

KOBIE BOYKINS

NASA ENGINEER

As principal mechanical engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California, Kobie Boykins is on the frontlines of Mars exploration.

Originally from Omaha, Nebraska, Boykins graduated Cum Laude from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, before joining JPL.

In more than twenty-five years at the lab, he has worked on a wide range of projects. Boykins designed the solar arrays that power the Mars exploration rovers, Spirit and Opportunity. Landing on Mars on January 25, 2004, Opportunity was designed to survive a mission lasting approximately 90 days. Remarkably, the rover continued to traverse the surface of Mars to through 2018, sending back valuable scientific data. He was also responsible for the design of actuators on Curiosity, the Mars Science Laboratory, which safely landed on Mars on August 6, 2012, and has served as Chief Engineer on the Europa Clipper team.

In 2013, Boykins received a NASA Exceptional Service Medal, one of the highest honors given to NASA employees and contractors. An engaging public speaker who puts a fresh face on America's space program, Boykins recounts the challenges and triumphs of the Mars exploration rover missions, sharing remarkable images and discoveries that continue to come to us from the Red Planet.



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If we can inspire just one person, that's an amazing feat. And maybe that's the person who's going to stand on the surface of Mars.

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