

# From Space Camp... To Space Station!

Dr. Serena Auñón-Chancellor is an **astronaut** and **physician** for NASA, headquartered in Houston, TX at Johnson Space Center. She served as a **flight engineer** for Expedition 56 and 57 onboard the International Space Station. Serena shares that, “the most rewarding part of my job on the ISS was **performing research that helps people live on Earth**. This included science looking at cancer research, muscle atrophy, and even Parkinson’s disease.”

Serena’s role as an explorer extends beyond her treks through space. Serena has lived on the Antarctic ice as part of a team recovering meteorites, and served as an **aquanaut** on the Aquarius underwater laboratory. “The most important skills to have as an explorer are an **optimistic attitude** and the ability to **work on a team**. Sometimes you have to be a leader and other times, a follower. As long as you have a good attitude, you’d be surprised what can be accomplished,” says Serena.

Participating in Space Camp during high school helped cement Serena’s goal of joining the astronaut program, and in 2009, that goal came to fruition. As only the second Hispanic female to join the NASA astronaut corps, she opens doors to diverse youth who also dream of pursuing careers in the aerospace industry. To those students, Serena says, “nothing can replace hard work and belief in yourself. You have to **picture where you want to be in life** and surround yourself by people who believe in you. Don’t ever choose a career because you think someone else wants you to do this. Choose a career in something you are passionate about and that will shine through!”

## Serena’s Journey



**Serena Auñón-Chancellor**  
*Astronaut and Physician*

“Do what you love...the rest will follow!”

