



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Susan Mallett to Receive the 2022 Brewer Trophy for Aerospace Education**

**Washington, DC, October 24, 2022**– The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is pleased to announce that Susan Mallett has been selected as the recipient of the 2022 Frank G. Brewer Trophy. The trophy was established in 1943 to honor “... significant contributions of enduring value to aerospace education in the United States.” Past recipients of the Brewer Trophy include Edward Stimpson, Dr. Peggy Chabrian, the National Air and Space Museum’s docent corps, the NASA Spacelink Team, Barrington Irving, and the 2021 recipient, Shelly Simi.

Susan Mallett is being recognized for “... her passionate and sustained aviation education leadership and ambassadorship to create enduring collaborative partnerships, programs, and products, which have impacted and inspired over 2 million American youth since 1986.”

Susan began her unlikely aviation education journey in 1986 when asked to ‘pilot’ an aviation program by the Alabama Department of Aeronautics. As an elementary reading teacher, she had little knowledge of or experience in aviation, but, with her enthusiastic manner began learning about and integrating aviation education into her curriculum. By the end of the first year’s efforts, she had begun organizing orientation flights for her students and fellow teachers. Over the course of the last 36 years, she has coordinated flights with the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and Civil Air Patrol (CAP) for over 900 students and 1,000 educators, introducing them to the wonders of the sky and beyond.

Soon, not only were Susan’s grade level teacher peers involved in the new aviation program, but, as she rose toward school administration, her entire school became involved and was ultimately recognized nationally and internationally. She was sought to conduct aerospace programs at her alma mater, Auburn University in Montgomery, AL, and throughout her school system and state. She started after-school Aerospace Clubs where Space Camp trips for the educators and students allowed them to venture beyond local rocketry demonstrations for the community and become integrated in even more aerospace explorations to extend club instruction.

Next, the Civil Air Patrol’s national headquarters at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery tapped her to become an Aerospace Education Member and AE ambassador for teachers across the southeast and soon she was making presentations at national conferences and symposiums. Her volunteer efforts quickly earned her recognition by the local and national Air Force Association - AFA - (now Air & Space Forces Association), the Alabama Air National Guard, and the commercial aviation industry. CAP, NASA, and the FAA recognized her with national awards, with her most treasured being the A. Scott Crossfield Teacher of the Year award. As the seventh recipient of the Crossfield teacher award, which is

now presented by the National Aviation Hall of Fame, Susan continues to support recipients of the award as an annual NAHF teacher selection team member and a Crossfield teacher mentor.

In 1990, Susan received a Christa McAuliffe Education Fellowship wherein she used her funds to create a Mobile Aerospace Classroom (MAC). Susan, her husband, and their two sons traveled across the state to schools, community events, and symposiums introducing young people to aviation via the Link Trainer, educational products, and learning videos aboard the prop-nosed, re-engineered traveling school bus. Educators were trained to integrate aviation education into their curriculum and use MAC to allow young students the opportunity to fly in a hydraulic-based movable airplane while learning about the history, current endeavors, and future visions of aerospace.

For the next two years, Susan was selected and served as Teacher-in-Residence at Auburn University, Montgomery, where she taught educational instruction to both pre-service and masters level in-service teachers while also supervising teacher internships. She demonstrated how to integrate aerospace education throughout the curriculum and was instrumental in adding an aerospace education class to the university's course offerings.

By 1994, Susan had become a school principal, and, thus, influenced hundreds of students each year toward an interest in aviation and space topics, principles, and future careers. Before STEM was the educational trend, Susan used aviation education to integrate STEM throughout the curriculum, introducing students to myriad aviation-related STEM career options. Many former students have credited Susan with influencing their subsequent aviation-related career choices.

In 2004, Susan worked with the national STARBASE program director at the Pentagon to bring a STARBASE Academy to Maxwell AFB. She has continued working with and supporting Maxwell STARBASE, as well as partnering with STARBASE academies across the nation to help provide educational resources for the academy teachers.

In 2006, after 31 years as a public-school teacher and administrator, Susan retired to accept a newly created position at CAP's national headquarters. She was asked to develop programs similar to her schools' programs for teachers across the nation. Thus, her pathway to influencing multitudes of teachers, students, and area citizenry began.

By the beginning of the 2007 academic year, Susan had created and launched a fully-executable, grade-specific, aerospace-themed program for grades K-6 called the Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE) program. The ACE program provides 22 national academic standards-based lessons per grade level that cover academics, good character, and physical fitness, all traits we desire in general aviation and the aviation workforce. A totally free program for teachers, ACE is comprised of online, interactive curriculum and class sets of educational items and is building an early interest in aviation that will help encourage and prepare youth to set their sights on an aviation-related STEM career. Since its beginning 15 years ago, the ACE program has impacted and inspired over half a million youth in classrooms across America.

Volunteering with the local AFA since her early aviation education days, in 2009 she became a member of the national AFA's Aerospace Education Council and has led its national AFA/Rolls-Royce Aerospace/STEM Teacher of the Year program since 2012. She has coordinated national STEM programs between the AFA and CAP for 15 years, promoting the AFA's CyberPatriot and StellarXplorers programs; now working with the AFA team to explore initiating a national aviation program.

Also in 2012, Susan began working with the newly created AF STEM Outreach Coordination Office at the Pentagon (now the AF STEM Office at Wright-Pat) and was offered a quarter of a million dollars to

originate CAP's national K-12th grade STEM Kit program. Since 2013, over 40,000 kits have been provided at no cost to teachers, youth organizations, museums/libraries, aviation organizations, CAP squadrons, and AF Jr ROTC units across the nation. With funding from the USAF, the STEM Kit program currently includes over 20 free kits in the areas of aviation, space, and cyber and has imparted newfound knowledge about and interest in STEM topics and careers to over 2 million youth across the country.

Currently, Susan coordinates aerospace/STEM education outreach for CAP's national headquarters. Most recently, during the COVID pandemic, Susan volunteered to create new national CAP programs: an online repository of aviation-related educational resources; the ACE Plus program where CAP squadrons adopt 5th-8th grade classrooms for virtual and in-person instructional, aviation demonstrations, and career exploration support; and the first national CAP STEM Challenge for cadets, the High-Altitude Balloon Challenge. The program's national ambassador and award benefactor is famed test pilot and high-altitude balloonist, Col Joe Kittinger (recipient of the NAA Cliff Henderson Trophy and Distinguished Statesman of Aviation Award). Kittinger, who nominated Susan for the Brewer Trophy, stated, "I volunteered to do this due to the professional expertise I knew Susan would bring to a new national STEM program. As a high-altitude balloonist and scientist, I see this program as another avenue to build student interest in science and a huge success for CAP."

From a humble beginning in aviation, Susan has and continues to influence educators and the future workforce through her above and beyond volunteer and professional efforts to ensure the excitement and benefits of aviation remain at the forefront in the lives young people and adult citizenry across our nation.

"Like many in aviation, Susan came to the industry through an indirect route," said NAA President, Greg Principato. "But once she found aviation, her passion for educating future generations found a new calling. Susan has left her mark in so many ways and has a legacy that will live forever through the lives of those she has taught and inspired. She is so deserving of this prestigious award, and it is our honor to present it to her."

"For the nomination by my dear friend Joe Kittinger, and being selected as this year's recipient, I am very humbled and honored," expressed Susan Mallett. "Aerospace education has been my passionate work for 36 years. I have been able serve alongside and be mentored by the most amazingly dedicated and passionate like-minded people and organizations, collaboratively working toward the common mission of inspiring our nation's youth onward and upward. Thus, this award is especially significant for me."

Serving on the 2022 Brewer Trophy selection committee were: Frank Brewer, the Brewer Family; Robert Brewer, the Brewer Family; Chad Budreau, Academy of Model Aeronautics (2010 Brewer Trophy Recipient); Dr. Peggy Chabrian; 2009 Brewer Trophy recipient; Professor James Gregory, Ph.D., 2020 Brewer Trophy recipient; Yvette Rose, NAA Board of Directors; and Dawn Vinson, University Aviation Association (2008 recipient).

The Brewer Trophy will be presented on a future date and location to be determined. 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 aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit [www.naa.aero](http://www.naa.aero).***

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