Press Release

For Immediate Distribution — March 5, 2015

Retired NASA Astronaut To Be Honored By Dedication To Community, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and Central Piedmont Community College

Joan Higginbotham to receive “Leadership & Inspiration” Award at Springtime Event

Charlotte, NC—In the spring of 2015, Dedication To Community (D2C), the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) and Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) will honor retired NASA Astronaut Joan Higginbotham with the D2C Leadership & Inspiration Award for her lifetime of professional and community service. The ceremony will be held on April 10, 2015 during the D2C Symposium at UNC Charlotte’s McKnight Auditorium in the Cone Center. D2C, UNC Charlotte and CPCC are co-hosting this full-day event where over sixteen executives from various industries are scheduled to present information about personal empowerment and pathways to success in business, as well as becoming community advocates.

“I am truly honored to be the recipient of this prestigious award,” said Higginbotham. “There are many people who through their leadership, support and encouragement contributed to my success; and I remain committed to doing the same for a new generation of leaders.”

Joan Higginbotham began her career in 1987 at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center (“KSC”), Florida, as a Payload Electrical Engineer in the Electrical and Telecommunications Systems Division. After being selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in April 1996 and undergoing rigorous training, Joan was assigned to the STS-116 mission on space shuttle Discovery (December 9 – 22, 2006). She logged over 308 hours in space during that mission where her primary task was to operate the Space Station Remote Manipulator System (robotic arm). Higginbotham was assigned to the STS-126 mission targeted for launch in September, 2008; however in November 2007, she retired from a twenty year distinguished career with NASA in order to pursue a career at Marathon Oil Company. Currently, Higginbotham is the Director of Community Relations at Lowe’s Companies.

Admission to the event on April 10th is FREE and, with limited seating, registration is recommended. To register, please visit http://oeo.uncc.edu/upcoming-events/calendar/dedication-community/registration-dedication-community and for more information about the Symposium, please visit http://oeo.uncc.edu/d2c.
About D2C

The Dedication To Community Tour (D2C) is an international forum that promotes the exchange of ideas in business and society. The purpose of the tour is to empower all generations in business, bringing them out from behind traditional means of learning by encouraging them to interact with successful executives in a real-time, exciting dialogue. This unique experience provides the masses with an awareness of self-empowerment, how business is connected to the community, the importance of ethical decisions in business and much more. The integration of the D2C live tour and online coverage affords attendees with opportunities to continue their experience of such vital teachings for years to come. For more information about D2C, please visit www.DedicationToCommunity.org.

About UNC Charlotte

University of North Carolina at Charlotte is North Carolina’s urban research university. With fall 2014 enrollment of 27,300 students, the University leverages its location in the state’s largest city to offer internationally competitive programs of research and creative activity, exemplary undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, and a focused set of community engagement initiatives. For more information, visit www.uncc.edu.

About CPCC

Central Piedmont Community College is one of the largest community colleges in the Carolinas, offering nearly 300 degree, diploma and certification programs, customized corporate training, market-focused continuing education, and special interest classes. CPCC is academically, financially and geographically accessible to all citizens of Mecklenburg County. CPCC responds to the workforce and technology needs of local employers and job seekers through innovative educational and training strategies. Established in 1963, CPCC has provided more than 50 years of service to Mecklenburg County residents, business and industry. For more information, see www.cpcc.edu.