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General Lloyd “Fig” Newton Honored with 2018 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy

Washington, DC, September 11, 2018 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is pleased to announce that General Lloyd “Fig” Newton has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy for ... “his extraordinary achievements as a history-making, African American military aviator and his continuing contributions to the advancement of aviation education and advocacy”.

Established by NAA in 1948 to honor the memory of Orville and Wilbur Wright, the trophy is awarded annually to a living American for “...significant public service of enduring value to aviation in the United States.” One of the most important, historic, and visible aerospace awards in the world, the Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy reflects a timeline of the most innovative inventors, explorers, industrialists, and public servants in aeronautics and astronautics.

General Newton served his country as a military aviator for more than three decades. As a command pilot, he logged more than 4,000 flying hours, commanded three wings and an air division, and held numerous senior staff positions. Among his notable accomplishments, General Newton flew 269 combat missions in Vietnam and, in 1974, he joined the renowned U.S. Air Force Demonstration Team, “The Thunderbirds”, as the first African American pilot. He retired in 2000 from the United States Air Force as a four-star general.

From 1978 to 1982, Newton served as a congressional liaison officer to the U.S. House of Representatives for the Air Force, and in 1997, led the Air Education and Training Command, which comprised 13 bases, 43,000 active duty personnel and 14,000 civilians. After leaving the Air Force with a record of distinguished service, General Newton worked for the aerospace company Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford, Connecticut, as Executive Vice President of international military programs and business development, until 2006.

General Newton serves on the board of directors for the defense contractor, L3 Technologies, Torchmark Corp. and the National Defense University. He is also Chairman of the National Business Aviation Association’s Board of Directors, and he will be inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame in 2018.

Among his numerous post-military accomplishments, General Newton is a founding member and generous supporter of Polaris Tech Charter School in his childhood home of Jasper County, South Carolina. Polaris Tech is an innovative school that will offer six career pathways, including one in aerospace. Its mission is “to unleash student potential and cultivate aspirations – where students are career-focused, college-ready and invested in the community.”

“From his 269 missions in Vietnam, to his selection as a member of the Thunderbirds, to his service as Air Force Liaison to the U.S. House of Representatives, General Newton served his country with great energy, commitment and distinction,” said Greg Principato, President & CEO, NAA. “His passion for the promotion of STEM education in the years since his retirement from the Air Force ensures that his legacy of service will endure for a long time to come. We at the National Aeronautic Association look forward to presenting General Newton with the 2018 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy.”

“It is a very humbling experience to join the extraordinary recipients of this award such as Neil Armstrong, Bob Hoover, Harrison Ford, and a host of other great Americans,” stated General Newton. “Aerospace continues to drive significant and positive changes around the globe and has been the nucleus of the success of my career. I am delighted and deeply honored to receive this most prestigious award.”

2018 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy Selection Committee Members:

- Richard Aboulafia, Columnist, Aviation Week
- James Albaugh, Chairman, National Aeronautic Association
- Mark Baker, President & CEO, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
- James Bridenstine, Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Nicholas Calio, President & CEO, Airlines for America
- General Jack Dailey, USMC (Ret.), 2017 Wright Trophy Recipient
- Daniel Dumbacher, Executive Director, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics
- Eric Fanning, President & CEO, Aerospace Industries Association
- Harrison Ford, 2010 Wright Trophy Recipient
- Margaret McKeough, President, Aero Club of Washington

General Newton will be presented with the Wright Trophy at the Aero Club of Washington’s Wright Memorial Dinner on Friday, December 14, 2018. For more information about the award or to view a list of past recipients, please visit www.naa.aero. For information regarding the Wright Memorial Dinner, please visit www.aeroclub.org.

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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