



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Erin Miller to Receive the 2021 Bruce Whitman Trophy**

**Washington, DC, June 8, 2021** – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is pleased to announce that Erin Miller, author of *Final Flight Final Fight: My Grandmother, the WASP, and Arlington National Cemetery*, has been selected as the recipient of the 2021 Bruce Whitman Trophy.

The Bruce Whitman Trophy was established by the Board of Directors of NAA in 2019 to honor the late aerospace executive and philanthropist. Whitman was posthumously named as the first recipient of the trophy the same year.

The trophy is awarded to “... outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to aviation or aerospace in the United States, and who by working with museums and other institutions have promoted an appreciation by students and the broader public of the sacrifices and legacy of members of the military service.” A deserving nominee is put forth annually by the Chairman of the NAA.

Erin Miller is the proud granddaughter of Elaine Danforth Harmon, a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) during WWII. Despite being part of the first group of women to fly for the United States Army, the WASP remained officially unrecognized as members of the military. Her grandmother’s last request was to be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) and after she died in April 2015, this request was denied by the U.S. Army which runs ANC. This injustice led Miller to launch a successful grassroots, social media, and direct lobbying campaign to fight the decision.

On May 20, 2016 President Obama signed H.R. 4336, the bill introduced in Congress by Representative Martha McSally (AZ-2) in January 2016, which then became a law to officially recognize the service of WASP as eligible for ANC. Thanks to Miller’s efforts, more than 100 living WASP members could now be buried in the nation’s most famous military cemetery. The funeral for Miller’s grandmother was held on September 7, 2016 at ANC, followed by a family memorial service at the Military Women’s Memorial.

Building on the success of her legislative efforts, Miller has used her book and story as a means of educating children and adults all around the country about the contributions of the WASP to victory in WWII. She has spoken to school groups, at museums, and in any forum she can find to reach and teach people about the WASP and their contributions. Miller has an illustrated children's book titled, *What Grandma Did*, coming out later this year telling the story of the WASP.

“Erin is tireless in her effort to ensure that Americans know the story behind the extraordinary women of the WASP,” stated NAA President Greg Principato. “Her efforts are of a kind that Bruce Whitman would surely be proud, and work to encourage. And, through this award, he is.”

“I’m honored and humbled to receive the Whitman Trophy. My grandmother Elaine Harmon spent decades speaking at schools and museums about her service with the WASP. I did not expect to be carrying on that legacy, but it was a natural progression after advocating for the law to have her rightfully laid to rest at Arlington. I am grateful that younger generations are inspired by the history of these aviation trailblazers.”

NAA will present the Bruce Whitman Trophy to Erin Miller on a date to be announced. For more information or to view a complete list of previous recipients, 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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