

NRO selects 2003 class of Pioneers

5 September, 2003

The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) has selected its Pioneer Class of 2003 - four people who made significant and lasting contributions to the discipline of national reconnaissance. The four selectees are Mr. Carl Ferdensi, Jr., Dr. James W. Stoner, retired Air Force Col. David Raspet, and Mr. Charles Tevis.

The new pioneers will be honored in a ceremony at 1:30 p.m. Sept. 23 at NRO headquarters where plaques will be permanently displayed in their honor. They were selected by Under Secretary of the Air Force and NRO Director Peter Teets based on recommendations from a special selection board, and will join 53 pioneers selected over the past three years.

Mr. Ferdensi devised algorithms and computer processing techniques in the late 1970s and early 1980s for foreign instrumentation signals intelligence data. His pioneering work led to dramatic improvements in telemetry collection. The accuracy of the data enabled national and military decision makers to analyze and make informed decisions about Soviet military capability. His career in national reconnaissance began in 1976.

Dr. Stoner pioneered techniques for near real-time processing of electronic intelligence signals in the 1970s. He developed essential algorithms, supervised software engineering, and implemented ground station operations to process large volumes of data in support of global military operations. His work made possible rapid digital processing and dissemination of data that meet critical requirements of military users. His career in national reconnaissance began in 1970.

Colonel Raspet pioneered advanced methods of integrating spacecraft into launch vehicles and provided crucial leadership in the management of national reconnaissance systems. His innovative approaches to spacecraft design and integration during the 1970s ensured the sustained operation of reconnaissance satellites and the continuous flow of technical intelligence to national and military decision makers. His career in national reconnaissance began in 1966.

Mr. Tevis was a pioneering advocate for space-based signals intelligence collection at the NSA in the late 1950s. He advocated using satellites to collect telemetry from foreign strategic weapon systems, which resulted in the deployment of several novel space-based signals intelligence collection systems. In the late 1960s, Mr. Tevis also was instrumental in founding the Defense Special Missile and Astronautics Center that analyzed signals intelligence at a single location. This made integrated intelligence available to policymakers. His career in national reconnaissance spanned from 1954-1994.

News media wishing to attend the event must contact the NRO Office of Corporate Communications at (703) 808-1015 and must be at the NRO Visitor's Center by 1 p.m. Sept. 23.