



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SHELLY SIMI SELECTED AS RECIPIENT OF THE 2019 STINSON TROPHY**

**Washington, DC, February 10, 2020**– The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is pleased to announce that Shelly Simi has been named the recipient of the 2019 Katherine and Marjorie Stinson Trophy.

The Stinson Trophy was created in 1997 by NAA to honor the accomplishments of two sisters - Katherine and Marjorie Stinson. These sisters were among the first 11 American women to be certified as airplane pilots through the Aero Club of America (the predecessor of NAA). Their flying school helped numerous U.S. and foreign pilots to earn their Aero Club licenses, the precursor to FAA pilot certificates. The trophy recognizes a living person for "...an outstanding and enduring contribution to the role of women in the field of aviation, aeronautics, space, or related sciences."

Simi is being recognized for "... her accomplishments as a successful and passionate aviation professional and for dedicating over 25 years to opening minds and doors for women in pursuit of aviation opportunities of every kind."

A love and passion for aviation as a young girl led her to pursue an aviation management and flight operations education at Delta State University, where she earned her degree and began her flight training. Simi was preparing for a career that would lead her from an initial post at Federal Express while in college to an impressive resume of important and exciting senior executive positions with the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, (GAMA), Adam Aircraft, Jeppesen, Boeing Digital Aviation, Aurora Flight Sciences and most recently with the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO), where she served as president and CEO.

Simi's enthusiasm was demonstrated in the early 1990s when she volunteered her time, effort and experience to help initiate the creation of a much-needed movement to encourage and promote a stronger female participation in the aviation marketplace. That four-year, start-up movement was the testing period for what would become Women in Aviation, International (WAI), and because of her dedication to the cause, she was asked to become a founding director in 1995. Today, WAI continues to be the fastest-growing aviation organization in the world with over 14,000 members and 131 chapters in 20 countries. For 20 years, Simi worked closely with founder Peggy Chabrian, taking on numerous committee positions focused on creating a more positive image and inviting environment for women of all ages and backgrounds to pursue educational and career opportunities in aviation.

Additionally, Simi helped establish the aerospace clearing house group as a co-founder and past chairperson of the National Coalition for Aviation and Space Education (NCASE), which provides teachers with aviation resources to help attract and encourage young men and women to consider careers in aviation; she also worked to enhance the GAMA Learn To Fly curriculum, which was distributed to thousands of teachers nationwide. Simi was integrally involved with the industry efforts to pass the General Aviation Revitalization Act in 1994, which created new opportunities for women seeking careers in aviation. She worked on the development and promotion of major industry growth initiatives over the years, including Be A Pilot, Learn to Fly, GA TEAM 2000 and No Plane. No Gain., promoting awareness of programs offering career opportunities for both men and women in aviation.

Simi is a founding member of the Aviation Communications Coalition of Washington, membership chair of the Royal Aeronautical Society, past President of the Aero Club of Washington, a trustee and membership chair of the University Aviation Association, and past board member of the NAA. She has been inducted into the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame, she is a recipient of the University Aviation Association Estridge Award for her dedicated service to aerospace education, and she has been honored with the NCASE Strickler Aviation Education Leadership Award for her outstanding contributions to aviation education. These awards recognize and credit Shelly's countless contributions and efforts in encouraging women of all ages and backgrounds to follow their desires to be involved in the world of aviation.

"I've rarely known anyone with the passion for aviation Shelly Simi brings to all she does," said NAA President Greg Principato. "She always looks beyond what is required. From her work encouraging kids to be involved in aviation to her efforts in getting Women in Aviation off the ground, Shelly goes above and beyond. She is a most appropriate recipient of an award named for Katherine and Marjorie Stinson, two women who embodied the same passion and determination Shelly demonstrates daily."

"The Stinsons set a great example in creating a pathway to flight so others could join in the amazing world of aviation. I have been blessed to be a part of such a dynamic industry and worked alongside legends that have truly shaped how aviation is used today," Simi said. "I am honored to be this year's recipient and share this with all of those who have served as mentors, promoted their passion and led the way for others to be a part of all the things aviation brings."

Members of the Selection Committee were Lt Col Dana Bochte, 2018 Stinson Trophy Recipient; Pete Dumont, Air Traffic Control Association and member of the NAA Board of Directors; Trish Gilbert, National Air Traffic Controllers Association and member of the NAA Board of Directors; and Lt Col Christine Mau, 2016 Stinson Trophy Recipient,

The Stinson Trophy will be presented on a date and location to be determined. For more information, please visit [www.naa.aero](http://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](http://www.naa.aero).***

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