

# Kentuckian among NASA’s 10 new astronaut candidates

**BY PAXTON MEDIA GROUP**

NASA’s 10 new astronaut candidates were introduced Monday following a competitive selection process of more than 8,000 applicants from across the United States. U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Erin Overcash, 34, of Goshen was among those chosen.

Born in Louisville, Overcash considers Goshen her hometown where her parents, Wendell and Joanne Overcash, still reside. Overcash graduated from North Oldham High School before earning her bachelor’s degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Colorado in Boulder in 2014. She went on to complete a master’s degree in bioastronautics with a certificate in engineering entrepreneurship at the University of Colorado in 2017. Overcash also attended U.S. Naval Test Pilot School at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., graduating with Class 162 in 2023.

Early in her career, Overcash was a member of the U.S. Navy’s World Class Athlete Program, living and training full-time at the Olympic Training Center with the USA Rugby Women’s National Team. She attended U.S. Navy flight school, earning her wings in January 2018. She then qualified in the F/A-18E and F/A-18F Super Hornet at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif.



Credit: NASA  
**U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Erin Overcash of Goshen was selected as one of 10 in NASA’s 2025 Astronaut Candidate Class.**

From 2019 to 2022, Overcash was an operational pilot flying the F/A-18F with Strike Fighter Squadron 102, stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, and deployed multiple times through the Pacific and Middle East. From 2023 to 2025, she served as an F/A-18E, F/A-18F, and EA-18G Growler test pilot, during which she also served as a Service Chief Fellow at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency in the fall of 2024. She has logged more than 1,300 flight hours in 20 aircraft, including 249 carrier arrested landings.

At the time of her selection, she was training for an operational tour as an F/A-18E department head at Naval Air Station Oceana, Va.

Overcash has been awarded the Naval Test Wing Atlantic Test Pilot of the Year in 2024, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (multiple awards), and various campaign and service ribbons. She earned Three Caps with the USA Rugby Women’s National Team, is a two-time Kentucky State Champion High Jumper and is an Ironman Triathlete.

A member of The Society of Experimental Test Pilots, the 99s, and Women Military Aviators, Overcash says she enjoys reading, adventure motorcycling, challenging workouts and spending time with friends and family. She is married to another naval aviator.

According to a news release, the class will complete nearly two years of training before becoming eligible for flight assignments supporting future science and exploration missions to low Earth orbit, the Moon and Mars.

Acting NASA Administrator Sean Duffy welcomed the all-American 2025 astronaut candidate class during a ceremony at the agency’s Johnson Space

Center in Houston. “I’m honored to welcome the next generation of American explorers to our agency! More than 8,000 people applied — scientists, pilots, engineers, dreamers from every corner of this nation. The 10 men and women sitting here today embody the truth that in America, regardless of where you start, there is no limit to what a determined dreamer can achieve — even going to space,” said Duffy. “Together, we’ll unlock the Golden Age of exploration.”

The agency’s 24th astronaut class reported for duty at NASA’s Johnson Space Center in mid-September and immediately began their training. Their curriculum includes instruction and skills development for complex operations aboard the International Space Station, Artemis missions to the Moon, and beyond. Specifically, training includes robotics, land and water survival, geology, foreign language, space medicine and physiology, and more, while also conducting simulated spacewalks and flying high-performance jets.

After graduation, the 2025 class will join the agency’s active astronaut corps. According to NASA, active astronauts are conducting science research aboard the space station while preparing for the transition to commercial

space stations and the next great leaps in human exploration at the Moon and Mars. The candidates’ operational expertise, scientific knowledge, and technical backgrounds are essential to advancing NASA’s deep space exploration goals and sustaining a long-term human presence beyond low Earth orbit.

In the class with Overcash are: Ben Bailey of Charlottesville, Va.; Lauren Edgar of Sammamish, Wash.; Adam Fuhrmann of Leesburg, Va.; Cameron Jones of Savanna, Ill.; Yuri Kubo of Columbus, Ind.; Rebecca Lawler of Little Elm, Texas, Anna Menon, 39 from Houston, Texas, Imelda Muller of Copake Falls, N.Y. and Katherine Spies of San Diego, Calif.

With the addition of these 10 individuals, NASA has recruited 370 astronaut candidates since selecting the original Mercury Seven in 1959.

“Today, our mission propels us even further as we prepare for our next giant leap with NASA’s newest astronaut candidate class,” said Vanessa Wyche, director of NASA Johnson. “Representing America’s best and brightest, this astronaut candidate class will usher in the Golden Age of innovation and exploration as we push toward the Moon and Mars.”

# Kentucky distillery rebounds after flood halts bourbon production

**BY BRUCE SCHREINER**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

FRANKFORT, Ky. — The long history of bourbon production at Buffalo Trace Distillery has been connected to the Kentucky River — summed up as a blessing and curse by a plaque on the grounds.

In the 1800s, long before the Buffalo Trace name was attached to the distillery, the river served as a floating highway to bring in grain and other production essentials and to transport barrels of whiskey to markets along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Even today, river water cools down production equipment. But the river flowing past the distillery flashed its destructive side in April.



Jon Cherry/AP Photo  
**In an aerial view, the Buffalo Trace Distillery is seen on Sept. 16 in Frankfort, Ky.**

ovating a campus building into a cafe and events center.

The cleanup enlisted hundreds of plant employees and contract workers. Buffalo Trace fans swamped the distillery with offers to pitch in, Adams said. The distillery politely declined and suggested they might assist area residents instead.

Crews removed debris, sanitized equipment and pumped out what was left after floodwaters receded. Bourbon barrels swept into the parking lot caught some attention, Adams said. No chance for sneak samples, though — the barrels were empty.

Few visible reminders remain of that mud-caked, debris-strewn mess.

Some filled whiskey barrels touched by floodwaters were still being cleaned and tested, but the meticulous task of examining thousands of barrels was nearly complete, the distillery said. Quality control assessments found only small amounts of aging whiskey were impacted. High water marks are etched into some buildings and tour guides casually remind visitors of the epic event.

Danny Kahn, a master

distiller for Buffalo Trace’s parent company, says he still experiences “a little PTSD” when recalling those frantic days. River flooding has been a sporadic part of the distillery’s history — including big ones in 1937 and 1978, but in early April, the floodwaters surged to previously unseen heights. Buffalo Trace had also just completed a decade-long, \$1.2 billion expansion to double distilling capacity.

“It actually looked kind of calm, but I knew that it was not calm because we could see buildings were under 10 feet (3 meters) of water,” Kahn said. “It was really quite overwhelming.”

Activating their flood plans, workers shut down the distillery and did what they could to safeguard equipment. After that, all they could do was watch and wait. Distillery officials observed the devastation from higher ground and via drone footage.

Once the river crest-

ed, it took a few days for the floodwaters to fully recede, but operations gradually sprung back to life. Finished whiskey shipped out the day after the rain stopped. Bottling soon resumed and a makeshift gift shop opened until the visitors’ center was repaired. Tours eventually resumed. But bourbon production halted for about a month as the cost for cleanup and repairs surpassed \$30 million.

Several storage tanks shifted off their foundation. Some were repaired, others replaced. Dozens of electrical control panels were destroyed. About three-fourths of gift shop inventory was lost.

“It was just defeating to watch all this flooding and to realize that we’re going to be down for a while,” Kahn said. “Just the apprehension of how much work this is going to be to fix. And when we finally got it done, it was really a sigh of relief and

we get back to business as normal.”

## HARD TIMES IN THE WHISKEY SECTOR

For the American whiskey industry as a whole, it’s been anything but business as usual.

After years of growth, prospects turned sour for the sector amid sluggish sales and trade uncertainties as President Donald Trump imposed sweeping tariffs.

In 2024, American whiskey sales in the U.S. fell nearly 2%, the first such drop in supplier sales in more than 20 years, the Distilled Spirits Council said. Initial data for the first half of 2025 showed a continued decline, it said. American whiskey exports dropped more than 13% through July of this year compared to the year-ago period, it said. The American whiskey category includes bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and rye whiskey.

Lower domestic sales stem from a mix of market challenges, including supply chain disruptions and changes in consumer purchasing trends, said Chris Swonger, the council’s CEO.

“While there’s ongoing debate about whether these are temporary headwinds or signs of a more fundamental shift in consumer behavior, large and small distilleries across the country are under pressure,” Swonger said in a statement.

Kentucky distilleries producing such prominent brands as Buffalo Trace, Jim Beam, Maker’s Mark, Woodford Reserve, Wild Turkey and Four Roses can weather downturns

better than small producers.

Heaven Hill Brands, another large producer, recently celebrated its new \$200 million distillery in Bardstown, Kentucky, taking a long view of market prospects by significantly boosting bourbon capacity.

“As an independent, family-owned company, we don’t have to chase quarterly trends; we’re building for the next generation,” said Kate Latts, co-president of Heaven Hill Brands, whose brands include Evan Williams and Elijah Craig. “This distillery reflects that philosophy.”

At Buffalo Trace, its future is entrenched alongside the Kentucky River, realizing that more floods could come in the years ahead. The distillery learned lessons to be even better prepared next time.

“This area being a National Historic Landmark, being right on the river, there’s only so much you can do to hold back that water,” Adams said. “Your best bet is to prepare for it, do what you can. But holding back that water? It’s really inevitable it’s going to make it into some spaces.”

## WHISKEY PRODUCTION BOUNCES BACK

Five months later, production at the distillery is back to normal, including of some of the most sought-after bourbons. Its lineup includes the namesake flagship brand, Buffalo Trace, as well as Eagle Rare, W.L. Weller and Blanton’s. Pappy Van Winkle bourbons are distilled and aged at Buffalo Trace while the Van Winkle family remains in control of the coveted brand.

The distillery recently filled its 9 millionth barrel of bourbon since Prohibition, just two and a half years since filling the 8 millionth barrel. It has also introduced new whiskeys to its catalogue and is ren-



**LEGAL NOTICE**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

The Daviess County Board of Education will receive proposals for the following:

**BROKERAGE SERVICES**

Proposals will be received up to the hour of 2:00 P.M. (Central Standard Time), Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at the DCPS Central Office, 1622 Southeastern Pkwy., Owensboro, Kentucky 42303. No awards will be made at that time. For additional information, please contact Sara Harley, Director of Finance – 270-852-7000.

SARA HARLEY, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE  
DAVIESS COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION



**LEGAL NOTICE**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**COUNTY AUCTION**

Daviess County Fiscal Court will be conducting a County Auction on Friday, October 3, 2025 @ 9:00 A.M. Local Time. The Auction will be held at the Daviess County Operations Center, 2620 Highway 81, Owensboro, KY 42301. Payment must be in the form of cash or good check accompanied by proper picture ID. All items will be paid in full the day of the sale. All items are sold as-is, where-is with no warranty except title. No vehicles are to be removed until the title has been transferred. Announcements made on the day of the auction take precedence over printed material (including handbills). Auction lists and handbills are available at the Daviess County Courthouse, 212 St. Ann Street; Room 202, Owensboro, KY 42303 in the Purchasing Department. For questions regarding the auction, please call Joe Paul Bickett, Auctioneer at (270)-685-8424, option 3.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**


The Public Service Commission of Kentucky issued orders on July 31, 2025 and September 11, 2025, scheduling public comment meetings to be held on October 13, 2025 at 5 p.m. Central Daylight Time, at Hopkins County Fiscal Court, 56 North Main Street, Madisonville, KY 42431; October 14, 2025, at 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, at Bluegrass Community & Technical College: Keenland Room, 500 Newtown Pike, Lexington, KY 40508; and October 16, 2025, at 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, at Middlesboro Community Center, 705 N. Petersborough Ave., Middlesboro, KY 40965 for the purpose of hearing public comments on Kentucky Utilities Company and Louisville Gas and Electric Company applications for adjustment of its electric and gas rates and approval of certain regulatory and accounting treatments in Case Nos. 2025-00113 and 2025-00114.

**MESSENGER-INQUIRER**

**CLASSIFIED DEADLINES**

PUBLICATION DATE	DEADLINE
SUNDAY (E-EDITION)	WEDNESDAY 3 PM
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TUESDAY	THURSDAY 3 PM
WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY 3 PM
THURSDAY	MONDAY 3 PM
FRIDAY	TUESDAY 3 PM
SATURDAY	WEDNESDAY 3 PM

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