FLIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Alumni help industry find new ways to adapt to global pandemic
This issue of Lift celebrates Embry-Riddle alumni who are translating resilience into action. From seizing new market opportunities for business jet fractional ownership, to retooling a critical supply chain, to raising standards of experience and sheer love of flight and exploration remained as familiar to us a century later. In 1918, Paul Riddle, faced setbacks that feel indirect, can bring unexpected gains.

Although the past year brought delays and detours, our insight, motivation as ever. I like to believe we share a little historical DNA as a part of Embry-Riddle. Resourcefulness is shown the industry what excellence looks like, and your support will continue that tradition.

Emory-Riddle’s founder, John Paul Riddle, faced setbacks that feel direct, but, in his view, also presented opportunities for business innovation. Based on this early experience, he insisted his pilots complete extensive maintenance training, convinced it would make them safer operators. His conviction paid off when the company’s reputation for safety led to its success in securing CAM-24, one of the first U.S. Air Mail routes. The government contract stabilized the fledging company, allowing it to expand to cargo service, photogrammetry and even aviation-based tourism.

Each of us, in our own way, carries forward Riddle’s combination of daring and pragmatism. You will see from the achievements featured in this issue, our graduates continue to embody creativity and productivity even in the face of unexpected challenges. These success stories are a source of pride. We can’t say it too much. Thank you for serving as ambassadors of inspiration. Thank you, too, for the generous financial support that funds scholarships, research and futures. Embry-Riddle graduates have always made a full recovery, the pandemic and struggling economy sidelined his dream, Riddle focused on aviation advancement, even when the route seems like, and your support will continue that tradition.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Air Taxi Innovators

Students gather scalable data for Honeywell’s urban air mobility research

Honeywell is partnering with Embry-Riddle to design air taxis and help shape the urban air mobility (UAM) industry — and students are more than just along for the ride. They’re benefiting from hands-on research opportunities, internships and employment offers.

The project, which aims to characterize the flight performance of future urban air vehicles by using scaled-down models, involved six Embry-Riddle juniors last year, and all were offered Honeywell summer internships, according to Johann Dorfing, assistant professor of aerospace engineering, who is the project mentor. Of the six, who interned at Honeywell last summer, at least three were offered full-time positions. This past fall, four new juniors joined the project team, and they have received internship offers for 2021.

“Being selected to work on the project really sets students up for success,” Dorfing says. “Having this project experience really gets employers interested in our students. I often hear that, during interviews, many of the talking points are the extracurricular projects students worked on. This project provides the added benefit of working with practicing engineers. It really rounds out students’ resumes.”

Both Brooklyn Cross and Brendan Stoutenburgh, two mechanical engineering students involved in the project, say they came to engineering quite naturally. Both have always loved taking things apart and putting them back together. Although not all of the student participants have the same major — they also come from the computer science and unmanned aircraft systems programs, for instance — Cross and Stoutenburgh share an academic focus in propulsion, and both say they are fascinated with engines.

“It was within the last few years that I realized my passion for engines,” Stoutenburgh says. “They’re a topic I could talk about all day.”

Cross, who is the team lead on the UAM project, says the research will help to determine characteristics of full-size air taxis — capable of carrying four to six people — such as flight time, maximum range and stability. Cross points out that one of the main intentions behind UAM is finding cleaner alternatives to current transportation modes, so the vehicles will be powered by electricity.

The initial phase of the project involves making a hexacopter design. A small-scale model is currently being flight-tested, and data related to speed, flight path angle, power and vehicle altitude will be collected. This information, according to a project abstract, will provide a foundation for optimum route planning and validation of projected performance.

“What we aim to do with this research is gather scalable data — rotor RPM, power consumption and movements in every direction,” Stoutenburgh says. “This information can be used in the future to roughly describe the motion of similar larger vehicles.”

— Michael Jarvis

BY THE NUMBERS

EMBRY-RIDDLE RESEARCH PARK

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Expanding Innovation

Research Park adds Advanced Technology and Manufacturing Center

Embry-Riddle’s Research Park will soon gain another 10,000 square feet of production space to advance innovation and entrepreneurship in Central Florida. Dubbed the Advanced Technology and Manufacturing Center, the new facility will include 5,000 square feet of space for both emerging and established businesses in need of a larger footprint for light assembly and production operations. WeatherFlow-Tampest Inc., an existing Research Park innovator focused on weather observation, modeling and forecasting technology, was first in line to claim all of the leasable space. The other half of the building will be devoted to Research Park operations.

The Research Park brings business leaders together with Embry-Riddle faculty and students, promotes out-of-the-box thinking and drives technological advancement, says Embry-Riddle President P. Barry Butler. “Our highly collaborative business ecosystem encourages transformative ideas enriched by many different perspectives,” he adds. “By providing a stimulating environment where academia, industry and entrepreneurship can share their best ideas, entrepreneurs in Embry-Riddle’s Research Park will be tasked with giving back to the community while solving real-world problems.”

For six months, Rojas and his team of student researchers will send signals from a 3D-printed antenna on the ISS to new satellite ground stations at the MicaPlex. The researchers will study the effects on the 3D-printed material after exposure to the antenna and the shield to UV radiation, ionizing radiation and atomic oxygen.

All of these activities will support the characterization of a broader set of additively manufactured materials prepared by the L3Harris Technologies research team, led by Senior Scientist Arthur Paolillo, Ph.D.

“This is a great opportunity for us because we can study the degradation of 3D-printed materials caused by different phenomena that only happen in outer space,” says Carlos Mejia, a Ph.D. student who worked on the radiation shielding and sensing components to monitor the radiation levels. — Ginger Pinholder

3D Printing in Space

Eagles and L3Harris Technologies send 3D-printed devices to the International Space Station

When Northrop Grumman’s Cygnus LV vehicle rocketed skyward on Feb. 20, bound for the International Space Station (ISS), its 6,000 pounds of cargo included a 3D-printed electronic experiment by Embry-Riddle students.

The Eagles are supporting a larger effort by L3Harris Technologies that will help advance the use of 3D printing, or “additive manufacturing,” for space applications.

“Our students are contributing to a much broader initiative by L3Harris, thanks to Embry-Riddle’s partnership with this leading aerospace company,” says Eduardo Rojas-Rastrucci, Ph.D., faculty mentor and assistant professor of electrical engineering and computer science. “It’s a wonderful opportunity for the students to learn from a real-world client as they prepare for their future careers in this field.”

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— Ginger Pinholder
FROM THE EDITOR

L ife is a relay of sorts. We’re perpetually creating and then handing our creations off to others to build upon, hopefully to improve and ultimately hand off to someone else. In April, I celebrated my 10-year anniversary as the editor of Lift and my final day as an employee at Embry-Riddle. The relay race seemed an appropriate metaphor for this occasion, as I race to complete my last edition of Lift. As I write this letter, I can see in my mind the outstretched hand of the next Lift editor reaching energetically for my baton — in this case, my pen. Life is full of relay races. Think of child-rearing. As a parent, you raise a child through different life stages. Once they hit school age, you help them advance through their studies from grammar school to high school and then to college. In each stage, they receive instruction, guidance and input from you, but also from teachers, other family members and friends. Ultimately, they “graduate” from your care to careers and spouses, and they oftentimes start their own family creations. But they remain in your heart, forever your child.

The space program is another example. Nearly every alumnus who works for NASA or the commercial space industry with whom I’ve talked energetically for my baton — in this case, my pen. For the space program, I work with our customers, colleagues and Embry-Riddle. The lifework is created word by word, story by story. When building a magazine, we hand our creations off to editors, illustrators and designers to add their touches and expertise to produce the highest quality, most engaging print product for our audiences. I didn’t birth Lift. But it’s definitely been my baby.

As a Christian, I believe God, the great Creator, places people where they need to be at the right time in their lives. We may not see the ultimate purpose of our efforts, but we trust that it’s fulfilled nonetheless. In a relay race, each runner sprints as fast as they can to win their individual stretch of the race, knowing that their effort can make or break the team’s success. I’ve run my fastest, and now, it’s time for the handoff. My story isn’t over, but this stretch of the relay is. I believe my purpose, here, has been fulfilled — at least for now. I’m grateful to all of you — our readers — for providing the inspiration for and substance behind Lift, and for sharing your stories with me over the last decade. Just as you made Helging friends and colleagues as students and alumni of Embry-Riddle, I’ve done the same. There’s something special about this place. Wrapped up in the shared passion for aerospace and aviation is a spirit of family and teamwork that I dare say is unparalleled.

In publications, when a story is over, we signify it with a symbol we call an end bug. This tells the reader that the story is complete and won’t be continuing to the next page. In Lift, we use the eagle logo as our end bug. Not to design. Let’s put an end bug on this.

— SARA WHITNOW, EDITOR

SEND US YOUR STORY In Other Words gives you the opportunity to share your industry-related or personal perspective with Lift readers. Email submissions/proposals to liftmag@erau.edu

IN OTHER WORDS

Family Fuel
BY SERGIO SOVERO (’16)

It seems like yesterday. My mother and her 17-year-old son unloading a rental car on move-in day in Daytona Beach, Florida. That day was also the first time I had ever visited Embry-Riddle. All of the admissions paperwork was accomplished online from my home in Lima, Peru.

I knew it wouldn’t be easy. Learning a new language and flight training in a different country were all barriers I would have to overcome. Without a doubt, what pushed me the most to never give up was the support of my parents. I simply couldn’t fail them. They sacrificed many things to help me afford to go to Embry-Riddle, and I wanted to make them proud.

I had a plan. My goal was to become a flight instructor at the university as quickly as possible, in order to start building hours. Thanks to all of my flight instructors, I was able to take extra flight lessons and advance through my flight courses at a rapid pace. I never went home to Peru during those four years. By the start of fall 2015 — two years after my first semester — I was hired as a flight instructor after earning my CFI.

Flight instructing was just the first of many steps. I knew that the airlines, particularly at the major level, looked for candidates who take the extra effort to stand out, either by volunteering or mentoring. I knew Embry-Riddle had the tools to allow me to accomplish those things; it was up to me to make that happen.

I became a flight supervisor for the flight department, and shortly thereafter, a quality assurance mentor and an assistant training manager. I graduated with honors at the age of 21, and started flying for a regional airline. I flew the Embraer 175 jet for Republic Airways for two years, and then the Airbus A320 for Spirit Airlines.

It wasn’t long before Delta Air Lines reviewed my application and offered me an interview. It was the interview of my dreams. I prepared tirelessly for it, over a month of sleepless nights. The day finally arrived. Nov. 21, 2018. I found myself standing outside the Delta World Headquarters building in Atlanta. At 23, I was the youngest candidate to be eligible for a Delta pilot position. None of the interview candidates were doing much talking; I knew we had a long and stressful day ahead.

After hours of intense testing, it was time for the human resources portion of the interview. Remembered the words of one of my biggest mentors at Embry-Riddle, John Fit (’40): “Above all, remain calm, cool and collected.”

The final verdict came a few hours later. When the manager of pilot hiring approached the candidates with conditional job offers, he looked at me and said, “Sergio, 23 years old? Sometimes I get asked about why I hire such young candidates. You not only have verified so hard until today, but you excelled on all of the interview scoring.”

At that moment, my family came to my mind. My mom in Peru, 9,000 miles away waiting for me to call her with the news. “I did it. Mom, I made it. Your only son made it! My only son made it!” Those were my first words to her. Looking back, all the effort was worth it. Having a strong support system behind me was key. Every check ride, every step I accomplished throughout my flight training, I shared with them. They were my “fuel” to keep going.

Thank you, Embry-Riddle. All of you became my American family during those years. Thank you for welcoming me, but most importantly, thank you for laying out the path to success for my professional career. Now, for me, it’s all about giving back and sharing my story with your young, aspiring aviators all over the world.

I have a few words for them. I missed my family as much as you will. Yet, remember, you are not alone. Your family’s happiness as they watch you succeed will be your primary motivation. You will encounter many obstacles along the way — learn from them and don’t let them sway you away from your dreams.

EDITORS NOTE: Sergio is a Delta Air Lines first officer. He earned a B.S. in Aeronautical Science in 2016. He is a member of Embry-Riddle Prescott Campus Aerospace Advisory Board and the Eagle Writers Corps, a group of volunteer writers for the Office of Philanthropy, and Alumni Engagement.

After graduating with honors, Sergio Sovero (’16) became the youngest candidate eligible for a Delta Air Lines pilot position.
We’ve been called powder-puff racers and lady birds, and perhaps even lady bugs, but no matter what they call us, you’ll note that the girls and women handle their ships just as competently as the male aviators.”

That was Amelia Earhart’s message to reporters and 15,000 spectators as she stepped out of her Lockheed Vega, landing at Lunken Field in Cincinnati on Aug. 25, 1929. Earhart was making a scheduled landing, not an unexpected stop as some of her competitors in the Women’s Air Derby had been forced to make, setting down in a cow pasture due to sand in the engine, heavy fog or, possibly, sabotage. At the last minute, Cincinnati was added to the competition’s 11 required check-in points, giving the women the opportunity for rest, repair and photo ops.

The fliers were guests of the Embry-Riddle Company. With the backing of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce, T. Higbas Embry and John Paul Riddle negotiated with the National Air Races to replace Indianapolis as the next-to-last stopover before the eight-day derby culminated in Cleveland. On Aug. 13, Ohio newspapers announced the fliers would spend four hours at Lunken Airport.

The Women’s Air Derby was the first official women-only race in the U.S. It drew 19 participants flying from Santa Monica, California, to Cleveland. Like their male counterparts competing in the National Air Races, the pilots were required to have 100 hours of solo flight and a minimum of 25 hours of cross-country flying. Fourteen flew heavy-class airplanes, and six flew lighter-class airplanes. They competed for prizes totaling $8,000.

Although some, like humorist Will Rogers, trivialized the event, calling it the Powder-Puff Derby flown by “petticoat pilots,” it proved dangerous to several fliers and fatal to one. Marvel Crosson crashed and died in the Arizona desert. Despite public outcry, the remaining fliers continued as a tribute to her. Pancho Barnes wandered into Mexico and crashed. Ruth Nichols crashed. Frances Noyes battled an in-flight fire. Earhart had electrical problems. Claire Fahey withdrew from the race when she believed someone deliberately damaged her wing wires with acid.

Fourteen women made it to Cincinnati to take the required check-in. Riddle served as chief starter, and one contestant who lost her way to Cincinnati and skipped the event, calling it the Powder-Puff Derby flown by “petticoat pilots,” it proved dangerous to several fliers and fatal to one. Marvel Crosson crashed and died in the Arizona desert. Despite public outcry, the remaining fliers continued as a tribute to her. Pancho Barnes wandered into Mexico and crashed. Ruth Nichols crashed. Frances Noyes battled an in-flight fire. Earhart had electrical problems. Claire Fahey withdrew from the race when she believed someone deliberately damaged her wing wires with acid.

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Billionaire charters humanity’s first all-civilian spaceflight

BY ALAN MARCOS PINTO CESAR

I

ot on the heels of the first privately operated crewed flight to the International Space Station, launched by SpaceX in November 2020, Jared Isaacman (‘11) is deep into astronaut training. In the fall of 2021, he will command a SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule as it blasts into Earth’s orbit, to an apogee of 540 kilometers, on humanity’s first-ever all-civilian spaceflight.

Isaacman’s chosen mission, called Inspiration4, is also a fundraising partnership with St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. It’s the biggest in a series of fundraising campaigns that the tech-maven-turned-billionaire has paired with major aerospace feats.

Teenage Entrepreneur

Isaacman’s career success started early, when he was building websites on the side for business owners he met at his part-time job at CompUSA. One of those clients was a payment processing merchant, who offered Isaacman a full-time job in his information technology department. Isaacman’s parents conditionally OK’d his departure from high school: “My parents wanted to make sure I at least had a high school diploma, so I got a GED. That was the big requirement,” Isaacman said in an interview with CNBC.

Isaacman got ideas on the job that inspired him to start his own payment processing company, initially called United Bank Card, with the goal of greatly simplifying the process for small businesses wanting to accept credit card payments. He hired his dad, an experienced salesman, to be the outward face of the company until Isaacman himself was in his mid-20s — old enough to be taken seriously by their potential clients.

The company, now known as Shift4 Payments, has more than 200,000 client businesses and processes more than $200 billion in transactions annually. As CEO, Isaacman’s 38% ownership stake made him a billionaire when the Shift4 Payments’ initial public offering in 2020 valued the company at $6 billion.

Aviation + Philanthropy

During his 20s, though, his work consumed him, and he needed an outlet. He started taking flying lessons. True to his adventurous nature, he decided to break the world record attempt into his first large-scale fundraising effort.

It took two tries to break the record. “We learned a lot that first time, as far as what countries you can fly over, which ones don’t like each other and how to speed up the refueling turnaround time,” he said during an Aviation Outlook webinar hosted by Embry-Riddle in March.

“It gave me a huge appreciation for how easy it is to fly in the U.S., especially learning to fly. The concept of VFR (visual flight rules) isn’t as much of a thing in other countries. In Japan, for example, every airport is on a slot system. You either make your slot time or you’re on the ground.”

He succeeded in 2009, circling the globe in less than 62 hours in a Cessna Citation CJ2. He beat the previous record by about 20 hours and helped raise $100,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

From Draken to Dragon

Thoroughly fevered over flying, Isaacman bought an ex-military fighter jet while he was pursuing a bachelor’s degree in professional aeronautics at Embry-Riddle’s Worldwide Campus and began trying out aerobatics with some friends. But things escalated.

“When you have one plane, you realize quickly all the benefits of having two planes. You can do formation flying and you can ‘fight’ each other. And once you have two, you imagine the things you can do with four. Next thing you know, we have five [Aero L39s] and two [Mikoyan-Gurevich] MiG-17s in matching paint jobs,” Isaacman said in the Embry-Riddle webinar, describing the Black Diamond Jet Team’s fleet and his role as right wing pilot. “The air show circuit is a rock star lifestyle for sure.”

Running a seven-jet fleet is also very expensive, Isaacman said, especially with the temperamental MiGs. “No sponsorship dollars can ever offset all that. We were having the time of our lives, but we knew we couldn’t do that forever.”

“Even in the basement days of my company, corporate responsibility has always been a big part.” — JARED ISAACMAN (’11)

Just a year after graduating from Embry-Riddle, he pivoted the air show team to a commercial adversary support business by creating Draken International. His company specialized in air-to-air combat training, putting up many types of ex-military aircraft to simulate air battles with U.S. Air Force pilots. After eight years, Isaacman sold Draken to Blackstone Group in 2019.

Isaacman is now preparing to command a mission even higher and faster than any fighter jet can go. Recent advancements in the commercial space industry are finally able to make the space-travel dreams of a select few come true. But Isaacman is once again using the opportunity to do some additional good in the world.

“Even in the basement days of my company, corporate responsibility has always been a big part. I’ve tried to support a handful of worthwhile causes,” he said in the webinar.

He hopes the Inspiration4 mission will help St. Jude’s Hospital raise $200 million toward its efforts to fight childhood cancers. Isaacman, who is funding the SpaceX mission and contributing $100 million to St. Jude’s himself, offered up the other three seats on the Dragon Crew capsule to help publicize the fundraising effort.

The crew was carefully and intentionally selected: scientist and educator Sian Proctor won an entrepreneurship competition; Hayley Arceneaux is a former St. Jude’s patient and practicing physician assistant; and Chris Sembroski is a dedicated St. Jude’s donor. Sembroski, who earned a B.S. in Professional Aeronautics, coincidentally gives Embry-Riddle alumni a 50% representation on the Inspiration4 crew.

“We named our mission to inspire others to see what’s possible here on Earth,” Isaacman said. “Sure, we can go to space, but we can also cure childhood cancer along the way.”
Projects Worldwide

One of Cignus’ biggest domestic projects is with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which manages John F. Kennedy International Airport, Newark Liberty International Airport, LaGuardia Airport and Teterboro Airport. The company provides support with airspace and airspace modeling and simulation, master planning work, airport layout and terminal facility planning.

“We are also helping them with expansion projects at JFK and LaGuardia airports,” Khara says.

Internationally, Cignus has done airspace and transportation planning work on airport projects in Turkey, Russia, Latvia and United Arab Emirates.

“We did a modeling and simulation project for Dubai International Airport, and it expanded into a regional airspace design for all of the UAE,” Khara says. Another major international project was an airspace assessment and development/environmental impact analysis, along with modeling and simulation work for the new Istanbul Airport.

“We try to be as forward-thinking as we can, so commercial space operations planning is definitely something we are looking to do more of in the future,” Khara says.

The Eagle Advantage

Roughly 50% of all Cignus employees are Eagles.

“When we hire new people, we want a specific skill set and a lot of it is geared toward understanding of air traffic, simulation and modeling, and a specific aviation domain understanding. Basically, everyone at Cignus needs to have a passion and love for airplanes,” Hafner says, “so Embassy-Riddle is really the first place we look.

He says he often calls Carlos Castro (’02, ’14), the NEAR lab project manager who now teaches the airport modeling and simulation class, when they are looking for a new employee.

One of their newest “finds” is Aviation Simulation and Modeling Consultant Mwangi “Mosh” Karuri (’16, ’19), who was hired in 2019. He works on various transportation planning projects — the most current being a terminal planning project for JFK.

“Every simulation is different, and there are so many dynamic variables to consider,” Karuri says. “You get knowledge from a lot of different areas, and then you can apply the knowledge to develop solutions.”

Director of Business and Corporate Development Tom Styc (’79), who was hired four years ago, was Khara’s former boss and mentor. He is a U.S. Air Force veteran with decades of experience working on FAA projects.

“In business development, it is all about networking,” Styc says. “I planned to retire, but Vinnie brought me back in.”

Looking back, Khara and Hafner credit the knowledge to develop solutions.

“We are also helping them with — FLORIAN HAFNER, PH.D. (’99, ’02)

The NEAR Lab Supports University and Industry

The Next-Generation ERAU Applied Research (NEAR) lab is a research and development facility operating under Embry-Riddle’s Center for Aerospace Resilience (CAR). It supports the university plus works with industry and government entities on rapid prototyping, proof of concept, modeling and simulation, data science and solution-oriented applied research. It also supports the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on projects, including the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) research contract.

Carlos Castro (’02, ’14), the NEAR lab project manager, says applications developed by NEAR include:

• The NEAR Flight Operations (NFO) tool, which supports flight planning and air traffic management research.
• The Advanced Environment for ISR Simulation and Research (AERIS) simulation program, which allows students to operate unmanned aircraft and payloads in virtual environments.
• The Flight-line Real-time Information ERAU Notification Display (FRIEND), which uses electronic screens at the university’s flight line ramp to specify the weather conditions under which a student may conduct flight activities, based on their level of training and proficiency.
• The ERAU Live Traffic Mobile App, which provides students with situational awareness of current airspace conditions and allows other students to follow along during a flight.

By Melanie Stawicki Azam
FLIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

BY ALAN MARCOS PINTO CESAR, CYNTHIA PUCKETT AND TRISTYN BEMIS ('20)

Alumni help industry find new ways to adapt to global pandemic
Founded by Glenn Gonzales ('11), Jet It offers a day-use model and fractional ownership options that resonated with travelers as the pandemic took hold.

“Called the ‘Keep Trust in Air Travel’ initiative, it switched from collecting flight data to health data, to learn how to mitigate risk,” Zwegers says. “It’s the same approach we have always taken to safety risk management, just with different data points.”

Much of that data collection dealt with cabin airflow, plus cleaning and disinfection procedures. A study published by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in October 2020 determined, through analyses conducted by Airbus, Boeing and Embraer, that the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission in an aircraft is very low when passengers also wear masks.

“Safety in the air transport system itself requires a collaboration of all stakeholders. We all work together. We don’t compete on safety.”

Shareef Al Romaithi, Ph.D. ('05, '06, '14), receives a COVID-19 vaccine. As a captain for Etihad Airways, he was among the first to participate in the airline’s vaccination efforts.
Virtual Operational Safety Goes Virtual

Shifting Against the Headwinds

With passenger air travel down as COVID-19 took hold, aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) organizations felt the ripple effect and promptly adjusted their business models.

“The impact of COVID was unique,” says Ed Orme (’12), vice president and general manager of VT San Antonio Aerospace, a global leader in aviation maintenance. “Significant portions of the world’s cargo go in the belly of passenger airliners. So when passenger travel declines, the opportunity to move cargo declines. To correct that, there has to be an increase in cargo lift. That gave us an opportunity to shift our focus to [maintaining] cargo airliners instead of passenger airliners, but the net effect is a decline of 20% to 30% in work volume.”

Amyr Qureshi (‘85, ‘86), senior vice president and co-founder of Aventure Aviation, says this unique situation created an opportunity for parked passenger aircraft to be converted to cargo use. “The honeymoon period right now is more for the conversion facilities that are converting passenger aircraft into freighters. They have a long backlog of orders for converting these aircraft.”

“But the demand for cargo isn’t strong enough to make use of all the excess aircraft in the industry. Qureshi says some airlines are salvaging their own parked aircraft for spare parts or making drastic cuts to their fleets altogether, which is having ripple effects on the aircraft parts sales side of his business.”

“Airlines are deciding to retire their aging airplanes much sooner than planned, lessen their cost structures and maximize their revenues,” Qureshi says. “This trend is bound to continue for the next four to five years simply because of the evolving market conditions leading to fleet optimizations.”

Qureshi says the resulting glut of harvested and reconditioned parts on the market compelled them to run a strategic analysis of the industry looking forward. Their conclusions called for Aventure Aviation to scrap parts inventory for more efficient new-generation aircraft. “We are shifting toward building parts inventory for more efficient new-generation aircraft, as well as for some common 757, 767, 777 freighters that are surely destined to fly for years ahead on medium-to-long-haul routes,” Qureshi says.

Though parked aircraft are slowly being brought out of storage to meet some rising demand, Qureshi predicts many operators will scrap their airliners and buy more efficient, new-generation aircraft.

“Many airplanes will never be airborne again,” Qureshi says. “You can blame this on the pandemic, no doubt about it.”

The Human Element

When it comes to addressing safety in a pandemic, aircraft are only part of the equation. The human element is vital. Keeping the industry afloat begins with protecting the health of crews and passengers.

Vaccines are a front-line solution, and airlines are eager to vaccinate workers. Shared Al Romathi, Ph.D. (’05, ’06, ’14), a captain for Etihad Airways, was among the first to participate in his airline’s efforts to have all of its crew members fully vaccinated—a measure taken to ensure the safety of its passengers and crews.

“I was very confident about taking the vaccine,” says Al Romathi, who is also head of corporate safety at Etihad. “As I work on the front line, the vaccine gives me an additional piece of mind to safely operate commercial flights.”

He credits his confidence in receiving the vaccine to the cooperation between Etihad Airways and the UAE government.

“Strong collaborations between Etihad and the UAE government ensured that all pilots and cabin crew were vaccinated in the shortest time possible. It is a great moment of pride,” Al Romathi says. “We are doing our part by getting vaccinated, and the sooner we all get vaccinated, the sooner we will get through this. We are all in this together.”

A Question of Balance

It’s that “alin-them-together” approach that’s helping companies and their employees weather the storm. Elisabeth Matschnigg (’20), assistant manager of ground operations audits at IATA, says the way companies balance employee mental wellbeing with the bottom line is a critical factor in their adaptability.

“If people are worrying about job security, the economic welfare of their company, dealing with stress from prolonged periods at home, this can reduce the fulfillment of your work. If you (as an organization) don’t address this on all levels, it can show in overall performance and the financial bottom line,” she says. “It’s always a balanced approach — obviously the company going bankrupt helps no one. But if employees see your support, they will want to support you.”

At IATA, Matschnigg highlights their personal “Are You Okay?” initiative, which includes surveys on mental well-being. “We had a restructuring; we had to let people go. The survey asks how [they] are coping with that, how has [their] workload changed. This has been a big focus in organizations and has become more important than ever.”

Singapore Airlines embraced a similar approach to help address the well-being and professional needs of their employees. Rick Wee (’19), senior executive of Cabin Crew Safety, Security, Quality and Health at Singapore Airlines, says they sought special permission from the nation’s civil aviation authority to use online programs to keep crew current on their 60-day operational and flight frequency requirements. In addition to investing in these measures, Singapore Airlines encouraged employees to volunteer locally, both to support their country and develop new skills.

“We provided crew to government institutions that were in need of resources, in areas such as healthcare, transport and contact tracing. The Crew Ambassador Programme was a win-win situation, as the role and training of the cabin crew enabled them to contribute to these establishments,” Wee says.

When the difficult reality of staff reductions became necessary in September 2020, the airline waived their exclusive employment restrictions on cabin crew and assisted them in finding temporary work. They also introduced...
Glenn Gonzales (‘11), CEO and founder of Jet It, a hybrid fractional provider.

Forty-one years, and feels that the company’s approach was an important part of the pandemic response.

I believe Delta recognized the issues very quickly, and I think they responded intelligently and thoughtfully and virtually immediately,” Sterioff says. “It helped balance the issues that everyone was concerned about in the industry.

That balance involved securing the cooperation of Delta employees. According to company statements, more than 40,000 Delta employees took a voluntary unpaid leave of absence and nearly 17,000 retired early or left the company with benefits packages. Pfannenstiel credits this proactive, cooperative approach in difficult times as the defining factor in Delta’s ability to recover, including the ability to avoid involuntary furloughs.

“We did the absolute best we could for people,” Pfannenstiel says.

While pay cuts, mass furloughs and retirements have left newly certificated pilots with few current prospects in a pandemic-ravaged industry, Sterioff remains hopeful for the young pilots just getting their start.

“I would say to anybody who is pursuing [a pilot] career that I think it’s a tremendous career,” Sterioff says. “I think it had a setback. The entire world has had a setback. But you are going to see a continual uptick and a huge demand for pilots going forward. I think that you’re going to see an improving economy and see things that hopefully will allow us to put this behind us.”

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

Not all sectors of the industry have struggled during the pandemic. A fortunate few were in the proverbial right place (or right sector) at the right time. Case in point: Glenn Gonzales (‘11), CEO and founder of Jet It, a hybrid fractional provider.

“For private aviation, it’s actually been a bit of a boon for us. The pandemic has definitely increased awareness as people are looking for different means of travel,” Gonzales says. “The industry is evolving, and I think it’s just accelerating the inevitable.”

Gonzales launched his hybrid fractional ownership business in 2018. It offers a day-use model that allows for travel to multiple destinations in one day and fractional ownership options of one-tenth (25 days) to one-half (130 days) of a HondaJet Elite. It’s called a hybrid program because owners who are pilots and have a type rating for the HondaJet can fly as co-pilots in the Red Jet Squadron. The Jet It fleet is also available for charter flights.

“I noticed a gap in the market,” Gonzales says. “I created a business model that met the market demand, and I was fortunate to have Harvard University select Jet It for a case study and incorporate us into their academic curriculum.”

In executing their vision, Gonzales and Jet It’s co-founder, Vishal Hiremath, have executed operations in three regions: the United States, Canada and the European Union. They are making preparations to launch in India and Southeast Asia in 2022. The company has gained global attention for its focus and innovation in travel.

While it may take some time, Gonzales expects people’s innate need for connection to induce a rebound in business air travel.

“At the end of the day, when closing a deal, there’s that human element that does not go away,” Gonzales says. “There’s something about the essence of another person that you cannot feel online. You need to look them in the eye, in person, and shake their hand. That will never go away as far as I’m concerned; it’s a human behavior that does not change.”

EDITORS NOTE: Gonzales is a member of Embry-Riddle’s Worldwide Campus Business Administration Industry Advisory Board.

“ ‘The entire world has had a setback. But you are going to see a continual uptick and a huge demand for pilots going forward. I think that you’re going to see an improving economy and see things that hopefully will allow us to put this behind us.’ — JAY STERIOFF (’79, ’83)"
Online Detective

Albane Flamant (‘10) analyzes online conversations to benefit brands and customers

BY SARA WITHROW

Albane Flamant (‘10) is an online detective of sorts. As the head of brand and data storytelling at Talkwalker, a social listening company, she uses her company’s proprietary software system to look for clues hidden in the millions of conversations that people have each day on social media and other online platforms. For example, say a hypothetical beverage company is getting comments on its social media pages that one of its bottled water products has a metallic taste. Is it really a product-quality problem or just a one-off complaint? Answering questions like these helps organizations make informed marketing and business decisions that benefit their brands and ultimately their customers, Flamant explains.

Over the last year, the pandemic has been a “game-changer” for businesses, and the social intelligence Flamant has gathered reveals clear winners and losers. “It has caused a massive shift in consumer behavior and that shift is still happening today.”

While COVID-19 negatively impacted many industries, technology was a segment that largely soared through the crisis. “The tech industry — anything that’s online, including technology that’s geared to working from home and e-commerce platforms — is doing really well,” Flamant says. “It's one of the most decorated members of our program in its 21 years,” says Women's Golf Coach Maria Lopez (‘12). “Not only is she highly intelligent, diligent and a gifted golfer, accomplishing things no one had ever done before, she was also the ultimate servant leader. Albane was always looking where she could grow and make a difference.”

Tech Attraction

Flamant’s inquisitive nature ultimately led her to Talkwalker. She says the technology of social listening intrigued her. “I was very curious as to how private companies were handling data and actually transforming it into something valuable. I’m quite fascinated by the tool that they were able to develop.”

When Flamant was a student at Embry-Riddle, social listening was largely nonexistent. The year before she graduated (2009), Talkwalker’s founders came up with the idea to launch the software as a service platform. The technology was nascent at the time. When Flamant joined Talkwalker in 2015, the company was still considered a startup. Today, it has a staff of 400 and has nine offices worldwide.

Brands need to keep their finger on the pulse of influencer conversations — and cultivating messages through Slack communities. But for businesses, farming web conversations — and cultivating messages through influencers — is important, she says. “Brands need to keep their finger on the pulse of their industry.”

Teed Up for Success

Although she acknowledges her Embry-Riddle degree helped lay the foundation for her work today, it wasn’t the communication program that brought Flamant to the Daytona Beach Campus. “I came to Embry-Riddle mainly because of golf,” she says. “I wanted an international school, not too far north, so I could play golf year-round. I really connected with the coach (Maria Lopez) and the team.”

Flamant, who is from Belgium, earned kudos on the links and in the classroom. Despite being a non-native English speaker, she earned a 4.0 her first semester, was selected for Embry-Riddle’s Honors Program and helped the women’s golf team earn a record-breaking 3.82 GPA for the program, for three years running.

Flamant's performance on the golf course was equally impressive. She helped take the team to four National Championship competitions and was the Region and Conference Player of the Year and Conference Champion in 2009. Her individual lowest 36-hole score of 70/72 is a school record that still stands today.

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Top: Albane Flamant (‘10) with Talkwalker colleague Georges Krombach.
Bottom: During her time at Embry-Riddle, Flamant helped the women’s golf team reach four National Championship competitions.
Giving to the Bigger Picture

Retired professors make planned gift to support student-athlete scholarships

BY MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

Professor Emeritus Jim Cunningham has seen a lot of change at Embry-Riddle’s Daytona Beach Campus since he first came to the university in 1969 as an instructor of humanities and communications.

“My first salary was $6,900, and I had to teach a summer term,” he recalls. “On the campus, we had three buildings — A, B and C — and there was a doublewide trailer for the library connected to another for the student cafeterias.”

Jim and his wife, Cheryl (’96), who was an assistant professor of information systems in the College of Business for 18 years, became fast friends with Steve Ridder, the university’s longtime basketball coach and athletics director. At the time, Ridder was starting Embry-Riddle’s fledgling athletics program and advocating for student scholarships.

“We were just drawn to Steve Ridder’s ‘student-person-player’ philosophy,” Cheryl says. “We have also taught many student athletes over the years, and we got to know them quite well; the quality of these students was impressive.”

That is why the couple, both retired in 2014, recently decided to make a planned gift to create both term and endowed scholarships at Embry-Riddle, benefiting men’s and women’s soccer and basketball student athletes at the Daytona Beach Campus.

“When we were looking over our future finances, we really wanted to give Embry-Riddle a gift,” Jim says. “We know the coaches and students and wanted to focus our gift there.”

The Need for Student-Athlete Scholarships

Steve Ridder’s “whole package” philosophy is the foundation of Embry-Riddle’s Athletics program, which equally emphasizes developing a student-athlete’s character, leadership and interpersonal skills, as well as their athletic excellence.

That ideology impressed Jim and Cheryl, who often attended the Eagles soccer and basketball games with their son Shamus.

“We really began to see the bigger picture of how athletics were so important to the students’ lives and to the university,” Cheryl says.

They also saw the need for scholarships.

During his tenure, Jim had served several years as dean of academics and director of international exchange programs.

“Especially during the economic crisis in 2008, the cost of a college education escalated, making the need for economic support acute for both American and international students,” Cheryl says. She also served as the university’s Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) for over six years.

“Steve Ridder’s ‘whole package’ philosophy is the foundation of Embry-Riddle’s Athletics program,” Cheryl says. “We have also taught many student athletes over the years, and we got to know them quite well; the quality of these students was impressive.”

Jim continues to serve in the Eagles Athletic Association as chair of the Steve and Vicky Ridder Scholarship Committee, and he is also co-chair of the Daytona Beach Campus Faculty Emeritus Committee.

Sports, particularly sailing, have been an important part of Jim and Cheryl’s lives. Jim helped start the campus’ sailing club, and the couple has sailed together competitively and internationally.

“Embry-Riddle is just one of those great schools. It’s been very good to us,” Jim says. “Some of my best friends are the faculty members I’ve worked with, and the students I’ve taught.”

Cheryl agrees, saying they are happy to give back to the place that has been such an important part of their lives.

“Our hearts continue to be with Embry-Riddle,” she says.

“...an opportunity to have an education and contribute to the field, get their degree and plant the idea that it is important to give back.”

BY MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

When Stephen Blanchette Jr. (’86) left his home in Brooklyn, New York, to study aerospace engineering at Embry-Riddle’s Prescott, Arizona, campus in the early 1980s, he acknowledges it was a bit of a culture shock.

“But I was happy to be able to step up,” he says. “It really fits in with my overall philosophy of giving back to the university. I owe a lot of my success to what I learned there.”

In recognition of that success, on Feb. 1, 2021, Blanchette received the Robert H. Herndon Black Image Award, which honors the legacy of its namesake, a pioneering Black engineer at The Aerospace Corporation. The award recognizes employees for their outstanding work in support of the corporation’s mission, laudable humanitarian efforts and distinguished personal achievement.

Blanchette jokes that he has com a long way from his first computer programming experience, using punch cards. But he also remembers being the student who had to apply for a bunch of financial aid and loans to pay for his education.

“I wanted to help those students who came after me,” Blanchette says. “I would like to see students continue to have the opportunity to have an education and contribute to the field, get their degree and plant the idea that it is important to give back.”

STEPPING UP

Alumnus and Philanthropy Council member combines two loves with planned gift

BY MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

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“One plane with about 12 people coming into Prescott for a landing, I don’t think I saw any buildings more than three stories high,” Blanchette says. “Then we had torrential rains the first year that flooded some buildings, knocked out the power and made it muddy all over campus.”

Now the director of software systems and acquisition at The Aerospace Corporation, Blanchette ended up changing his major to computer science. But he says he never regretted his choice to attend Embry-Riddle, and his experiences there ultimately led to his success in a career that merges his interests in computers and aerospace.

“It really has been a combining of both of my lives,” he says.

To help students like him, Blanchette recently made a planned gift to the university to continue funding the Blanchette Scholarship for Excellence in Computing Sciences, which already has benefited Embry-Riddle Prescott students majoring in computer science since 2006.

“I went through about every dollar I had to get my education, so I know it is not easy,” he says.

Blanchette also gives back to Embry-Riddle as an inaugural member of the College of Security and Intelligence Philanthropy Council.

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE

For more about how you can make a difference through a planned gift, go to:

giftplanning.erau.edu

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By Air or by Sea

Drew Ferguson (’01) is preparing students for aviation and maritime careers

While tutoring and mentoring students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Drew Ferguson (’01) saw firsthand the challenges facing inner-city kids. From food insecurity to inadequate housing, many of the students were impoverished, he says. But their greatest need wasn’t necessarily physical. “The students had an expectation of failure,” Ferguson says. “They had lost the ability to dream and aspire to greater things. Those kids had been told that their hopes and dreams were a waste of time.”

Ferguson could relate. Because of a childhood injury, he was told he couldn’t achieve his dream of becoming a pilot. But he persevered. Today, he is a pilot (fixed and rotor wing), an instructor pilot, a teacher and a leader in his community. He’s also a U.S. Coast Guard licensed boat captain.

Completed by what he witnessed in the classroom, Ferguson founded the Public Health and Safety Technical Aviation Resources (PHASTAR) Corporation in 2010. A nonprofit organization, PHASTAR aims to improve the quality of education and provide public services in northeast Ohio. As president and CEO, one of Ferguson’s biggest accomplishments to date was creating Davis Aerospace and Maritime (A&M) High School. Established in July 2017, in conjunction with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Davis A&M opened with 50 ninth-graders that year. Four years later, the school has nearly 350 students in grades 9 through 12.

“PHASTAR exists purely to support the school and its programs,” Ferguson explains. The school provides students an aerospace and maritime environment that prepares them for college, careers and citizenship. “Davis A&M is currently the only high school in the country specializing in both aerospace and maritime,” Ferguson says. Students have opportunities to fly planes and assist in water rescue missions. The curriculum and programs provide life experiences and training opportunities for students to achieve self-sufficiency and can assist in breaking the poverty cycle, he says.

Piloting a Nonprofit

Earning a B.S. in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle, Ferguson says he’s always had “a fascination with flying, space and astronauts.” Embry-Riddle was the perfect place to feed his infatuation with aviation. “I chose Embry-Riddle for a variety of reasons, but especially due to its all-inclusive aviation atmosphere,” Ferguson says.

Helicopters became his aircraft of choice. He attained his helicopter Certified Flight Instructor – Instrument and instructed before being hired to fly critical-care transport helicopters for Cleveland’s MetroHealth Life Flight Services. He later became lead pilot and director of aviation for Metro Life Flight. With his interest in emergency and disaster management, he earned a master’s degree in public health along the way.

Ferguson has flown a variety of helicopters and obtained his air transport pilot certificate in a Sikorsky S-76. The skills he attained as a pilot have translated well into his role as CEO of a nonprofit organization. “As a pilot, you need to have situational awareness, always having a plan A, B and C, because situations change. Crew resource management and aviation safety management are also essential. These all transfer over to the daily operations with PHASTAR,” Ferguson says.

Learning through Service

Intent on also serving the community, Ferguson fashioned the maritime programs at Davis A&M as a hands-on partnership with Cleveland’s maritime industry. The students learn and work on PHASTAR Marine Safety vessels, which operate on the Cuyahoga River and along the lakefront. The PHASTAR vessels provide commercial vessel escorts and safety audits, water debris removal and safety patrols. The students’ maritime experiences allow them to build sea time (much like flight time), logged as days versus hours to qualify as a crew member on commercial vessels, he says.

The Bond that Breaks the Barriers

With the goal of making flying fun and affordable, PHASTAR also operates the Discover Aviation Center (DAC) and a flying club. DAC provides its own flight instructors and aircraft, including several flight simulators. The flying club offers training in conjunction with the Federal Aviation Administration’s Wings program, and DAC manages its own FAA-approved, in-house safety management system. Several Davis A&M students participate in the flying club after school and on weekends, and Ferguson personally helps ferry them from the school to the flight line. Many of the students come from communities of color, which are vastly underrepresented in aviation. This makes the flying club a win both for students and the industry, Ferguson says. “It has been beneficial for the children and those at the airport to interact. Aviation is the bond that breaks the barriers. I want to change the perspectives of others in aviation and the environment towards these kids so that it’s more welcoming to a kid who grows up in a poor environment and sees aviation as being out of reach.”

PHASTAR recently solidified a partnership with United Airlines, whereby the airline will provide leadership support, paid internships for 20 to 30 students, manufacturing opportunities and flight training costs for 12 students each school year, Ferguson says. Flight students will earn their private pilot’s certificate and may continue in United’s Aviate program, which helps increase diversity among applicants for the airline’s pilot openings. Ferguson has lofty future goals for PHASTAR, including building a new high school campus at the airport, expanding the maritime program and starting an AMP certificate program. “I would like to see more changes in the industry to reach out, engage, recruit and invest in students,” Ferguson says. “My drive comes from the kids’ success and changing their outlook on their futures.”

BY JACK SPRANKLE (’76)
S


tudents of the Embry-Riddle Aviation Management program in Brazil, offered through the Worldwide Campus, are putting their capstone projects to work — to bring about positive change for the aviation industry in Brazil. The 2019 student cohort used their research findings to convince regulators in Brazil to change fuel requirements for airliners, resulting in cost savings for Brazilian airlines in the millions of dollars. The 2020 cohort is on the verge of accomplishing something similar.

The 2019 Aviation Management cohort consisted of 30 students. Diogo Youssef (20), Fabiano Gomes (20), João Centeno (20) and Luciano Oliveira (20) were the four students who together developed their capstone research centered on lowering Brazil’s contingency fuel requirements from 10% to 5%.

Contingency fuel regulations require that a certain amount of fuel be carried for unforeseen occurrences, such as the pilot’s need to deviate from original routes due to weather conditions or other factors and the amount of fuel be carried for unforeseen occurrences, such as the pilot’s need to deviate from original routes due to weather conditions or other factors. Contingency fuel requirements are set to allow for adequate fuel reserves in case of unexpected events, such as receiving a new routing or landing pattern from air traffic control.

The 2019 Embry-Riddle students focused on helping reduce the amount of fuel required for airliners in Brazil. By using mathematical modeling and simulations, they determined that reducing the contingency fuel requirement from 10% to 5% would result in significant cost savings for airlines.

The students’ work was presented to Brazilian regulators and the aviation industry. As a result, a new law was enacted, reducing the contingency fuel requirement from 10% to 5%. This change has had a positive impact on Brazilian airlines, resulting in cost savings estimated to be in the millions of dollars.

In 2020, a new cohort of students continued this work. Joao Centeno (’20) and Luciano Oliveira (’20) were the researchers who led this effort. They used similar methods to simulate flight scenarios and analyze fuel requirements.

The 2020 Embry-Riddle students focused on quantifying the savings for Brazilian airlines resulting from the reduced contingency fuel requirement. They presented their findings to Brazilian regulators and airline executives, who were impressed by the potential cost savings.

Based on the students’ research, the Brazilian aviation industry has successfully reduced the contingency fuel requirement from 10% to 5%. This change has had a positive impact on Brazilian airlines, saving them millions of dollars in fuel costs. The Embry-Riddle program continues to work with aviation professionals in Brazil to bring about positive change in the aviation industry.
Jordan Antoniadis (86) wasn’t content to just sit around and wonder what ever happened to the many fellow Greek students who were his good friends when he was a student at Embry-Riddle in the 1980s.

So, he decided to find them. In 2009, through the Facebook page “Greek ERAU 80s Alumni,” he located and reunited with more than 60 fellow alumni and friends living in Greece, the U.S. and around the world.

Once he made the connection, Antoniadis presented them with a bright orange, self-made “ERAU Lost & Found” shirt. Through the Facebook page, the old friends were able to share photos, reminisce and plan reunions.

Jordan was the one who brought the group back together,” says Christodulou “Chris” Tzanakos (86, 88), director of quality assurance for Teledyne Systems. “And he personally made a point to see everyone who came back to Greece.”

Sadly, Antoniadis died on Feb. 3, 2021, at the age of 59. But Tzanakos and other Greek Embry-Riddle alumni and friends are trying to continue his efforts.

Tzanakos and Roussos recently held a Zoom session to remember Antoniadis and raised more than $2,000 for Antoniadis’ wife and two children with a GoFundMe page.

“Antoniadis was the one to find all of us again,” KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, who lives in Athens. “He is the one to find all of us again.”

Tzanakos says the students were grateful for the support. “You relied on a check mailed from Greece and, sometimes, people had no money for a week or more,” he recalls. “So we all looked out for each other. It is the bond that you share because you are in another country by yourself.”

The Great Connector

Antoniadis, who also went by the nickname “Danny,” was legendary for getting everyone together when they visited Greece, Tzanakos says. He would arrange local events and feasts at local tavernas.

“Someone would exchange a message, and he would coordinate and get everyone together,” Tzanakos says. “It would always be a big dinner, then you’d end up at 2 o’clock in the morning drinking coffee somewhere with other people calling in on speaker phone or FaceTime.”

John Tsapos (86, 88), who is managing director at BNY Mellon Asset Management in New York, says Antoniadis was the one who connected the Greek alumni group. More than just a host, he was also a confidant and always made time for friends.

“Personally, every time I flew into Athens, he always came to the airport to meet me;” Tsapos says. “Before anything, we would go have a coffee and talk about everything.”

Michal Aletraris (87, 89), product line manager at Delta Air Lines in Georgia, agreed, adding, “If you look up the worst hospitality, folklorism, it had a picture of Jordan. He was a true folkfriend.”

Some of the 1980s Greek alumni reunited in 2011 and visited Embry-Riddle’s growing campus. Tzanakos says. Epitropoulos made a video tribute to Antoniadis with old photos of the group from their student years and reunions.

“Without Danny and his efforts, we couldn’t have had these wonderful nights we shared here in Greece,” says Katerina Deligiorgi (87), an operational manager for KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, who lives in Athens. “He is the one to find all of us again.”

Tzanakos says he will try to honor his late friend’s memory by keeping the Embry-Riddle 80s Greek alumni group going, so the lifelong friendships, reunions and good times will continue.

“He definitely started something that will live forever,” Tzanakos says.

CONNECT

To join the Greek alumni Facebook group, search “Greek ERAU ‘Jordan Antoniadis’ Alumni” on Facebook.
As I write this letter, we have endured a full year of challenge, loss and sometimes heartbreak — but we’ve also responded with flexibility, creativity and resilience. As Eagles, we masked up, kept a wingspan apart and against the odds, completed another full academic year. This issue highlights many of the ways we adapted to and persevered through our new normal.

With many of our annual events cancelled, we were grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and get to know many of you virtually. As alumni, you networked, shared and met new friends and faces around the globe in all 50 states and in many countries. With over 200 online events, webinars and e-gatherings, including our first-ever virtual Homecoming, we were truly “One Eagle Community,” supporting each other. Thank you for your ongoing support.

But even with all this great activity, I still missed the sights, smells and sounds of air shows; the cheers and applause at graduations and sporting events; the tears at commissioning; the nervous excitement at career fairs; and just seeing real, in-person smiles.

As I reflect on the lack of sensory feedback from our activities, I still feel grateful for all that we have been able to do to stay connected. Eagles, I hope you can join me in approaching the upcoming year with a bright new outlook; while some uncertainty remains, we can now see a light ahead. Let’s stay connected and enjoy the sights and sounds — and most importantly, the smiles — as we connect in the next year.

In closing, I must thank Sara Withrow, editor of Lift magazine, for the last 10 years and 22 issues. While this issue will be her last (we will miss her!), I’m thankful for Sara’s many contributions over the decade. As I look at some of the headlines from past Lift covers, I feel that she embodies many of our core values represented in those titles. Whether it was “Breaking Barriers,” or “Igniting Innovation” or “Engineering Success,” Sara always kept her “Eyes on the Sky,” demonstrating a “Passion, Pride and Expectation” for the future.

Godspeed, Sara! Thank you for lifting up our alumni, each and every issue.

Forever an Eagle,
Bill Thompson (’87)
Executive Director

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A.dapt.a.bil.i.ty noun
The quality of being able to adjust to new conditions.
— OXFORD LANGUAGES

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Embry-Riddle — like the aviation industry — adapted its programs to ensure the greatest level of health and safety for its students, faculty and staff. The alumni engagement office paused in-person activities and offered virtual/Zoom gatherings, instead — including its first weeklong, truly global Homecoming celebration. Likewise, the university hosted virtual and hybrid commencement ceremonies.

These numbers tell the story.

### 2020 VIRTUAL HOMECOMING WEEK (OCT. 4-10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>States Represented</th>
<th>Countries Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>980</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VIRTUAL COMMENCEMENTS (DAYTONA, PRESCOTT AND WORLDWIDE/ONLINE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Virtual Ceremonies</th>
<th>Ph.D.s Confirmed</th>
<th>Undergraduate Degrees</th>
<th>Master’s Degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPRING 2020</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3,575</td>
<td>1,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPRING 2021</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2,530</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VIRTUAL ALUMNI E-GATHERINGS (MARCH 2020 TO MARCH 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Most Popular by Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,329</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>Virtual Lift Off for fall 2020 graduating students (169)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Recently met Amber [Evans], the director of the Camp LeJeune campus, at one of the online networking events last week. The following day we got to meet in person, where I got to share my aviation and college experiences with her. What a great opportunity!”
— ERIC CLARK (’19)

“After my state shut down, then in-office work schedules made the shift to work-from-home status. I felt more isolated than ever. Our alumni engagement team does an outstanding job offering opportunities to become and stay connected with fellow Eagles through podcasts, webinars and online formatted events, including virtual Homecoming — nicely done! Go Eagles!”
— TINA ROGONIA (’08)

### Join the Eagle Network:
- Alumni.erau.edu/join
- facebook.com/ERAUAAlumni
- twitter.com/ERAU_Alumni
- instagram.com/erau_alumni/
- alumni.erau.edu/podcast

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Godspeed, Sara! Thank you for lifting up our alumni, each and every issue.
Jayde King ('14, '16, '20), left, is the first Gaetz Aerospace Institute graduate to complete a Ph.D. at Embry-Riddle.

From high school to Ph.D., triple alumna pursues her passion at Embry-Riddle

BY ANNELISE O’DONNELL

Jayde King ('14, '16, '20) started her journey as an Eagle as a high school student enrolled in Embry-Riddle’s Gaetz Aerospace Institute. The institute links Embry-Riddle to secondary schools, giving students a jump-start on their college education through a concurrent enrollment program. For King that jump-start was like a rocket, launching her on an upward trajectory that culminated in three degrees and earned her the distinction of being the first Gaetz Institute graduate to complete a Ph.D. at Embry-Riddle. Today, she is a human factors research psychologist at the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL).

“I love seeing humans and technology working together,” she says. “That’s my favorite part of this field.”

Raised in close proximity to space shuttle launches, King says she dreamed of being an astronaut from a young age. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) came naturally to her; her mother is a crime scene investigator, and her father is a math teacher. Her love for aviation grew when she joined the Boynton Aerospace Science Academy (BASE), an arm of Embry-Riddle’s Gaetz Aerospace Institute at Boynton Beach Community High School in South Florida.

“We were able to complete 10 free flight hours through the program,” King says. “We get to fly, take aviation maintenance classes — all of that really fed into my decision to go to Riddle and promoted my love for aviation.”

Embody-Riddle Family

At Embry-Riddle, King was an active participant in and out of the classroom. She served in the Student Government Association and was a member of the Embry-Riddle Family.

As a graduate student, Jayde King ('14, '16, '20) observed a classroom’s experiment with the effect of wind through various simulated weather conditions.

Making a Difference for Industry

Before even finishing her program, King accepted her position with the AFRL. A recruiter for the lab offered her a job — on the spot — at a NSBE conference she attended.

“Looking back on my accomplishment, King says her position with the AFRL. A recruiter for the lab offered her a job — on the spot — at a NSBE conference she attended. Her role focuses on making the relationship between humans and artificial intelligence more seamless and less robotic.

“Transitioning from a student to a working professional can be challenging, not to mention doing so during a global pandemic: King leans on the lessons she learned at Embry-Riddle that she still uses today. “Just a couple of months ago I was a student, but now my decisions actually have impact,” she says.

With few women of color pursuing STEM-related careers, King believes that representation and giving back through mentorship and key solutions to diversifying the industry. She also credits the Gaetz Institute program with playing an important role in attracting people of color and women to these fields.

“It gives them the knowledge they need to prepare for this career, exposure to mentors at a young age and the opportunity to see students like them working through that coursework,” she says.

Looking back on her accomplishment, King says it’s not her new title of “doctor” that she values the most, but the collective experience she had at Embry-Riddle and how she can use it to conquer any challenge that comes her way.

What changed wasn’t the title — what changed was everything I did and learned,” she says. “Research is supposed to increase knowledge and better people’s lives. Now I have the credentials to do it, which is really empowering.”
SEVEN ALUMNI HONORED WITH 2021 EAGLE ALUMNI AWARDS

BY MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM AND ALAN MARCOS PINTO CESAR

Barry Hyde, Ph.D. ('07) miraculously survived a 1988 plane crash, but he permanently lost his vision and ability to fly a plane again. The former pilot and flight instructor embarked on a new career path, studying aviation safety at Embry-Riddle. He went on to earn his doctorate and is now an aviation safety analyst for the Federal Aviation Administration.

Barry is one of seven alumni being honored with a 2021 Eagle Alumni Award for their achievements. The other recipients, who will be recognized in a virtual program, include Phil Rosnik (’86), Matt Savoca (’94), Moriba Jah, Ph.D. (’99), Lisa Anderson Spencer (’99, ’03), Jean Olivier Mbog (’07), and Narendran Muraleedharan (’16, ’17).

Journey, and I’m loving every minute of it. Let’s together pay it forward to the next generation!”

Phil Rosnik (’86) Volunteer Alumni Award

“Receiving an award as recognition for my efforts is certainly an honor and always appreciated. However, the real reward for me is observing the actual positive impact that Embry-Riddle and the student population experience from my efforts.”

Lisa Anderson Spencer (’99, ’03) Distinguished Alumni Award

“This award was so unexpected and humbling. I’m honored and filled with gratitude. This award demonstrates ERAU’s confidence in me — as a valued alumna. I feel a degree of responsibility to be the best me I can be, as I represent the faith that ERAU has in me, as well.”

Narendran Muraleedharan (’16, ’17) Young Alumni Award

“I am honored that I am chosen for an alumni award from my university where a very large number of amazing and successful professionals come from. I loved my experience at Embry-Riddle, from the classes to the independent studies with professors to the research projects.”

Jean Olivier Mbog (’13) Volunteer Alumni Award

“I’m in love with all aviation, aerospace dreams, aircraft and everything that goes into them. Give me a chance to uplift, and I’m as happy as I can be. My life and my career are an endless learning journey, and I’m living every minute of it. Let’s together pay it forward to the next generation!”

Lisa Anderson Spencer (’99, ’03)

“I am extremely honored and pleasantly surprised that the university felt that I was someone who would earn this sort of distinction. It is welcomed and a very moving gesture.”

Matt Savoca (’94) Entrepreneur Alumni Award

“I graduated with the confidence to know I could take on life’s challenges. There are many great minds and many great entrepreneurs that have graduated from ERAU, and to be selected for this award is truly an honor.”

Moriba Jah, Ph.D. (’99) Distinguished Alumni Award

“I am extremely honored and pleasantly surprised that the university felt that I was someone who would earn this sort of distinction. It is welcomed and a very moving gesture.”

You can give up to a maximum of $100,000 per year from your IRA directly to Embry-Riddle without having to pay income taxes on the money. This popular gift option is commonly called the IRA charitable rollover, but you may also see it referred to as a qualified charitable distribution, or QCD for short. If you are interested in learning more about this popular gift option, please contact Travis Grantham at 386-226-7568 or travis.grantham@erau.edu

A Special Opportunity for Those 70½ Years Old and Older

by supporting student scholarships with a planned gift. Kristine, joined the Legacy Society by making a planned gift to fund scholarships for students. The Legacy Society was founded in 1998 to express appreciation and recognition for those vision- ary individuals, like the Childers, who inform the university, confidentially and in writing, that they have made a provision for a future gift through a bequest in a will or by naming Embry-Riddle a beneficiary in a trust, life insurance policy or retirement plan.

Planned gifts such as charitable gift annuities or charitable remainder trusts also qualify as future gifts, and they can provide lifetime income to donors or other beneficiaries. Planned gifts may be either unrestricted or designated for a particular Embry-Riddle department or program. They also may be named for one or more individuals.

Legacy Society Member Benefits

• Invitations to exclusive university and educational events
• Invitation to annual Legacy Society dinner
• A subscription to Lift, the university’s magazine for alumni and friends
• Legacy Society lapel pin

By becoming a member of the Legacy Society, you help secure the university’s place as a world leader in aeronautical education and applied research.

We invite you to create your own legacy by helping those who follow to realize their dreams. If you have already named Embry-Riddle in your will or other aspect of your estate plan, thank you, and please call or email us so we can document your gift. We want to be sure that we fulfill your wishes. To inquire further about joining the Legacy Society, contact Travis Grantham, Executive Director of Gift Planning and Special Gifts, at 386-226-7568 or travis.grantham@erau.edu.
**Career News**

**1960s**

Raul Mendez (‘69) received the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The award recognizes 50 years of exemplary aviation flight experience, distinguished professionalism and steadfast commitment to aviation safety. He is still current and qualified in the B737 and B767 and has a 17,629 hour part time in Malaysia.

William Palmer (‘70) recently retired from Delta Air Lines as a senior A320 captain/check airman, completing 36 years with Northwest Airlines and Delta Air Lines. 

Samuel “Scott” Tomlinson III (‘70) received the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The award recognizes 50 years of exemplary aviation flight experience, distinguished professionalism and steadfast commitment to aviation safety.

**1970s**

John Alger (‘70) retired in 2018 after a long career and moved to Miami Beach, Florida, in 2019.

James Black (‘70) is the founder of Blackbird Bikes and inventor of the EZ Quadribent.

Ellis Cheemoff (‘70) retired in 2013. Prior to retirement, he was an air safety representative for the Air Line Pilots Association.

John M. Bookas (‘77), who is a member of thePhiilanthropy Council for the Daytona Beach Campus College of Aviation, recently retired.

Cpt. Michael B. Sigman (‘77) is a retired three-star general, Jamieson was appointed head of the university’s College of Aviation at the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies in West Trenton, New Jersey.

**1980s**

Wayne Cornutt (‘78) retired as an aircraft mechanic at Delta Air Lines after 40 years as a C/E-mechanic.

William Palmer (‘78) recently retired from Delta Air Lines as a senior A320 captain/check airman, completing 36 years with Northwest Airlines and Delta Air Lines.

Samuel “Scott” Tomlinson III (‘78) received the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The award recognizes 50 years of exemplary aviation flight experience, distinguished professionalism and steadfast commitment to aviation safety.

Nigel Patterson (‘80) was named vice president of sales and contracts at Certified Aviation Services LLC. Patterson has more than 32 years of experience in his field.

Stephen Blancheck Jr. (‘80) was honored Feb. 7, 2021, as a recipient of the 48th annual Robert H. Herndon Black Image Award. The award honors the legacy of Herndon, a pioneering black engineer at The Aerospace Corporation, by recognizing employees for their outstanding work in support of the corporation’s mission, laudable humanitarian efforts and distinguished personal achievements. Blancheck is the director of software systems and acquisition at The Aerospace Corporation and a member of the College of Security and Intelligence Philanthropy Council at Embry-Riddle’s Prescott Campus.

Capt. Michael B. Sigman (‘80) is a former U.S. Army Master Aviator.

**1990s**

Mark Ingemi (‘90) is a Boeing 777 captain for FedEx, based in Memphis, Tennessee.

Sosie Latralla (‘91) recently completed 25 years at FedEx. In December, she transitioned to 777 captain and now lives in Port St. Lucie, Washington, with her husband, Jeff. Previously, she spent four years in Hong Kong and flew the 767. She also flew the NOV1 for 20 years.

George R. Macli (‘91, ‘94) recently retired from The Boeing Company after more than 10 years. He was a quality engineer working on NASA space programs, starting with Ares and followed by Space Launch Systems Artemis, while at the Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans.

**2000s**

Mark Ingemi (‘90) is a Boeing 777 captain for FedEx, based in Memphis, Tennessee.

Robert M. Ruiz (‘90) was named director at the Office of General Aviation Safety Assurance and the Flight Standards Service, FAA.

Capt. Carlos Zendejas (‘90) was named senior vice president of sales for SR Technics. He was appointed the role of Designated Airworthiness Representative for Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance.

Richard Griffe (‘90) was named the 30th Adjutant General of New Jersey.

Arnulfo Telleria (‘90) was appointed head of claims for Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty in North America.

Mary Patti Shotwell (‘92) is an insurance broker at Farmers Insurance/ The Assurance Group.

John Parrish (‘93) retired in 2019 after a 36-year aviation career in which he held executive positions with Lockheed Martin for 22 years, Northrop Grumman for six years and GE Aviation for eight years.

Kenneth M. Dufour (‘93, ‘99), who is an Embry-Riddle Riddle of Trustee member and founder/ president/ CEO of Aviation Management Consulting Inc., was honored with the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The award recognizes 50 years of exemplary aviation flight experience, distinguished professionalism and steadfast commitment to aviation safety.

Mary Ann DeSantis (‘94) was named chief technology officer of Alliance Global Corporate & Specialty in North America.

Robert M. Ruiz (‘95) was named vice president of flight operations, overseeing Horizon’s 700 pilots and its flight operations support team. He was appointed to CEO of CorVent Medical, which is developing ventilators for critical care.

**2020s**

Mark Ingemi (‘95) is a Boeing 777 captain for FedEx, based in Memphis, Tennessee.

Capt. Michael B. Sigman (‘95) was recently named chief technology officer at Quantum Xchange, a developer of advanced encryption technology and products. A member of the university’s College of Engineering Industry Advisory Board, Sigman has 30-plus years of experience in information technology and risk management consulting.

Stacy Emmett Grubb (’95) was appointed the role of Designated Pilot Examiner, based out of Portland, Oregon, by the FAA.

Shahryar Shaghaghi (‘97) was recently named chief technology officer at Quantum Xchange, a developer of advanced encryption technology and products. A member of the university’s College of Engineering Industry Advisory Board, Shaghaghi has 30-plus years of experience in information technology and risk management consulting.

**Class Notes**

Send us your news! Email your life events to alumni@erau.edu. For guidelines, visit alumni.erau.edu/notices._guidelines
Claude Going Jr. (13) has become the first Indian American diplomat serving as the senior FAA regional representative for South Asia. Based out of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, he will be the top FAA authority in South Asia on U.S. civil aviation, policies, practices and procedures.

Raymond Hanson (12, 07) received the 2020 National Air Traffic Controllers’ Association’s Archie D. Leach Medal of Safety Award on May 26, 2021, for the Eastern Region. Hanson and fellow controller Mark Dvorak helped a pilot in distress on the cloudy night of May 30, 2020—all while juggling other traffic, including Air Force 2, according to an FAA news release.

Claude Gailing Jr. (13, ’16), who is a senior nondestructive examination engineer for General Electric, was chosen as a 2020 Fellow of the American Society for Nondestructive Testing.

Jeff Ketson (14) retired from the U.S. Court of Appeals in 2017 and is the director of safety and risk management for Life Flight Network in Auburn, Oregon.

Allison Odyssey (14) is chief operating officer for Zero Gravity Corporation, a privately held space tourism and entertainment company.

Donette Sawin (’04, ’07) was promoted to mission director over the next generation of pilot training. He’s now back at his unit flying the C-130.

Jonathan Bourdeau (’11) was recently chosen for the Basu Foundation’s annual Elsie Award, for outstanding contributions to Earth and space science society.

Ensign Vinicio Soossa (’18) recently graduated U.S. Navy Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island — with five other Embry-Riddle graduates in his class: Ensign Dylan Horan (’20), Ensign Michael Hernandez (’18, 20), Ensign Dustin Perry (’20), Ensign Rahim Agha (’20), and Ensign Lukas Delong (’20). Soossa writes: “Five of us are aviators and will be going to Pensacola to start Flight School and one of us will be going to Virginia to start Surface Warfare Officer School.”

Meghan Burleigh, Stacy Sheard, Darshan Dixakaran, Nathan Krokos, Robert Meade, and Chase D. Rinehart

Salvator De Rosa Traconis (’11) recently marked four years as a first officer at Air Macau.

Enrass Olivaros (’11, ’16) is a project engineer senior staff at Lockheed Martin.

Randy O’Dell (’12) recently retired as an aeronautics flight chief from the U.S. Air Force.

Emma Roberts (’13) was chosen to be the vice chair of the National Air Transportation Association’s new Air Ambulance Subcommitte. Roberts is the senior director of safety, training and compliance for PEGA Inc., an international airline and medical flight transport services company. She joined Peva after nine years with Spirit Airlines, working in-flight operations and safety.

Jesse Jackson (’16, ’20) recently received the Northern Lights Aero Foundation’s annual Else Award, honoring Canadian women who have made outstanding contributions to aviation and aerospace.

Mindur Ahmed (’17) is a first officer working for the National Airlines of Maldives, flying the Bombardier Dash 8 aircraft.

Reinaldo Cherem (’17), a former Major League Baseball player, was named the All-Single-A Manager.

Joe Santella (’18) is a USAF pilot at Hill Air Force Base in Utah.

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Jason Topol, Ankit Jain, Terik Weekes, Robert Meade, and Chase D. Rinehart

Noah Segovia (’19, ’20) is currently flying with Chris Chung (’19). We’re both at Delta Air Lines flying the A320 out of NYC and just finished up a trip.”

Petre Stepan (’14) and Hannah Bunnigan Stupak (’16) recently commanded a SkyWest Airlines flight into Prescott Regional Airport in Prescott, Arizona. The couple were both students at the Prescott Campus.

Vicent Grillo (’16) recently flew with fellow alumnus, Nicolas Belhomme (’19) in a French Bee Safai flight. French Bee is a low-cost, long haul airline based at Paris Orly Airport.


Noah Segovia (’20), Chase Owen (’20) and Kurt Eatera (’19) worked the Canyon Peak Fire in Colorado together.

State Awareness Research Team that was awarded the 2020 NASA Langley Achievement Award. She was also recently awarded the American Indian Science and Engineering Society Technical Excellence Award. She works in AFRL’s Advanced Avionics Technology department, developing supersonic flight technology. Additionally, Smith-Velazquez received a Patent Recognition Award from the Society of Women Engineers.

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Temporary Quarters

Readers identify this apartment building turned Embry-Riddle dormitory, circa 1967-68, that was published in the fall/winter 2020 edition of Lift.

“We Made Our Mark There”
The only off-campus dormitory that I know of was the one I lived in and the one pictured in Lift. It was located at 886 S. Nova Rd., Daytona Beach. It’s currently called Palm Cove apartments and still stands today. I believe these apartments were there for quite some time, and they were not new when I stayed there.

I was one of the lucky students who lived in the dormitory just south of Bellevue Road. The dormitory housed approximately 200 Embry-Riddle students during my time there, 1969-1970.

Mr. Hofstatter, the administrative assistant of the school, tried his best to keep a watchful eye on us. Several female students lived in that area as well. Each apartment had two bedrooms, a kitchen, a combination living/dining room and an attached patio/balcony.

I have many wonderful memories of my stay there, and the most obvious was the diversity of students from around the world. Living with them was an education itself. Many residents were teammates of mine on the school’s soccer team, and some of the girls were cheerleaders on the school’s soccer team, and residents were teammates of mine as well. Each apartment had two bathrooms. The kitchen turned out to be a good thing because we were a long way from any restaurants, and for that matter, the campus too. I must admit, sharing a “homie” with pilots, mechanics, engineers, managers and historians made for great friendships.

I got married in 1968 and was the first to leave our place.

Joseph Fabulich (’71)
B.S. Aeronautical Engineering

Swimming Pool for Frogs and Snakes

I attended Embry-Riddle from the fall of 1967 to graduation in 1970. Our “co-ed dorm” was the old motel (apartments) with a center pool, which did a great job caring for frogs and snakes in the early days, but got cleaned up in 1968 for our use. Besides, we had the beach.

The seniors got the upper floor and the rest of us got the lower floor. Most of the rooms could accommodate two to four students, with a kitchen and bath. The kitchen turned out to be a good thing because we were a long way from any restaurants, and for that matter, the campus too. I must admit, sharing a “home” with pilots, mechanics, engineers, managers and historians made for great friendships.

I got married in 1968 and was the first to leave our place.

Ken Richard (’74)
B.S. Airway Science

Walter Jones McFadden Jr. Jan 20, 2021

Trustee Emeritus Walter Jones McFadden Jr., 96, served on the university’s board of trustees from 1971 to 1976. A service pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corps, McFadden started two companies: Southern Air Surveys Inc. and Mapco Inc., both based in Florida and both of which conducted the aviation portion of aerial survey contracts for projects throughout the U.S. and the Bahamas. In 1972, he sold both companies, then started another company, Airborne Data Inc., which specialized in forest management photogrammetric programs and was sold in 2004. A World War II veteran who flew North American P-51s, he received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in 2014 from the Federal Aviation Administration, honoring his 50-plus years of flight expertise.

McFadden’s passion was in the area of photogrammetry, and he made a gift to the university to set up the Merton M. McFadden Jr. Memorial Lecture Series on the topic, in honor of Minter, who was his good friend.

“I had the honor of meeting Walter McFadden, who remained a supporter and good friend of the university,” says Embry-Riddle President P. Barry Currie. “He contributed millions of dollars to the university, with a classmate to the "dorm. "

Thanks for the memory. It is fascinating to think that Embry-Riddle students built this campus being built near old runway 6R. We continued to take classes in the two-story wood headquarters building near the airport terminal and would take a shuttle or catch a ride to school. There were many wild parties that were the hallmark of the Woodstock festival era.

Michael M. Costain (’88)
Jan. 26, 2021

Richard R. Fontaine (’88)
Jan. 8, 2021

A Different Kind of Hallmark

I went to ERAU from 1970-74 and lived, existed in Dorm 1. That is another story in itself. The picture on the back cover of Lift is a sight... a memory that I will not forget. Used as a dorm, mostly all the residents were veterans, or at least had a vehicle to go to school. There were many wild parties that were the hallmark of those walls. Almost every weekend, sometimes mid-week, if you could get there, you could find something of interest. Or just a crazy time. I think this dorm was closed in 1972, and the residents were left to their own devices.

Ken Richard (’74)
B.S. Airway Science
Do you remember how many quarters you sank into these pool tables and arcade games underneath the “Queen of the Skies”? Can you identify the pool sharks? Share memories of your leisure time at Embry-Riddle and help us fill the gaps in our institutional knowledge: Tell us what you remember of the old John Paul Riddle Student Center, what is out of frame and what year you think this photo was taken. Bonus points if you recognize anyone (especially the pool sharks) or know who took the photo. We’ll share the details in the next edition of *Lift*.

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