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The Queen to Award OBE to Dr David Alexander

Dr David Alexander, Director and Professor at Rice University's Space Institute, will become an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE). The OBE will be awarded to Dr Alexander *for his services to UK/US links in the space industry and higher education.*

David Alexander is a professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, where his primary area of research is solar astrophysics. As Director, Professor Alexander is responsible for managing all aspects of the growth and development of the institute. This includes providing vision, direction, and leadership, managing the various institute programs, identifying and fostering research opportunities for our faculty, and interacting with government and the space industry.

"This is a very well-deserved honour," said Karen Bell, British Consul General in Houston. "Dr Alexander's steadfast commitment to strengthening UK/US relations across the fields of science, higher education and business has been a tremendous help to our work in the region."

The UK honours system recognises exceptional achievement and service to the nation, and includes non-British nationals who receive "Honorary" awards for their important contribution to British interests. All British honours are awarded on merit, and honorary awards are conferred by HM The Queen on the advice of the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary. The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire was founded in 1917.

Dr David Alexander will receive an OBE medal and may forthwith put "OBE" after his name.

“I am extremely honoured to be receiving this recognition,” said Dr Alexander. “The Special Relationship that exists between the UK and the US is incredibly important and is exemplified by our many partnerships in scientific research and education. My passion has always been to build on that relationship for the advancement of space exploration, in its many forms. I am humbled to have my work recognised in this manner and look forward to continuing to promote our two countries' shared excitement for space for years to come.”

Professor Alexander received a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2004 and was appointed a Kavli Frontiers Fellow by the National Academy of Sciences in 2006. He is currently Chair of the Mauna Loa Solar Observatory Users' Committee. He is also former Chair of the Solar Physics Division of the American Astronomical Society and former Chair of the Solar Heliospheric Interplanetary Environment (SHINE) program. Professor Alexander has served on many national and professional committees including the NASA Advisory Council's Heliophysics Subcommittee, the NASA Solar Heliospheric Management and Operations Working Group (SH-MOWG), ESA/NASA Solar Orbiter Payload Committee and the Science Advisory Board of the High Altitude Observatory Coronal Solar Magnetism Observatory. He currently serves on the advisory board of SpaceCom, Deep Space Industries, and the Sasakawa International Center for Space Architecture at the University of Houston and on the editorial boards of ROOM: The Space Journal and Space Science Reviews. He has been named a GlobalScot by the Scottish government and appointed to the UNESCO EOLSS subcommittee on the Science of Space. He was also recently elected to the Board of Directors of the American Astronautical Society.

Professor Alexander joined the faculty at Rice in 2003, coming from the Lockheed Martin Advanced Technology Center in Palo Alto, California where he was a Staff Physicist working on the development of advanced space missions for solar physics. He received his Bachelor of Science in Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, and his doctorate on Relativistic Cosmological Models from the University of Glasgow.

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