The first humans ever to leave footprints in the lunar regolith, Aldrin and Armstrong made history — and a permanent impression on the world — as they bravely ventured beyond Earth. This summer marks 50 years since Aldrin, Armstrong and Michael Collins made their daring journey to the moon.

But this historic achievement belongs to many more Americans than just this trio of astronauts: Behind the scenes, more than 400,000 people worked on the mission and made it possible for to land on the moon. All told, it was one of the greatest feats that we humans have ever pulled off.

See our complete archive of Apollo 11 50th anniversary coverage here!

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Events Celebrating Apollo 11 Moon Landing's 50th Anniversary

The mission, dubbed Apollo 11, was the climax of the Apollo program, which pushed human spaceflight forward faster than ever before. In October 1968, the first crewed flight of the Apollo program lifted off; less than a year later, Apollo 11 launched. Within just a few short years, a total of six missions landed 12 U.S. astronauts on the surface of the moon. A seemingly impossible goal, the first human landing on the moon was a major victory for the United States in the ongoing space race with Cold War rival the Soviet Union.

Fifty years after the Apollo 11 mission, people around the globe are once again reflecting on and celebrating the moon landing, the odds that were stacked against it and how it continues to influence spaceflight.