



2024 Walks of Life Honoree

Joyce Dever

As Chief of NASA Glenn Research Center's Materials and Structures Division, Joyce A. Dever oversees a staff of more than 230 researchers and engineers working to advance the capabilities of materials and structures for extreme aerospace environments.

She fosters a collaborative research and engineering culture. Teams under her leadership have developed new materials and structures technologies to enable aircraft propulsion systems to burn less fuel and produce less emissions. Her teams have also carried out large scale testing of spacecraft structural systems and rover components, proving that they can operate in the harsh environments they will encounter during their missions to the moon and other planets.

Joyce, whose father, Patrick Brady, was an accountant in Cleveland, grew up in Cleveland's West Park neighborhood, attending Our Lady of Angels School and graduating in 1983 from Saint Joseph Academy, where she developed her passion for science. While a student at Cleveland State University seeking her bachelor's degree in chemistry, she became a student intern at NASA Lewis (now Glenn) Research Center, where she became familiar with materials and coatings used on spacecraft surfaces and the need to improve their durability for the harsh environments of space missions.

Upon graduation, she worked for a NASA contractor for two years before being hired by NASA in 1989. She subsequently earned her master's degree in Materials Science and Engineering from Case Western Reserve University. Prior to assuming a leadership position, she spent nearly 20 years conducting research and testing the effects of the space environment on materials. She authored more than 65 technical publications, and her work has contributed to the selection of materials used for thermal control systems on the International Space Station and the Hubble Space Telescope.

From the earliest days of her career, Joyce sought to share her excitement of science and space with students to encourage future generations of scientists and engineers. For a number of years, she served as a speaker at Saint Joseph Academy's annual career day. Recently, she served on the school's advisory board for their Engineering and Design Honors Program. She also has mentored numerous NASA employees, with a particular focus on supporting women on their professional development journeys.

Among other awards, she has been the recipient of NASA's Outstanding Leadership Medal and the Cleveland Federal Executive Board's "Wings of Excellence" Award. She was a finalist for the Rotary National Award for Space Achievement.

She and her husband, Tim, an electrical engineer for NASA, live in Westlake. They are the parents of Megan and Sarah, who also works for NASA.

2024 Walks of Life Award of the Irish American Archives Society, Cleveland OH