Jake Singleton: pioneering work in space

The 32-year-old US Air Force Captain from Utah, United States, is now preparing for his next adventure as was recently sworn in as a US Space Force Officer in the newly formed military service.

The dad-of-four said:

> Sitting back and thinking about my job titles and what I do… I had several experiences over the past couple of years where I've just sat back and thought this is incredible.
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> I've got the greatest job in world and I can't believe I'm doing this!
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> I don't think I could have imagined this scenario and situation as just a kid interested in space.

The ceremony was particularly poignant as, due to pandemic restrictions, he was sworn in remotely at home with his wife and children on the sofa behind him.

He said it was extra special that people, who would not otherwise have been able to attend, could join on Zoom including his family in America. His father also served in the Air Force.

After completing his application for the Space Force the family man had their 4 year old son press the submit button while dressed up as an astronaut.

The People Inside – Jake Singleton

In his time with Dstl he has been working on space innovation projects that look to change the way the Ministry of Defence collaborates with companies and inventors of space technology.

Along with Dstl Space Programme lead Mike O'Callaghan, Jake was one of the leading forces behind the first International Space Pitch Day which aimed to utilise emergent technology and get new ideas to market as quickly as possible.

He said:

> We worked with space start-ups and space ventures from all around the world, in a real Dragon's Den type style, we were able to receive these pitches and award these contracts.
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> Sometimes we can do it really quickly in months. Could we do it

> faster? Could we do it in a number of weeks? Could we do it in a day?
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> It was incredible working with Dstl and also the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA).

Ten companies from the UK, the US, India and Australia received contracts.

He said:

> I think the most exciting thing is within the space programme today there is a lot of new exciting technologies emerging independent of government requirements in the commercial market.
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> We see these disrupting and changing the way we think about space.

Jake has always wanted to work in space and achieved a BS degree in mechanical engineering at Utah State University, then went on to get his MS degree in astronautical engineering at US Air Force Institute of Technology.

He added:

> Coming out of my Masters programme and working at the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) on space technologies there, I actually found a resume that I put together for an English assignment in high school.
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> It said imagine where we will be in 10 years, what we will be doing and create a resume for it. So I had this astronaut's resume that said I was going to go and get a degree in astronautical engineering and space and different things like that.
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> I don't think I realised what any of those meant and I think I looked up what the requirements were and I write those down on the resume.
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> It was really exciting as an adult to look at that and realise I was doing some of those things. I couldn't have imagined how cool and how incredible a job I could be doing today. It was kind of fun to see.

He added that, with NASA's recent commitment to having a permanent presence on the moon, space travel may be a realistic possibility for him in the coming years.

Last year, while at Dstl, Jake submitted his first application for the astronaut candidate program.

"This decade that we're in is the most exciting decade we will see in space.

The advancement in technology is so rapid. We are breaking new boundaries every day, every year," he said.