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Seven Aviation Leaders Honored as NAA Distinguished Statesmen and Stateswomen of Aviation

Washington, DC, September 27, 2021 – For over six decades, the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) has honored outstanding Americans as Distinguished Statesmen and Stateswomen of Aviation for their contributions of significant value to aeronautics over an extended period of years. Today, NAA is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2021 Wesley L. McDonald Distinguished Statesman and Stateswoman of Aviation Award: Cassandra Bosco; Steven Brown; Angela Gittens; The Honorable John Goglia; Colonel Gail Seymour “Hal” Halvorsen, USAF (Ret.); Jean Lydon-Rodgers; and General John Raymond, USSF.

Cassandra Bosco for “... her 35 years of dedicated service providing consulting and executive services to leaders in the aerospace industry, in addition to her passionate industry advocacy, and commitment to the advancement of women in all aviation related fields.”

Steven Brown for “... his four-decade long career in aviation defined by passion, service, inspiration, innovation, and selfless leadership at the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), National Aeronautic Association (NAA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and National Business Aviation Association (NBAA).”

Angela Gittens for “... her exemplary vision and leadership as Director General of the Airport Council International (ACI World), having increased the safety, security, efficiency, sustainability, and diversity of the air transport industry throughout the world.”

The Honorable John Goglia for “... his lifetime of passion and dedication to aviation safety and maintenance, and whose internationally recognized expertise led him to become the first and only Airframe and Powerplant mechanic to receive a presidential appointment to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).”

Colonel Gail Seymour “Hal” Halvorsen for “... distinguishing himself through acts of goodwill, bravery, and determination as the ‘Berlin Candy Bomber’, contributing significantly to aeronautics in the U.S. and across allied countries worldwide.”

Jean Lydon-Rodgers for “... distinguishing herself as a successful leader during her nearly four decades at General Electric Aviation, while continuously providing mentorship to women throughout the entire spectrum of aviation science and STEM applications”

General John Raymond for "... his 35 years of service in the Department of the Air Force and for standing up the nation's first new military service in seven decades as the Chief of Space Operations of the United States Space Force, advocating for an enhanced national focus on emerging threats to American interests in space."

"The women and men we honor this year as Stateswomen and Statesmen of Aviation represent the depth and breadth of our industry," expressed NAA President, Greg Principato. "They represent all sectors of aviation and span the gamut from the Berlin Airlift to efforts to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. Their contributions have inspired and continue to inspire. Congratulations to the 2021 NAA Stateswomen and Statesmen of Aviation."

Previous recipients of this award include: Scott Crossfield, Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, Katherine and Marjorie Stinson, Charles Bolden, Olive Ann Beech, Clay Lacy, Fran Bera, Bob Hoover, and Chuck Yeager.

The members of the 2020 Distinguished Statesman and Stateswoman of Aviation Selection Committee were: Jim Albaugh, Chairman of NAA; Former FAA Administrators Randy Babbitt, Marion Blakey, Dan Elwell, Jane Garvey, and Michael Huerta; former Distinguished Statesmen and Stateswomen of Aviation George Carneal (2009), Peggy Chabrian (2016), Julie Clark (2020), Dave Franson (2020), Jeff Hamiel (2017), Michael Heuer (2019), John King (2018), Martha King (2018), Dick Koenig (2012), Mary Miller (2019), Jack Pelton (2017), Michael Quiello (2020), and Don Skiados (2019); and Trish Gilbert, NATCA; Rebecca Lutte, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Ellen Stofan, Smithsonian Institution; and Patty Wagstaff, Aerobatic Pilot.

The 2021 class of Distinguished Statesmen and Stateswomen will be honored at the NAA Fall Awards Dinner on December 6, 2021, in Arlington, Virginia. For more information, please visit www.naa.aero.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. NAA is the caretaker of some of the most important aviation awards in the world, and certifies all national aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit www.naa.aero.

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