

DIANA TRUJILLO: FROM CALI TO THE STARS

Diana Trujillo Pomerantz was born in Cali, Colombia, on January 4, 1981. From a young age, she dreamed of exploring the universe and breaking barriers. Growing up in a country with limited opportunities for women in science, she decided to chase her passion despite the odds. At just seventeen, with only \$300 in her pocket and without knowing English, she moved to the United States in search of a better future.

In Miami, she worked cleaning houses while studying English and saving money for college. Her determination soon led her to Miami Dade College and later to the University of Maryland, where she earned her bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering. Diana's perseverance and intelligence soon opened doors at one of the most prestigious institutions in the world: NASA.

She began her career at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and later joined the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), where she became part of several Mars missions. One of her first major projects was the Curiosity Rover, where she contributed to the development of tools used to analyze Martian rocks and soil.

Her most recognized achievement came with the Perseverance Rover (Mars 2020 Mission), where she led the team responsible for the robotic arm — a crucial component that allows the rover to collect and study samples from the surface of Mars. On February 18, 2021, she also hosted NASA's first-ever Spanish-language broadcast of a Mars landing, inspiring millions of Latin Americans around the world.

In 2022, NASA appointed Diana as one of its Flight Directors, making her one of the first Latin American women to oversee missions to the International Space Station and upcoming Artemis lunar projects.

Beyond her professional success, Diana Trujillo has become a symbol of resilience and representation in STEM. Through her story, she continues to motivate young women — especially Latinas — to believe that no dream is out of reach. Her journey from a young immigrant to a leader at NASA reminds the world that perseverance, passion, and purpose can truly reach the stars.