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## SPEAKER INFORMATION

**Moogega Cooper, Ph.D.**  
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Moogega Cooper, who has a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering, is planetary protection engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Dr. "Moo" Cooper worked on the famed 2020 Mars mission and inspires organizations and individuals to build strong teams, overcome obstacles, and push beyond their limitations.

As the real-life "Guardian of the Galaxy," she holds the awesome responsibility of keeping the Red Planet safe from any of the Earth's contaminants. Her work with NASA's JPL is integral to the ongoing mission to discern whether Mars could be habitable for humans and to ensure that we don't harm what's already there—a job she has been working up to for most of her life.

After graduating from high school at 16, Dr. Cooper studied physics as an undergraduate, received a master's degree and went on to earn her Ph.D. in mechanical engineering at 24 years old with a dissertation on sterilizing spacecraft materials.

She is passionate about empowering organizations and others to build resilience, overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. A role model for women in science and technology, Dr. Cooper also loves introducing wider audiences to the wonders of the STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) world. Through her work talking to girls and boys from underrepresented communities and appearing on shows such as *Because Space* and *Bill Nye Saves the World*, Dr. Cooper is helping to build the next generation of strong leaders.

Dr. Cooper is a recipient of several awards, including the NASA Early Career Public Achievement Medal, the Charles Elachi Award for Exceptional Early Career Achievement, and JPL Voyager Awards for Technical Leadership.