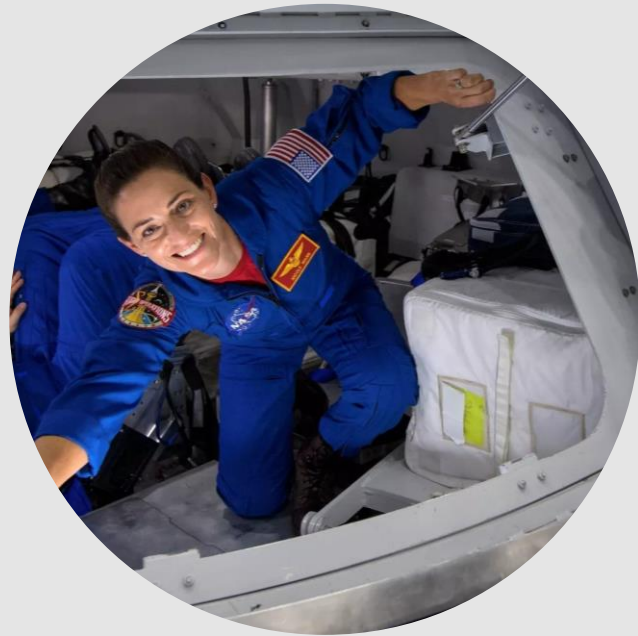
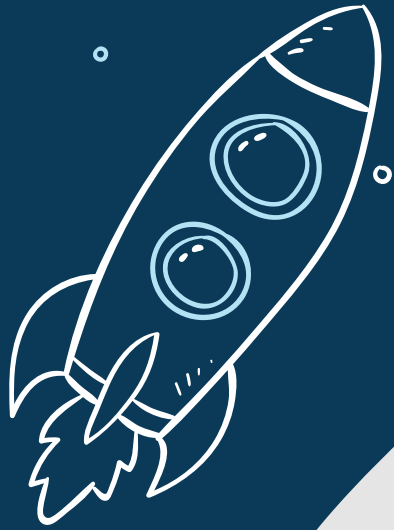
During her career as a pilot, Mann has flown more than 2,500 hours in 25 different types of aircraft. She also completed 47 combat missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2011 Mann applied to be an astronaut. More than 6,000 other people applied as well. Two years later eight people were chosen, and she was one of them. In 2015 Mann completed astronaut training. This included wilderness survival training, Russian language training, and instruction in the International Space Station (ISS) systems.



Mission Commander

The Crew-5 mission was launched in October 2022. Mann is the mission commander, which means she is responsible for all parts of the flight. On board the ISS, Mann will help conduct about 250 scientific experiments. The crew is scheduled to be on the ISS for six months. In 2020 Mann was selected to be one of 18 astronauts for the Artemis program. Artemis is NASA's mission to send astronauts to the Moon for the first time since 1972.





- ✧ Mann hopes her achievements will encourage other Native American kids to pursue their goals. “I hope it will inspire young Native American children to follow their dreams and realize that some of those barriers that are there or used to be there are being broken down,” Mann told BBC. “Anytime we are able to do something that is a first, or wasn’t done in the past, it’s so important. They have these opportunities.”

Multimedia Content

