

Scientist Profile Index

Check out these great scientists on Tape 3



Ayanna Howard

Electrical Engineer - Segment 1

Just call her The Bionic Woman! Dr. Howard is a robotics research engineer in the Telerobotics Research and Applications Group for the Jet Propulsion Labs. Her job is to use artificial intelligence (AI) to make robots "smarter." With improved AI, robots can travel into space and other hazardous locations, such as earthquake-damaged areas. She is currently working on a rover for use on Mars.

Nalini Nadkarni

Forest Canopy Researcher - Segment 2

When Forest Canopy Researcher Nalini Nadkarni was young, she studied dance and biology. Now she puts on climbing gear and spends her time high up in the forest canopy of Washington State. The canopy is one of the last frontiers on Earth, and Nalini is studying how some plants in the canopy—called epiphytes—survive without having their roots in the ground.



Laurie Marker

Cheetah Conservationist - Segment 3

Laurie moved permanently to Namibia in 1989 to protect and sustain the wild cheetah and its wilderness habitat. Known in her African village as "the Cheetah Lady," Laurie founded the Cheetah Conservation Fund so she and other scientists can research, breed, protect, live with, and lecture about this sensitive and highly endangered cat.





Corliss Outley
Behavioral Scientist - Segment 4

Having fun is her work. Corliss is an urban play researcher. In this role, Corliss hangs out at inner-city parks and recruits kid assistants to help her with her data gathering. These kids help Corliss determine what kinds of activities city kids like best and what things they'd like to change about their neighborhoods. Corliss shares this information with educators and community leaders to help improve and create new urban play environments.

Katie Broughton
Toyologist - Segment 5

Katie's job is all fun and games: she's a toyologist, which is an engineer who focuses on the science of toys and their mechanical make-up. Katie designs and builds toys that use silent motors to animate them. She creates everything from realistic blinking doll eyeballs to creepy monsters to sleek robots!



Ameri Gurley
Wind Researcher - Segment 6

Ameri gets blown away by her own research. That's because she's a graduate student at Texas Tech University where she studies the damaging affects of wind. In particular, Ameri looks at how house placement can reduce exposure to flying debris during a tornado or hurricane.





Una-May O'Reilly

Mechanical Engineer - Segment 7

Una-May is a mechanical engineer at MIT. She designs mobile robots that function without the help of humans. Una-May's research in artificial intelligence (AI) will eventually give human faces and personalities to robots.

Elizabeth Arredondo

Mineralogist - Segment 8

Mineralogist Elizabeth Arredondo loves adventure! When she's not skydiving, she's out hunting for colorful gems and minerals. In her work at Caltech, she studies how much water is hidden in minerals, like garnets. By examining these red and green gems, she hopes to find clues about how the Earth formed.



Erin Gillam

Bat Researcher - Segment 9

Erin Gillam is batty about bats! This biologist uses a "virtual bat," which is a technology that mimics real bat sounds and calls. This tool lets her track the Mexican Free-Tailed Bat, and discover how these fuzzy fliers can help limit the insect population and ultimately assist south Texas farmers.