



*2016 Distinguished Alumni Award Winner
Dan Brandenstein*

Dan Brandenstein was born and raised in Watertown, Wisconsin where he attended St. John's elementary school and graduated from Watertown High School in 1961. Dan graduated from University of Wisconsin – River Falls in 1965 with a double major in mathematics and physics.

He served in the U.S. Navy for 27 years as a Naval Aviator and test pilot logging 192 combat missions and 400 carrier landings. In 1978 he was selected as an astronaut by NASA. In his 14 years with NASA, he flew four Space Shuttle missions, commanding three of them and served as the Chief of the Astronaut Office for six years. Dan followed this with 20 years as an Aerospace Executive, at Kistler Aerospace as the Program Manager, at Lockheed-Martin as Program Manager and at United Space Alliance as Chief Operating Officer.

He was the 1983 Distinguished Alumnus, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the 1992 Society of Experimental Test Pilots', Iven Kincheloe Award winner, inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame in 2003 and has received numerous other awards throughout his career.

Dan retired in 2012 to a small ranch in the Texas Hill Country while continuing to serve as the Chairman of the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation.