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NAA Announces Mr. George Carneal and Dr. Thomas Connolly as Recipients of the 2009 Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Award.

Arlington, Virginia, September 22, 2009 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) announced that George Carneal, a Partner with the Hogan and Hartson Law Firm and Dr. Thomas Connolly, Chancellor of Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, have been named recipients of the Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Award.

The Elder Statesman of Aviation Award was established on October 16, 1954, by NAA to honor outstanding Americans, age 60 and above, who, by their efforts over a period of years, have made contributions of significant value to aeronautics, and have reflected credit upon America and themselves. In 2007 the award was re-named to Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Award to honor the 16 years he spent as Chairman of NAA..

“Being selected as an Elder Statesman of Aviation by the National Aeronautic Association is considered to be a great honor in the aerospace industry,” stated Walter Boyne, NAA Chairman. “However, the selection of George Carneal and Dr. Tom Connolly will immediately be perceived as an honor to the NAA and to all of the Elder Statesmen who have been previously selected. These two men have labored diligently and with brilliance in the service of the aerospace industry, and are immensely deserving of the recognition.”

Carneal, Director of Hogan and Hartson’s Transportation Group, was selected for his 47 years of the service to the aviation industry to include General Counsel of the Federal Aviation Administration, Member of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Aeronautical Law for over a decade, President of the Aero Club of Washington, Director of the Flight Safety Foundation, and General Counsel of the National Aeronautic Association.

Connolly has spent over 36 years dedicated to the education, training, and advancement of tens of thousands of aviation professionals through his work at Embry-Riddle Aeronautic University. Since joining the faculty in 1973, he has served as Chair of the Aviation Education Design Department (1978-1979), Chair of the Flight Department (1979-1984), Chair of the Aeronautical Science Department (1985-1993), Dean of the School of Aviation (1993-1998), and

Interim Chancellor of the Daytona Beach Campus (1998-2001). In 2001 he was appointed to the University's first endowed chair in aviation and Chancellor of Daytona Beach campus in 2006. He is also a retired Commander in the United State Navy Reserve.

“In my two years serving as the President of the National Aeronautic Association, George and Tom have been two of the most dedicated, professional, and talented individuals I have worked with,” said Jonathan Gaffney, President and CEO of NAA. “They are just remarkable representatives of our wonderful aviation and aerospace community.”

The 2009 Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Award Selection Committee Members consisted of the Skip Ringo, Vice Chairman of the National Aeronautic Association and Senior Vice President, Government Relations, DRS; Susan Sheets, President of the National Aircraft Resellers Association; and Henry Ogrodzinski, President of the National Association of State Aviation Officials. The Committee was chaired by Jonathan Gaffney.

Carneal and Connolly will be invited to receive their awards at the National Aeronautic Association annual Fall Awards Banquet on Monday, November 2, 2009 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott. For more information on the award and the Fall Awards Banquet, please visit www.naa.aero.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering America's aerospace leadership and promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States.

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