



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stephanie Griffith
703-416-4888 Ext 104
awards-events@naa.aero

Major Eleanor Morgan to Receive the 2021 Katharine Wright Trophy

Washington, DC, May 20, 2021 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is pleased to announce that Major Eleanor Morgan, United States Air Force Reserve Officer and Pilot, has been selected as the recipient of the 2021 Katharine Wright Trophy. The trophy was established in 1981 and is awarded annually in partnership with the Ninety-Nines, International Organization of Women Pilots to an individual who “... has contributed to the success of others or made a personal contribution to the advancement of the art, sport, and science of aviation and space flight over an extended period of time.”

Major Morgan is being recognized for “... her diverse contributions to military aviation, her research and development efforts supporting the advancement of human space exploration, her extensive youth STEM outreach, and her mentorship activities in support of women in aviation and space.”

After graduating and receiving her commission from the Air Force Academy in 2006, Major Morgan served as an aerospace physiology assistant at Luke Air Force Base, where she supported F-16 pilot education and training by administering aircrew conditioning tests, analyzing student performance for G-force risks, and helping to construct the first ever virtual night vision goggle training facility.

Upon completing her pilot training, Major Morgan was assigned to fly transport aircraft at McChord Air Force Base, where she logged over 520 combat hours supporting Operations Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn, and Enduring Freedom. Additionally, Major Morgan flew medical evacuation missions out of Iraq and Afghanistan and supported a Pakistan humanitarian relief mission by airlifting 100,000 pounds of emergency cargo and safely evacuating 71 refugees. In 2012, she was named the Air Force recipient of the annual Federally Employed Women Military Meritorious Service award for her contributions to diversity, equality, and the advancement of women in the military.

In 2013, Major Morgan transitioned to the growing career field of remotely piloted aircraft (RPA). During her time at Creech Air Force Base, she served as an Instructor and Evaluator pilot for the MQ-1B Predator supporting various combat operations around the globe. In 2016, she was selected as one of the Air Force’s nominees for the NASA astronaut program, and she became an inaugural graduate of the first formal Air Force RPA Electronic Combat Officer course in 2017. In this capacity, she served as a subject matter expert for the USAF on the electromagnetic spectrum and satellite networks for military RPA operations and was integral to securing flight communications

networks during several satellite jamming events. Her last position, prior to transitioning from active duty in 2018, was the operations center Mission Director leading a 15-person, cross-functional team. She supervised 24/7 combat operations across three combatant commands and five geographic theaters and oversaw 10,400 global RPA missions. Presently she continues to serve as a part-time reservist supporting combat operations as a pilot for the MQ-9 Reaper.

Her initial space sector contributions began in mid-2018 through her involvement in human spaceflight research with NASA. She was selected to participate as a human test subject for NASA's Human Exploration & Research Analog (HERA) program in Houston, Texas. This intensive nine-week program involved working as a member of a four-person crew for a simulated 45-day space exploration mission that took place at the Johnson Space Center inside an isolated and confined habitat. During this time, she led and participated in eighteen separate research investigations which assessed the physiological and psychological effects of long duration, deep space missions, providing valuable data to researchers planning future crewed missions beyond low earth orbit.

Major Morgan then went on to work at a private space company called Bigelow Aerospace which focused on developing inflatable spacecraft, the next generation of space habitation. She worked in several key positions during this time, serving as Program Manager for the company's \$12M NASA contract for deep-space habitation research and managed the systems engineering and crew systems departments at the company. Her leadership efforts were critical to the company's successful week-long human-in-the-loop NASA habitat evaluation with four astronauts, earning top scores against four other competing companies.

In mid-2020, Major Morgan began employment with Lockheed Martin where she presently serves in their Advanced Programs division as their Chief Systems Architect for human spaceflight programs. She has supported mission architecture design efforts for the development of the company's lunar habitat and crewed spacecraft for Mars transport. Major Morgan also leads Lockheed Martin's Lunar Terrain Vehicle development team with members across numerous disciplines who are working on the next generation of crewed vehicles for the moon. Her team will provide mobility solutions for future astronauts in NASA's Artemis program and eventually create vehicles that can be utilized on Mars.

In addition to being an excellent officer, leader, pilot and engineer, Major Morgan embodies the whole person concept and takes time outside of work to not only develop herself personally and professionally, but also to give back to her community. As an avid STEM outreach advocate, Major Morgan has engaged in numerous activities and speaking engagements over the years with local schools, youth groups and female aviation organizations. She has served as a judge at youth science, robotics, and Unmanned Aerial System competitions, and supported local public science fairs and summer science camps. On several occasions, she has served as a speaker at ROTC career fairs and in classrooms for minority and underprivileged youth, discussing STEM careers and her experience as an Air Force pilot.

Aside from her youth STEM outreach efforts, Major Morgan has been passionately involved in supporting other women, especially those in the military, aviation, and aerospace communities. She has served as a speaker and panelist at several annual Women in Aviation International (WAI) conferences and is an active member of the Women Military Aviators, Inc. Major Morgan is also passionate about finding opportunities to innovate and advocate for the improvement of protective equipment, especially for women. In 2018, she served as a representative for female military aviators, discussing some of the challenges faced by women regarding current policies and flight

equipment at the iGIANT national roundtable summit. As a follow-on opportunity, she was invited to partake in an Air Force AFWERX workshop with Air Force leadership which focused on the improvement and innovation of gender tailored flight equipment. This workshop's findings led to the first ever "Female Fitment Event" in June 2019, which gathered Air Force and Navy female aviators from across the country to have their measurements taken to design new prototypes for female flight equipment, thus increasing the safety and effectiveness of female aircrew.

As a result of her desire to support fellow women in their leadership and professional development, she co-founded a "Lean In" circle for female officers at her base, organizing several monthly group gatherings with twelve members from four different military career fields. With the current active-duty Air Force officer retention issues, especially those of female aviators, Major Morgan volunteered to support a research study in 2016 sponsored by Headquarters Air Force. This study focused on a multitude of factors (personal, professional, policy, operations, etc.) that often cause barriers in female careers, along with providing change suggestions for future policy and operational considerations, all of which were consolidated and published by the Advanced Study of Air Mobility graduate program at the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center.

"Some years NAA awards are given for long careers of service. Some years they are given to young, tremendously accomplished people who have given so much and who we know will inspire others to do so as well," described NAA President Greg Principato. "Major Morgan fits squarely in the second category. Already highly accomplished as an Air Force Officer, Major Morgan gives of herself tirelessly to mentor and inspire others. This award is about great accomplishment AND making those around you better. Major Morgan personifies this. I look forward to presenting her this prestigious and well-deserved award."

"Words cannot express how truly honored and deeply humbled I am by this award," shared Major Morgan. "I would not be where I am today nor have been able to achieve a fraction of the accomplishments without the unconditional love, guidance, and support from my family, friends, colleagues, supervisors, and teammates along my life journey. I am forever grateful for the path emblazoned by all the amazing women that came before me over the years, serving as role models and inspiration for me to pursue my dreams. I truly stand on the shoulders of giants and dedicate this achievement to them! In turn, I promise to continue my pursuits of leaving the world in a better place than I entered it and to help inspire the next generation!"

Members of the 2021 Katharine Wright Trophy Selection Committee included: Terry Carbonell, Vice President, The Ninety-Nines; Dorothy Cochrane, 2020 Katharine Wright Trophy Recipient; Minnetta Gardinier, Director, The Ninety-Nines; Chrystina Jones, 2017 Katharine Wright Trophy Recipient; Pat Prentiss, Past-President, The Ninety-Nines; Barbara Walters-Phillips, 2019 Katharine Wright Trophy Recipient.

The Katharine Wright Trophy will be presented on a date and location to be determined. For more information or to view a complete list of previous recipients, 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.

#####