

Honor Awards

3350 S. George Washington Blvd. ★ Wichita, KS 67210 ★ 316.683.9242 ★ kansasaviationmuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame Announces Class of 2026

WICHITA, Kan. — The Kansas Aviation Museum has announced the **Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame Class of 2026**, honoring six individuals whose accomplishments have helped shape aviation history in Kansas and around the world.

The 2026 inductees are **Nadine Ramsey, Thomas Carr, Ed Bolen, Al Higdon, Harold Miller**, and **Robert “Bob” Taylor**. The Museum will also present its prestigious **Lifetime Achievement Award** to legendary aviator and entrepreneur **Clay Lacy**.

The honorees will be recognized during the Kansas Aviation Honor Awards on Tuesday, November 10, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at WSU Tech's National Center for Aviation Training, 4004 N. Webb Road, Wichita, Kansas.

"The Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame exists to preserve the stories of those whose vision, courage, leadership, and innovation have advanced aviation," said **Ben Saucedo, President of the Kansas Aviation Museum**. "This year's class represents the extraordinary breadth of Kansas aviation—from wartime service and technological innovation to industry advocacy, entrepreneurship, and breaking barriers."

About the Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame

The Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame recognizes individuals whose achievements have significantly contributed to the advancement of aviation and aerospace. Through their innovation, leadership, service, and vision, Hall of Fame inductees have helped establish Kansas as a global center of aviation excellence.

Tickets, sponsorship opportunities, and additional event information will be announced in the coming months.

Media Contact:

Ben Saucedo
President, Kansas Aviation Museum
(316) 683-9242
bensauceda@kansasaviationmuseum.org

Honor Awards

3350 S. George Washington Blvd. ★ Wichita, KS 67210 ★ 316.683.9242 ★ kansasaviationmuseum.org

Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame Class of 2026

Nadine Ramsey

A native of El Dorado and Wichita, **Nadine Ramsey** answered her nation's call during World War II as a member of the elite **Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)**. After accumulating more than 700 hours of flight experience through Wichita's Civil Air Patrol, Ramsey joined the Women's Flying Training Detachment and graduated as a WASP in 1943. She became one of only 303 women qualified as a ferry pilot and later flew high-performance military aircraft, including the P-51 Mustang. Ramsey was also among an exceptionally small group of WASPs qualified in the Lockheed P-38 Lightning, one of the most advanced fighters of the war. Her service helped free male pilots for combat operations and contributed to the Allied war effort at a pivotal moment in history.

Thomas Carr

For nearly five decades, **Thomas Carr** has been at the forefront of aviation innovation as an engineer, experimental test pilot, and avionics pioneer. A University of Kansas aerospace engineering graduate, Carr's career has spanned Beech Aircraft, Raytheon Aircraft, and Garmin International, where he serves as Director of Flight Operations and Chief Test Pilot. His work has influenced some of the most transformative technologies in modern aviation, including the Garmin G1000 integrated flight deck, synthetic vision systems, advanced autopilots, and Garmin Autoland. Carr played a key role in the development and certification of Autoland, the world's first certified autonomous emergency landing system, recognized with the prestigious Robert J. Collier Trophy as the most significant achievement in American aeronautics in 2020.

Ed Bolen

Born and raised in Salina, Kansas, **Ed Bolen** has become one of aviation's most respected advocates and influential leaders. Since 2004, he has served as President and CEO of the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), the world's leading business aviation organization. Bolen's leadership has helped drive industry growth, strengthen aviation safety, expand workforce development initiatives, and shape national aviation policy. Earlier in his career, he played a pivotal role in securing passage of the General Aviation Revitalization Act of 1994, legislation widely credited with revitalizing the American general aviation manufacturing industry and helping

Honor Awards

3350 S. George Washington Blvd. ★ Wichita, KS 67210 ★ 316.683.9242 ★ kansasaviationmuseum.org

restore growth among Wichita-based aircraft manufacturers. His impact continues to be felt throughout the global aviation community.

Al Higdon

Few individuals have done more to shape the public image of aviation than **Al Higdon**. Beginning his career at Beech Aircraft before joining Learjet during its formative years, Higdon helped introduce the business jet to the world and establish "Learjet" as a household name synonymous with business aviation. As Learjet's Public Relations Director, he pioneered innovative marketing strategies that elevated both the aircraft and the industry. In 1971, Higdon co-founded Sullivan, Higdon & Sink, one of the nation's premier aviation marketing firms. Over the following decades, the agency represented a who's who of aviation companies, including Learjet, Cessna, Rockwell Collins, Lycoming Engines, Signature Flight Support, and many others. Through communications, branding, and advocacy, Higdon helped define how generations of people viewed aviation and aerospace.

Harold Miller

Harold Miller made history in 1970 when he became the first Black air traffic controller to actively control aircraft in Wichita. A Wichita native and U.S. Navy veteran, Miller overcame significant barriers to enter one of aviation's most demanding professions. During a twenty-year career at Wichita Mid-Continent Airport, he safely guided thousands of aircraft, rose to supervisory positions, and became an instructor. His leadership extended beyond his own career as he actively recruited and mentored future air traffic controllers, helping open doors for others and increasing diversity within the profession. Miller's story stands as a testament to perseverance, professionalism, and service.

Robert "Bob" Taylor

Entrepreneur and aviation visionary **Robert "Bob" Taylor** transformed business aviation through the creation of a groundbreaking fractional ownership model. After assuming leadership of Wichita-based Executive Aircraft Corporation in 1998, Taylor launched Executive AirShare in 2000 with an innovative concept: selling access to aircraft by the day rather than by flight hour. The model revolutionized flexibility and efficiency for business travelers and became the foundation of one of the nation's most successful

Honor Awards

3350 S. George Washington Blvd. ★ Wichita, KS 67210 ★ 316.683.9242 ★ kansasaviationmuseum.org

private aviation companies. Today, Airshare operates nationwide and is recognized as one of the country's leading private jet operators. Taylor's entrepreneurial vision and commitment to aviation excellence have had a lasting impact on Kansas aviation and the broader business aviation industry.

Lifetime Achievement Award

The Kansas Aviation Museum will present its **2026 Lifetime Achievement Award** to **Clay Lacy**, whose extraordinary career spans military service, airline operations, business aviation, aerial cinematography, flight instruction, and entrepreneurship.

Widely regarded as one of the most accomplished aviators in aviation history, Lacy has logged tens of thousands of flight hours across hundreds of aircraft types while pioneering advancements in business aviation and aerial filmmaking. His lifelong commitment to aviation excellence, safety, and mentorship has inspired generations of pilots and aviation professionals.

##