



MARITIME PATROL AND RECONNAISSANCE FORCE HALL OF HONOR

Captain Michael E. Lopez-Alegria

United States Navy

Captain Lopez-Alegria was born in Madrid, Spain and grew up in Mission Viejo, CA. He attended the United States Naval Academy, earning his degree in aeronautical engineering in 1980. Upon earning his pilot wings, he served a tour as a selectively retained graduate instructor at primary flight school. His maritime experience commenced when he reported to Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron Two (VQ-2) in Rota, Spain, where he flew Cold War missions in both the EP-3 and EA-3B. He was designated a mission commander and instructor pilot in the EP-3 and left the command in 1986, as the top Lieutenant. He was selected for test pilot training while completing his Master's degree at Naval Postgraduate School. During his test pilot tenure in Patuxent River, MD he accumulated over 5,700 flight hours in over 30 different aircraft. In 1992, he was selected for astronaut training and reported to the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

CAPT Lopez-Alegria first flew in space aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia in 1995 for a 16 day mission. The mission crew prepared for launch on 6 occasions, being scrubbed each time until their successful launch 25 days after first suiting up. Following this flight, CAPT Lopez-Alegria was assigned as NASA Director of Operations at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia. He also served as the director of NASA's International Space Station Crew Operations Office. He returned to space aboard Space Shuttle Discovery on the 100th Space Shuttle mission. During this mission, the crew completed the first exterior framework for the International Space Station. During his 2 spacewalks, CAPT Lopez-Alegria successfully tested the SAFER jetpack, flying up to 50 feet away from the Space Station. On his third mission, aboard Space Shuttle Endeavor, CAPT Lopez-Alegria conducted 3 more spacewalks as part of the ongoing International Space Station expansion. This mission was extended 4 days due to bad weather at the landing site. His fourth and final space mission was as the Commander of International Space Station Expedition 14. He was launched from Baikonur, Kazakhstan aboard a Soyuz TMA-9 spacecraft. While onboard the Space Station, CAPT Lopez-Alegria conducted 5 more spacewalks on various construction projects for the station, including the attachment of the guidance antenna which subsequently guided in the first unmanned automated transfer vehicle, the Jules Verne to the Space Station. Upon his return to Earth aboard the same Soyuz spaceship, CAPT Lopez-Alegria marked the longest single space mission for an American at 215 days. He also established the American record for number of spacewalks and time outside his spacecraft with 10 spacewalks and over 67 hours conducting them.

CAPT Lopez-Alegria retired from the Navy in 2008 and from NASA in March 2012 and currently serves on several boards for commercial space organizations.