



**CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE  
DU MONTRÉAL MÉTROPOLITAIN**

BOARD OF TRADE OF METROPOLITAN MONTREAL

SCIENTIFIC SECTOR

**Julie Payette**

Chief Operating Officer  
Montréal Science Centre

Vice President  
Canada Lands Company

Canadian Astronaut

Born in October 1963 in Montréal, Julie Payette is one of the world's few female astronauts. Her determination and passion for science and engineering led her to complete two space missions, orbiting the Earth 500 times and travelling over 16 million kilometres.

From the beginning of university, the future astronaut's destiny was clear. A diligent, gifted student, she received one of six Canadian scholarships to attend the United World College of the Atlantic in Wales. After receiving her international baccalaureate from that institution, she graduated with honours in electrical engineering from McGill University (1986) and received a master of applied science from the University of Toronto (1990).

Before joining the Canadian Space Program, Julie Payette conducted research into computer systems, natural language processing, automatic voice recognition and the application of interactive technologies to space. She worked as a systems engineer at IBM Canada, a research assistant at the University of Toronto (1988-1990), a guest research scientist at the IBM Research Laboratory in Zurich (1991) and a research engineer at BNR/Nortel in Montréal (1992).

In June 1992, the scientist reached the most important turning point in her career. She was selected by the Canadian Space Agency, from among 5,330 candidates, to be part of a select group of four Canadian astronauts to go into space. In 1996, she joined the NASA Astronaut Corps to continue her training at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

In preparation for a space mission, Julie Payette accumulated hundreds of flying hours, earning her professional pilot's licence and completing training as a military pilot. After years of tireless effort, she found herself aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery from May 27 to June 6, 1999, becoming the first Canadian to visit the International Space Station.

After returning from her mission, Julie Payette worked with Russian and European partners for the development of the International Space Station and was CAPCOM (Capsule Communicator) at the mission control center in Houston. From 2000 to 2007, she was the Canadian Space Agency's Chief Astronaut. These years of experience gave her a chance to return to space in 2009 as flight engineer aboard Space Shuttle Endeavour, at the controls of three robotic arms.

After logging over 611 hours/25 days in orbit, Ms. Payette stayed firmly planted on the ground in the years that followed. In January 2011, she accepted a research chair in public policy at the prestigious Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington. A few months later, she became Quebec's Scientific Representative to the United States, while remaining a member of the Canadian Astronaut Corps. Since July 2013, she has been at the helm of the Montréal Science Centre and Vice President MSC for the Canada Lands Company.

An accomplished woman who serves as an inspiration, Julie Payette has earned many honours for her important contribution to science and to Quebec's reputation around the world, including becoming a Knight of the Ordre national du Québec (2002), receiving the Engineers Canada Gold Medal (2010) and becoming an Officer of the Order of Canada (2010).