

Delorey has what it takes

'He's determined. Once he says he's doing it, he's doing it,' says aspiring astronaut's wife

34 A mechanical engineer, graduating from the University of New Brunswick, Delorey grew up near Riverview, New Brunswick, where he learned to speak French fluently. In high school he was a competitive swimmer and a lifeguard at the pool.

A resident of Milton for the last five years, he works at SNC-Lavalin, at Winston Churchill and the QEW in Mississauga. There, he's project manager of tooling on the firm's contract to refurbish Bruce Power's six nuclear reactors in the Bruce Peninsula.

It's a multi-billion-dollar, 30-year project that's an enormous undertaking, he said, considering they'll be changing out the reactor and replacing two different sets of components.

It's so detailed, the first shutdown is planned for 2020, with the next ones taking place over the following 26 years.

He's already been through the physical shutdown of a reactor in South Korea and he's travelled to many parts of the world, where he gets inside nuclear reactors, wearing the full Tyvek suit.

"It's kind of like wearing a spacesuit," he said.

Exercise

In addition, he's kept himself in peak physical shape, working out every morning at Milton's Reebok Crossfit Firepower for a few hours, before heading off to work. He also swims laps at the Milton Sports Centre.

Delorey can also check off the ability to handle stress category. Ten years ago, he and his friend were out on a mountain when his buddy fell and broke his neck. The rescue

involved many people, who he gathered to help. Eventually, they were able to lower him to the ground, but he became a quadriplegic as a result.

He's remained good friends with him and said he actually moved right next to where his parents live in New Brunswick and married his girlfriend at the time. They now have twin girls who are six years old.

Empathetic

Delorey said he's also a people person with a lot of empathy. His employer, whose head office is in Montreal, employs more than 2,000 in Mississauga, and has its own Toastmaster's chapter, of which he's a member.

With a baby on the way, Leina said it was a given that the nursery room would be decorated in a space theme.

"I wonder if someday, I'd say to my baby 'That's your daddy up there in space,'" she laughed, adding she's confident he has what it takes to become an astronaut, and fully supports him.


"He's determined. Once he says he's doing it... he's doing it," she said, adding that she has no problem moving to Houston, where NASA's Space Center is located.

Since 1993, Canada has recruited 12 astronauts, eight of whom have participated in space missions.

Over the next year, the list will be narrowed down to 200, then 40 finalists, who will take part in written, physical and mental tests, interviews and security clearances.

Currently, Ontario has the highest number of candidates in the country for the pair of positions, with 589. Only 34.5 per cent of applicants from the province made the cut-off.

If selected, Delorey would spend two years in basic training at NASA, followed by years of intensive training before the successful candidates can go to space on a mission.



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