

WAI Announces 2020 Pioneer Hall of Fame Inductees



December 12, 2019 – Women in Aviation International (WAI) has selected the 2020 inductees for its International Pioneer Hall of Fame. These women will be honored at the 31st Annual International Women in Aviation Conference, which will be held March 5-7, 2020, at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. The induction ceremony will take place on Saturday, March 7, 2020, prior to the conference's closing Celebration Dinner.

The 2020 Pioneer Hall of Fame inductees are:

Maj. Gen. Jeannie Leavitt is the commander, Air Force Recruiting Service, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, and made history as the service's first female fighter pilot. In 2016, she became the first woman to head the 57th Wing at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, and in June 2018 she took over Air Force recruiting. Her Air Force career has spanned more than 25 years, and Gen. Leavitt has flown more than 3,000 hours to include 300 hours of combat flight with operational experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq, including in Operation Southern Watch, Northern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom.

Patricia "Patty" Jean Wagner is an airshow legend, multi-rated pilot, and a devoted WAI volunteer. In 2019, Patty received the FAA Master Pilot Award for demonstrating professionalism, skill, and aviation expertise for 50 years. With her husband, Bob, Patty started an airshow wing-riding act called *A Girl on the Wing*. Six years after that first flight, the couple decided to go on the airshow circuit full-time, and have flown in all 50 states and performed in 47 states, as well as British Columbia, Quebec, every Canadian province in between, and in South America.

U.S. Army's First Women Rotary Wing Aviators is a group of nine female helicopter pilots who represent the first women in rotary wing aviation to serve in the U.S. Army. These four lieutenants and five warrant officers proved women had a place in military aviation and blazed the trail forward for future generations of Army women. During the 1970s, these women displayed the pioneering spirit, persistence, and courage to earn their place in U.S. Army aviation. They include Lieutenants Sally Murphy, Linda Horan DuMoulin, Susan Dunnwoody Schoech, Beverly Birkholtz, and Warrant Officers Jennie Vallance, Diane Dowd, Susan Boring, Lavern Fransworth, and Mary Reid.

"Our 2020 inductees reflect the diversity of careers represented by our members," says WAI Communications Director Kelly Murphy. "Our International Pioneer Hall of Fame honors not merely women of great accomplishment, but women who have carried the weight of future female aviators on their shoulders as they broke down gender barriers and proved that women could succeed and contribute to aviation in unique ways."

The Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame was established in 1992 to honor women who have made significant contributions as record setters, pioneers, or innovators. Special consideration is given to individuals or groups who have helped other women be successful in aviation or opened doors of opportunity for other women. Each year, the organization solicits nominations from throughout the aviation industry for the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame. For more information on the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame, visit [pioneers](#).

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Women in Aviation International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing networking, mentoring and scholarship opportunities for women and men who are striving for challenging and fulfilling careers in the aviation and aerospace industries. For more information, contact WAI at 3647 State Route 503 South, West Alexandria, OH 45381, Phone (937) 839-4647; Fax (937) 839-4645 or through www.wai.org.

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