

Helena Bales

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Doctor Helena Bales, Director of LEO Colonization at NASA Ames, has been a prominent contributor to the development of a sustainable continued human presence in space as well as to STEM outreach programs. Throughout her career Dr. Bales has focused on creating and maintaining a space-port in Low Earth Orbit, fueling travel and scientific discovery throughout our solar system. Dr. Bales graduated from Oregon State University with a B.S. in Computer Science and was awarded a Doctorate from John Hopkins University. Dr. Bales has worked as a civil servant for over fifty years, contributing to many space missions, research discoveries, and publications. Dr. Bales was the first openly LGBTQ astronaut, and the first person to automate soldering in space. Dr. Bales has written about her experiences throughout her career in her autobiography "Climbing to LEO and Staying There: One Woman's Journey through the Aerospace Industry". In her retirement, Dr. Bales will continue her travels throughout the solar system and her projects from her home in the French Alps where she lived as a child.