

FALL 2010

LIFT

The alumni magazine of
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

A look back at how
Bob Rockett helped
launch Embry-Riddle

Veronique Balsa
Koken hopes to send
dreams into orbit

Elizabeth 'Liz' Smart
makes a hot
career move to the
Frozen Continent

Norman Knight
makes a mark
on NASA mission
control

Will to Survive

Michael Durant turns his harrowing story
of survival and captivity into a lesson
about the power of perseverance



Wings and Waves Air Show and Alumni Weekend

Wings and Waves, your favorite Embry-Riddle Air Show is back! Join us October 8-10 in beautiful Daytona Beach Florida for a spectacular air show over the Atlantic Ocean, featuring the Canadian Snowbirds Jet Demonstration Team, world-class aerobatic and parachuting acts, US military jet fighter tactical demonstrations and much more!

Take in the sights and sounds with fellow alumni from the Daytona Beach Bandshell for only \$5 per person. Register early because space is limited.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8

Eagle Open Golf Scramble Tournament	TBD	TBD
Brothers of the Wind Luncheon	12 p.m.	College of Aviation Atrium

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9

Air Show	11 a.m.-4 p.m.	Daytona Beach Bandshell
Men's Soccer Game vs. St. Thomas	7 p.m.	Embry-Riddle Soccer Stadium
EagleNight Alumni Celebration	6-9 p.m.	Spruance Lawn

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10

Air Show	11 a.m.-4 p.m.	Daytona Beach Bandshell
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For up-to-date information about these events, and to register to attend, visit the eaglesNEST at www.ERAUalumni.org/homecoming.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was pleased to be at Cape Canaveral in April for President Barack Obama's speech outlining his vision for NASA and our nation's agenda for the future exploration of deep space. I welcomed his commitment to strengthening both NASA and the future of manned space exploration. Although not without controversy, his plan should be welcomed by all who want the United States to continue to lead the world in aerospace research and space exploration.

Embry-Riddle is committed to continuing our extensive participation in the space program. In this issue of *Lift*, you will find alumni who are actively engaged with the present and future of our country's space program—like Shuttle Flight Director Norman Knight, who has served at least a dozen Shuttle missions during his 20-year career at NASA. You also will have an opportunity to read the reflections of the two alumni astronauts, Nicole Stott and B. Alvin Drew, who are preparing for their second and perhaps last Shuttle journey into space.

While many alumni are necessarily focused on the incredibly complex challenges of the present, others are looking to the future of commercial space exploration. In our Alumni in Action profile, Veronique Koken, president of Aurora Aerospace Space Training Center, hopes to prepare and inspire the first generation of "casual space travelers" by providing them first-level spaceflight training experiences. She also hopes someday to fly into space

herself on a commercially developed spacecraft.

As these and other stories illustrate, Embry-Riddle and its alumni will be right in the middle of the next great phase of aerospace research and space exploration. As the nation prepares to invest

in what the President calls "transformational technologies for next-generation spaceflight capabilities," Embry-Riddle stands ready to contribute to this effort in concert with other leading educational institutions and research partners.

I look forward to seeing the many ways that our alumni will make their mark on the future of space exploration and research. If the past is any indication, I am sure that whatever form future space exploration takes, it will have at its core a passionate group of Embry-Riddle alumni who will help lead the way.

Warmest regards,

JOHN P. JOHNSON, PH.D.
PRESIDENT AND CEO

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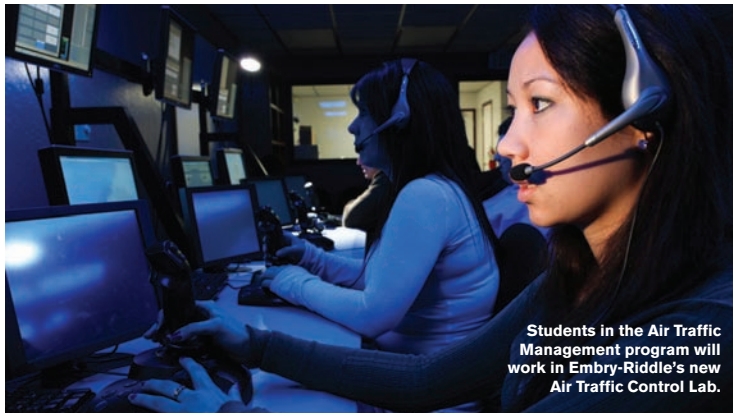
ALTIMETER

More news and events at Embry-Riddle:

Daytona Beach student Sherman Carlil of the Eagles Flight Team was named **National Top Pilot** and won the Short Field Landings competition at this year's National Intercollegiate Flying Association's SAFECON competition.

NASA selected two undergraduate Embry-Riddle student teams from its Prescott and Daytona Beach campuses to conduct their own experiments aboard the agency's **"Weightless Wonder" aircraft** at Johnson Space Center in Houston. The prestigious annual program chose only 14 collegiate teams from across the nation this year.

CIO Magazine recognized Embry-Riddle Worldwide as a recipient of its **CIO 100 Award**, which recognizes 100 organizations around the world that exemplify the highest level of operational and strategic excellence in information technology.



Students in the Air Traffic Management program will work in Embry-Riddle's new Air Traffic Control Lab.

NEW PROGRAMS TAKE FLIGHT

ATM and helicopter flight training at Prescott Campus

Embry-Riddle's Prescott Campus recently added two programs: a Bachelor of Science in Air Traffic Management (ATM) program and a helicopter flight-training program.

The ATM program is designed to provide qualified applicants with the skills needed to fill FAA Air Traffic Control specialist positions. Embry-Riddle is one of the few schools authorized to enroll students under the FAA Collegiate Training Initiative. Students will get hands-on industry-advantage instruction from experienced faculty while working in Embry-Riddle's new

Air Traffic Control Lab, which has a tower simulator and terminal radar approach control (TRACON) laboratory.

The helicopter flight-training program is a result of Embry-Riddle's partnership with Universal Helicopters (UHI), bringing together the experience of two of the most respected names in aviation flight training. The Embry-Riddle Flight Line will now be closely aligned with UHI's Center of Excellence facility at Prescott's Love Field Airport.

The contract with UHI simplifies the path for students seeking helicopter flight training while enrolled in Embry-Riddle's Helicopter Flight or Helicopter Operation and Safety minors. The contract also allows military veterans, including those who qualify for the Post 9/11 "Yellow Ribbon" GI Bill program, to receive the appropriate student financial aid and VA funding.

Flight teams shine in national meet

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's two renowned student flight teams placed second and third at this year's National Intercollegiate Flying Association's (NIFA) Safety and Flight Evaluation Conference (SAFECON).

The Daytona Beach team, the Eagles, held second place in the nation for the second year in a row. The team won the national championship in 1992.

The Prescott team, the Golden Eagles, improved to third place, up from its fourth-place ranking last year. The team won national championships in 1993, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2008.

Reflecting Embry-Riddle's international status, the Eagles team this year was made up of students from Croatia, England, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Mexico and Poland, as well as the United States, making it the most diverse team competing at SAFECON.

"Our team is a testament of the great things that can be achieved when a diverse group of people focus their efforts and strive to accomplish a goal," says Les Wesbrooks, the Eagles' coach.

Boeing honors Embry-Riddle



Embry-Riddle receives the Supplier of the Year Award from Boeing.

The Boeing Co. named Embry-Riddle as the winner of its 2009 Supplier of the Year award in the Academia category, primarily thanks to research conducted by Human Factors Professor Jon French at the Daytona Beach Campus.

"Dr. French's recent effort on our enplane/deplane aircraft passenger flow model was a great success and was considered key to receiving this award," says Boeing Research & Technology's Edward Winkler. "He invented an outstanding analytical tool that gives Boeing a method to analyze various passenger constraints and interferences while boarding an aircraft."

Supplier of the Year award recipients were judged on quality, technical expertise, delivery performance, environmental initiatives, cost and customer service.

Former Worldwide Campus Executive Vice President Martin Smith signs a landmark agreement with the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore.



EXPANDING INTO ASIA

Worldwide Campus to offer a Master's Degree program in Singapore

“There is a need to groom and empower the next generation of leaders.”

Embry-Riddle Worldwide has made a landmark agreement to begin offering aviation programs in Asia. The Worldwide Campus signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Feb. 4 with the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) to begin a Master of Business Administration in Aviation (MBAA) program in the second half of 2010.

The collaboration is a reflection of the shared interests between Embry-Riddle and CAAS to promote high-quality aviation education and training,

as well as information exchange and research.

“As Singapore’s aviation industry continues to grow, there is a need to groom and empower the next generation of leaders,” says Yap Ong Heng, director-general of CAAS. “In addition to operational and technical training, management training provided through the MBAA will be useful for the overall development of aviation professionals, and for preparing them to take on leadership positions.”

“We are excited to have the opportunity to deliver a Business Administration program in Singapore,” says John R. Watret, Ph.D., executive vice president and chief academic officer of the Worldwide Campus. “Embry-Riddle’s successful MBAA program will support the Civil Aviation Authority’s mission to further establish Singapore as a center of excellence for the aviation industry.”

Biofuels could power first ‘green fleet’



Embry-Riddle is leading the green flight effort with a plan to phase in lead-free renewable fuel for its training aircraft—the nation’s largest collegiate fleet. The university is partnering with Swift Enterprises, developer of a biofuel that has been tested by the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) Technical Center with promising results.

Engineers in the Eagle Flight Research Center, a laboratory in the College of Engineering at Embry-Riddle’s Daytona Beach Campus, will perform the certification testing needed to enable more than 40 Cessna 172s, nearly half of the university’s fleet of 93 aircraft, to use Swift fuel. When the changeover is complete, Embry-Riddle will be the first large aviation organization to move to unleaded, renewable aviation fuel.

Three trustees join Embry-Riddle board

Embry-Riddle’s Board of Trustees elected three new members during its March 2010 meeting:

John Amore ('73, DB): CEO of the Global General Insurance division of Zurich Financial Services and a member of its Group Executive Committee. Amore joined Zurich U.S. (now Zurich North America) in 1992 and has held such titles as CEO of the Zurich U.S. Specialties Business unit, CEO of Zurich U.S., and CEO



John Amore

of the North America Corporate Business division. Amore holds a bachelor’s degree in management from Embry-Riddle and an MBA in finance from New York University.



Ron Keys

Retired U.S. Air Force Gen. **Ron Keys:** Consultant to government, military and civilian organizations on such topics as climate change, energy, national security, transportation and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Keys retired in 2007 after a 40-plus-year Air Force career. In 2007, the Air



Zane Rowe

Force Association honored Keys with its most prestigious award, the H.H. Arnold Award, presented annually to a member of the military who has made the most significant contribution to national defense.

Zane Rowe ('91, DB): Executive Vice President and CFO of Continental Airlines Inc. Before joining Continental, Rowe taught economics at Embry-Riddle. He currently serves on Embry-Riddle’s Business College Industry Advisory Committee. He holds a B.S. in aviation business administration from Embry-Riddle and an MBA in finance from San Diego State University.



Just call him 'Dean Rockett'

He has worked with every Embry-Riddle president, shaped the university's history and helped propel generations of students toward achieving their dreams. Now after more than 35 years, **BOB ROCKETT**, Embry-Riddle's second-ever Dean Emeritus, is retiring with more friends than he can count and a selfless legacy of service that won't soon be forgotten.

BY ASHLEE (FISER) ILG ('03, DB)

Look around any of Embry-Riddle's campuses and you won't find Bob Rockett's name engraved on any of the buildings, but that's just fine by him. Dean Rockett's legacy is written elsewhere—in the lives and hearts of the people who make up Embry-Riddle.

In fact, Rockett's career has been a testament to the idea that a university is much more than bricks and mortar: It's made up of all the people who, through their passion for aviation, breathe life into the university's mission.

"A university is successful when it is built up of people who know what they want and are passionate about it," Rockett says. "I believe this is why Embry-Riddle is a world leader today, and I am honored to be a part of it."

THE HEART AND SOUL OF EMBRY-RIDDLE

But that status as world leader didn't happen overnight. It was built over many years, under many administrations—and Rockett has worked with them all. He has

"served at the pleasure" of every university president and was particularly close to Presidents Cmdr. Jack Hunt and Gen. Kenneth Tallman.

Rockett fondly recalls the contagious enthusiasm among those early administrations. "Everyone worked long hours, but we had a 'work hard, play hard' attitude," he says. "The early years for me were fantastic. My biggest challenge was keeping up!"

Keeping tempo with legendary President Jack Hunt was no small feat. Hunt set an aggressive pace for growth, establishing the Worldwide and Prescott campuses in relatively quick succession, which naturally created some turbulence.

"When Jack decided to open the Prescott Campus, it was pretty controversial. We had many needs on the Daytona Beach Campus and many people wanted to keep our focus there," Rockett says.

Rockett worked tirelessly to smooth over the mixed emotions of opening additional campuses, earning him his long-held reputation for compassion and understanding. Lynn Hunt Doten, Jack Hunt's widow, says it best: "When I first met Bob, Jack Hunt was the face of Embry-Riddle, but Bob was

the heart.” Now, many years later, Doten has expanded her opinion of Rockett. “He has been the eyes, ears, heart and soul of Embry-Riddle for 35 years.”

BOB THE BUILDER

Over the years, Rockett’s heartfelt efforts would go beyond his role as peacemaker to include his central role as a builder of student programs.

As Dean of Student Affairs, he helped establish a variety of must-have programs that would lay the foundation for a vibrant student life on Embry-Riddle campuses, including a formal athletics program, a campus ministry, and international student affairs and disability services programs. He also led the way to establish the first homecoming tradition on the Daytona Beach Campus.

“It was a very exciting and fun time as we were building these new programs,” Rockett says. “I knew the students deserved a well-rounded education experience, and I was grateful to have a team of people who felt the same way and helped make them happen.”

THE ORIGINAL DEAN OF STUDENTS

From the very beginning, even when building student life programs, Rockett was, first and foremost, attending to the lives of students. As a counselor and therapist, he understood the importance of getting to know the people he would help—and he couldn’t do that very well from a distance. So he decided to move into one of the residence halls. “I wanted to meet the students, so I decided to live with them,” he explains.

It was the kind of unorthodox move that would distinguish Rockett as an uncommonly dedicated advocate for students—so dedicated in fact that he became the Director of Counseling in his second year and soon after that, the Dean of Student Affairs.

“Bob was the cornerstone of Student Affairs for 25 years,” says Sonja Taylor, current Dean of Students. “His heart and soul have always been with students. He was never too busy to make time for them, and could often be seen on campus having coffee with students in the UC [University Center] or sitting on a bench in conversation.”

Naturally, beyond the coffee and conversations, there were difficult times, too, the worst always coming after the tragic loss of a student. “In many ways, Bob had the toughest job on campus,” Doten says. “When we lost a student through some terrible misfortune, Bob became the bearer



At his retirement ceremony, Dean Rockett listens to well-wishers as they congratulate him on his 35-plus-year career.

A fond farewell

On June 30, 2010, Bob Rockett bid a bittersweet farewell to his remarkable and historic career at Embry-Riddle. “I’ve spent more than half my adult life living and breathing this university,” Rockett says. “I’ll miss being a part of such a remarkable place, but I am grateful to have played a role in some of the successes we’ve had over the years.”

While physically removed from the day-to-day rhythms of Embry-Riddle, Rockett will always be part of the university he helped build—one student at a time. As long as there is an Embry-Riddle student, alumna, colleague or friend around who has been fortunate enough to know him, Rockett will remain the “heart and soul” of Embry-Riddle.

As Deb Bandy, Director of Admissions, has noted in her many travels on behalf of Embry-Riddle, “Bob Rockett’s name has come up countless times with fond references by so many. Who could forget Dean Rockett?”

of the news to the family. He made those left behind feel cared for and comforted [knowing] that the student lost had mattered most to the Embry-Riddle family.”

But not all stories had tragic endings. On one occasion, Rockett helped save the life of an off-campus student who’d phoned in a suicide threat. Maureen Bridger, now Director of Health Services, remembers it well. “This was in the mid-’70s before we all had computers and cell phones,” she recalls. “Bob rushed to the Records office and somehow, with the cryptic information the student had shared with me, identified him and got to his apartment in time to save him. [The student] got the help he needed and continued his education.”

It was one happy ending among many during Rockett’s tenure, and it spoke volumes about his philosophy for

living. “He’s always lived by the credo that one best makes a difference one person at a time,” former President Steven Sliwa says.

THE FIRST DEAN EMERITUS

In the latter years of his career, Rockett, not surprisingly, devoted himself to Embry-Riddle’s legacy. As Dean of the university’s Heritage Project, a multifaceted effort to preserve Embry-Riddle history, Rockett led the creation of the University Archives, which houses, among other things, the oral histories of many of Embry-Riddle’s oldest surviving alumni, dating as far back as World War II. He also supervised the establishment of an online database that features more than 7000 historical photographs and artifacts documenting Embry-Riddle’s entire history, beginning in 1926.

“I hope the work of this project gives everyone a sense of pride in what we’re a part of,” he says. “It is great to see that we still have the secret formula that

we had so many years ago—we attract people who are passionate about aviation, and we have a world-class faculty. I would love to come back in 100 years, because I know we will be here with an even bigger presence.”

At a recent ceremony honoring his retirement, Rockett received the prestigious title of Dean Emeritus, the second-ever in Embry-Riddle’s history (and first for a non-academic dean), in recognition of his countless contributions and steadfast service. “This was a huge honor,” he says humbly. “This represents everything in my life that I’ve received, and I am very grateful.”

Although this distinction is usually reserved for those in academic administrative positions, Rockett’s exceptional record of service compelled the honor. “Bob is highly respected by all of his colleagues and throughout his career has been looked to for leadership,” says President John Johnson. “He is genuinely deserving of the Dean Emeritus Award.”

BOB’S TAKE ON THE PRESIDENTS

A large part of Embry-Riddle’s success, according to Dean Emeritus Bob Rockett, is the fact that “Embry-Riddle has always had the right president at the right time doing the right thing.” And he should know—he’s worked with all of them since Embry-Riddle has been a university. We asked Rockett for his take on Embry-Riddle leadership through the years. Here are his thoughts on:



Cmdr. Jack R. Hunt

“Many consider him to be the most important historical person because who we are goes back to his vision and efforts. He moved us to Daytona Beach, started the Worldwide Campus in 1970 (then called the Extended Campus), and opened the Prescott Campus in 1978. When he took over as president, there were only about 250 students, but over the next 20 years that he was president, we grew to nearly 5,000 students at Daytona Beach.”



Lt. Gen. Kenneth L. Tallman

“He was determined to take the university to the next level and he greatly improved several areas, including starting an athletics program, reducing the faculty workload from 36 class hours to 24 hours, and increasing fundraising efforts. We can also thank Tallman for the Wright Flyer replica that has become a landmark on the Daytona Beach Campus.”



Dr. Steven M. Sliwa

“We nicknamed Dr. Sliwa ‘the kid’ because he was only 35 years old when he became president. He fit right in with the students and was very approachable by everyone. As president, Sliwa built up the modern engineering program, which, as we know, has been voted the number-one aerospace engineering program in the country for the past 10 years.”



Dr. George H. Ebbs

“During his leadership, he restructured the academic infrastructure and created the College system. I believe he will be remembered for building the business degree program and the College of Aviation building, as well as updating the Aeronautical Science program, and furthering research.”



Dr. John P. Johnson

“It’s clear that his calling is in higher education and he has a great understanding of faculty and students. Dr. Johnson is a sophisticated president and has truly strengthened academics on each of our campuses. I believe his greatest legacy will be establishing the Ph.D. programs and expanding our research capabilities.”

ON TOP AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD

ELIZABETH 'LIZ' SMART ('01, DB) is living a career dream managing airfields in Antarctica

When Elizabeth “Liz” Smart ('01, DB) accepted a job offer in Antarctica, her world was turned upside-down—literally. As McMurdo Station Airfield Supervisor for Raytheon Polar Services Company, Smart helps support the National Science Foundation’s U. S. Antarctic Program’s mission on the Frozen Continent.

Although used to living in the bustling city of St. Louis, Mo., where summer temperatures average about 90 degrees, Smart now braves extreme and volatile weather conditions, minimal resources and a sense of desolation unlike any place on the planet. It may sound like a nightmare to those more faint of heart, but to Smart, it’s anything but. For her, it’s a dream come true.

ON THE UPSIDE

Antarctica may be at the bottom of the world, but it places Smart firmly on top of her career goals. “For as long as I can remember, I’ve wanted to work in Antarctica,” she says. “When they contacted me about the airfield supervisor position available, I felt it was the perfect opportunity to fulfill a personal goal while expanding my professional aviation experience.”

Her perfect opportunity involves overseeing airfields near McMurdo Station on Ross Island, including Williams Field Skiways, the Pegasus Skiway/Runway Complex and the Annual Sea Ice Runway. Each airfield is on top of varying amounts of sea ice, glacial ice and compacted snow, and Smart helps ensure they are ready for use by



passenger and cargo aircraft during their summer “aviation season.” During the 2009 season—from late September to late February—airfields across the continent handled about 6,500 passengers and 1.5 million pounds of cargo.

“Each aviation season, key support personnel work essentially to rebuild these airfields,” Smart says. “We follow U.S. Air Force Engineering Technical Letters, which provide guidance on how to build the airfields for specific aircraft. For example, the Sea Ice Runway is built on frozen sea ice with loose snow on top and is designed to support both wheeled and ski-equipped aircraft.”

FLYING ON THIN ICE

Although Smart has more than nine years of experience managing commercial airfields in the U.S., she could not have been prepared for the extreme conditions she faces in Antarctica. “Except for a few basic airfield concepts, nothing about this operation is comparable to my previous experiences of managing airfields in the U.S.,” she says. “Antarctica is such a different environment. After all, where else in the world do you land large aircraft on large sheets of ice?”

Not surprisingly, according to Smart, the biggest challenge is the weather, with its subzero temps nearly year-round. Such extreme conditions mean that Smart must be prepared for anything—from melting runways to shifting glacial ice (The Pegasus



Airfield Complex moves approximately 40 feet per year). “It’s not every day that you worry about your runway melting or your navigational aids floating out of tolerance,” she says, referring to how the instruments that provide pilots with sensitive navigational information can shift out of position with the moving glacial ice.

“EXCEPT FOR A FEW BASIC AIRFIELD CONCEPTS, NOTHING ABOUT THIS OPERATION IS COMPARABLE TO MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES OF MANAGING AIRFIELDS IN THE U.S.”

The shifting ground and icy climate also can cause dangerous cracks in the runways and ramps. During the previous aviation season, they discovered a large crack on the ramp made of sea ice located adjacent to the Annual Sea Ice Runway. “As one would expect, having a large crack in a ramp made entirely out of sea ice is never a good thing and has the potential to create hazards to both aircraft and personnel,” Smart explains. “We tried to fill the crack with the recommended snow/water mixture, but it was too warm for it to freeze. We had to mark the area with black flags, close it for use and continue to monitor it for the remainder of the season.”

As if the freezing climate weren’t enough, Smart also has had her share of wildlife encounters on the



Liz Smart endures brutally low temperatures to keep Antarctic airfields, including Pegasus Skiway/Runway complex, safe for the 6,500 passengers and 1.5 million pounds of cargo that land on the runways each year.

airfields. “We often have seals or penguins on or near the runways and skuas [birds] flying around the airfield town site,” she says. “We’ve had a few instances where a penguin was reported on the runway or a seal was sunning under the wind sock.” Luckily, though, it’s rare that wildlife causes any operational or safety issues.

A DEGREE FOR THE EXTREME

Smart credits her Embry-Riddle education as a key factor in preparing her for the challenging environment of Antarctica. Besides the obvious benefits that her degree in airport management provides, Smart notes wryly that her time as a freshman at Embry-Riddle prepared her well for living at McMurdo Station, which she describes as “a military installation combined with freshman year in college.”

“It’s very similar to McKay Hall,” she says, comparing it to one of the residential halls on the Daytona Beach Campus.

Living quarters and wry comments aside, at the end of

the day, Smart feels privileged to be using her degree to further scientific advancements on the continent. “Embry-Riddle prepared me with an excellent education, and I plan to continue making the most of my degree—exploring unique aviation opportunities and making a difference in the field of airport management.”

Smart believes she has found the perfect place to do it. “Antarctica is a desolate continent that is not owned by any one nation, does not have a native population—other than the whale, seal and penguin variety—and does not have any resources of its own. This is why aviation is so vital. The primary goal of aviation is to support and further science on the continent, and that’s what my role is all about.”



NASA FLIGHT DIRECTOR
NORMAN KNIGHT
(’90, PC) TAKES THE
MANTLE OF MISSION
CONTROL GREATS

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROGENY

A glimpse of Norman Knight (’90, PC) striding through Johnson Space Center’s Mission Control hearkens to an era when the Beatles topped the charts and muscle cars ruled the roads.

“He’s got a flattop and wears a white button down shirt with a dark tie. He’s right out of the ’60s. He looks like Gene Kranz,” NASA Astronaut and fellow Embry-Riddle alum Terry Virts (’97, WW) says, evoking imagery of the legendary flight director best known for his role in saving the crew of Apollo 13. “Kranz is the hero of flight directors. Norm is following in his footsteps.”

BY LAURIE DAVIES





Knight draws no such likenesses, at least not intentionally. He holds the prestigious role of Deputy Chief, Flight Director Office at Johnson Space Center, and helps manage the dynamic, high-stress, real-time environment known as Mission Control. But at heart, he's still just a kid who grew up 7 miles from the Houston-based epicenter of human space exploration. "I was always a visitor. I went to NASA's Visitors' Center all the time. I was in awe of this amazing agency."

Today he's at the center of it.

'LIKE WATCHING ROLLING THUNDER'

Growing up in Houston in the 1960s and '70s, Knight devoured books on the Apollo program. The first televised Shuttle launch burned the beginnings of a dream into his young mind. "The smoke and fire and how that was channeled to provide an escape from Earth—that really fascinated me," he says.

Constantly pondering the forces of lift and drag, Knight spent hours at Ellington Air Force Base. "The Texas National Guard was flying F-4 Phantoms at the time. It was like watching rolling thunder," Knight says.

As a young man, he set out for Embry-Riddle to become a fighter pilot, but 20/50 vision redirected him to aeronautical engineering. While he credits Embry-Riddle's wind tunnel, aerostructures and physics labs with forging a "bond between engineering principles and how things behave in real life," Embry-Riddle's greater contribution to launching Knight's career may have been in opening a path to NASA.

"NASA had high-speed aircraft and rockets. NASA had it all," Knight says. He applied for NASA's Cooperative Education Program, a four-month internship program

SPACE SHUTTLE IS ALL IN THE EMBRY-

Norm Knight ('90, PC) is not the only Embry-Riddle alumnus intimately involved with the Shuttle program.

Currently, two Embry-Riddle astronauts, Nicole Stott ('87, DB) and B. Alvin Drew ('95, WW), are preparing for STS-133, the next-to-last Shuttle mission. It will be their second trip to the International Space Station.

In their training, Stott and Drew are getting help from yet another alumnus, Scott Wray ('09, PC), who works as an Extra Vehicular Activities (EVA) crew instructor and flight controller for United Space Alliance at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston.

"I absolutely love my job and have Embry-Riddle to thank for preparing me for it," Wray says. "I am currently training Embry-Riddle alumni Nicole Stott and Alvin Drew, as well as Tim Kopra in Extra Vehicular Activity. Tim Kopra and Alvin Drew will perform spacewalks during their mission and Nicole Stott will serve as their Inter Vehicular Activities officer."

We asked Stott and Drew to take a moment from their training to reflect on the close of the Shuttle program and what it means for human space travel in the future.

Nicole Stott: I think the word "bittersweet" is what you will commonly hear, and it certainly is for me. I feel like I got to know these magnificent vehicles so

well after working up close and personal with them at KSC [Kennedy Space Center] for so many years. There is nothing like them, and I don't think there will be anything else like them for a very long time. As the program comes to an end, I hope that everyone will take some time to celebrate the successes of



Embry-Riddle alumni (clockwise from top), Scott Wray ('09, PC), Nicole Stott ('87, DB) and B. Alvin Drew ('95, WW) have all played key roles in NASA's Space Shuttle program.

NORMAN D. KNIGHT

DURING 20 YEARS WITH NASA, NORMAN KNIGHT ('90, BS AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERING, PRESCOTT) HAS SUPPORTED:

- A total of 40 NASA flights in a certified flight controller position
- Over 1,500 hours of console operations as International Space Station Flight Director
- Six Space Shuttle missions as Ascent Flight Director
- Four missions as Entry Flight Director
- Two missions as Orbit Flight Director

Knight has some of the broadest experience in the Flight Director office, having certifications for Shuttle Ascent/Entry, Shuttle Orbit and the International Space Station—and was the first Flight Director to achieve certification in all these positions.



-RIDDLE FAMILY

the Space Shuttle program and the beautiful vehicles themselves.

I also feel a real sadness and uncertainty right now, because I'm not totally clear yet about the details of the new plan for human spaceflight following the Space Shuttle. I do hold hope, though, that we as a nation are not willing to give up the leading role we have in human spaceflight and will continue to build and launch the vehicles and the astronauts to destinations both in and outside of low Earth orbit. The potential for exploring outside our own relatively close orbit is certainly exciting to me.

B. Alvin Drew: The pending Space Shuttle program retirement is poignant for me. It represents the last relic of a space exploration era that spanned from the early '50s to the mid-'70s, when anything was possible. Our aspirations were boundless, and we weren't afraid to stub our toes in pursuit of a great cause. We're more constrained and risk-averse in our space-faring goals now.

I am excited for our next generation of astronauts and rocket scientists because of the great, untapped opportunities that exist for them. We have yet to re-examine some of the very ambitious concepts from the '50s and '60s (which could not get around the limits of their technology), in light of our current and future state of technology. I really expect this next generation to head back to the future, with Mars ships, flying cars and jet packs.

at Dryden Flight Research Center. Dryden was full. So Knight sought permission to go where no Embry-Riddle student had gone before. "Embry-Riddle empowered me to go build a relationship with Johnson Space Center, and I became one of the first group of Embry-Riddle co-op students at that NASA Center."

SHUTTLE EXPERIENCE

In Knight's first days at NASA, he programmed displays for flight controllers as they transitioned into a new, modern Mission Control Center. "It was amazing to see what happens from the inside out as opposed to being a tourist from the outside in," he says.

With a confidence in his ability to isolate complicated machinery problems and find quick fixes on the fly, he rose in NASA's ranks. "He's in a super elite group of people," Virts says. "The Space Shuttle is an extremely complicated system, and he understands everything about it."

During a 20-year tenure with NASA, Knight's first flight as Shuttle Entry Flight Director in December 2006 still stands out. High cross-winds ruled out landing *Discovery* at Edwards Air Force Base while clouds and showers at Kennedy Space Center thrust the seldom-used White Sands Space Harbor in New Mexico into real consideration for its first Shuttle landing since 1982.

"In the end, I looked at how the weather patterns were trending and made the call to send them to the Cape [Kennedy Space Center]. If I was wrong, the consequences could range from vehicle damage to the life of the crew," Knight says.

Knight got the crew down safely and, although he emphasizes it was never

a factor in his decision, he avoided the significant cost and the large number of employees who would have had to work well past the Christmas holiday to load *Discovery* onto a 747 to fly it from New Mexico back to Florida. "It was a hard first day on that job," Knight says.

A LOOK BACK-AND AHEAD

Knight's career low-point is shared by every other modern-day NASA astronaut, flight controller and engineer—the *Columbia* disaster that claimed a seven-member crew in 2003. Knight had planned to watch *Columbia's* pass over North Houston on Feb. 1 with his son from their roof. Fog kept them inside. The phone rang 10 minutes later.

"I rushed into console to work with the station crew to determine what happened and how to deal with it," Knight says, his tone turning somber. "They were friends."

Knight's tone remains somber when talks turn to the end of NASA's Shuttle program. He ponders the possibilities of a manned visit to an asteroid, a robot being sent to the moon and a possible journey to Mars. "I'm hoping this agency provides a vision my children can believe in," he says.

In the meantime, at age 44, he's still awe-struck over the systems and machinery of NASA's soon-to-be-retired Space Shuttles. "The Shuttle is an engineering marvel. You have 4.5 million pounds of hardware sitting on the pad with eight bolts—eight bolts—keeping it in place. You take this magnificent piece of machinery from 0 to 17,500 miles per hour in 8.5 minutes. When you see all the hardware and all the teams required to make this a success, it's truly a testament to the great things this nation can do."

Winners Don't Quit



Military hero **Michael Durant** ('95, '97, WW) turns his harrowing story of survival and captivity into a winning lesson about the power of perseverance

Michael Durant always begins the most important story of his life with a photograph.

The year is 1993. Five U.S. soldiers pose in front of a Blackhawk helicopter. The first four, from left to right, smile at the camera, at ease in the bright Somalia sunlight. The fifth, Michael Durant, stands near the cockpit, sheltered from

the sun by the shadow of the Blackhawk's rotor blade above. The picture is an omen of what would follow in the coming month for the Night Stalker crew of Super-Six-Four.

Standing before a packed crowd of faculty, staff and students at Embry-Riddle's Daytona Beach Campus this past April, Durant summed it up ruefully, "The only surviving member of that Super-Six-Four crew is standing with you here today."

But his sole survival isn't the only reason he begins his presentation with that picture of his fallen crew; he does it because it embodies his philosophy for living: "The key to success in anything is people," he says.

From his captivity, to his remarkable recovery, to his successful career as a best-selling author, motivational speaker, and president and CEO of Pinnacle Solutions (psimulation.com), a growing simulation and training services company, Durant has drawn on that philosophy to inspire a new generation about the importance of perseverance in the face of adversity.

BY ANTHONY BROWN PHOTOS BY MILLER MOBLEY



IN THE COMPANY OF HEROES

As told in his best-selling book, *In the Company of Heroes*, Durant's story of survival and captivity arguably details one of the most harrowing individual experiences in American military history.

On Oct. 3, 1993, while providing aerial fire support for ground troops over Somalia, Durant's U.S. Army Special Operations Blackhawk lost its tail rotor when it was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade.

"At low airspeed, with the tail rotor gone, a single rotor helicopter like a Blackhawk will enter a flat spin," Durant says, "In fact, we were spinning so fast the only thing I could see was brown earth and blue sky—the horizon line; everything else was a complete blur."

The Blackhawk crashed, hitting on its wheels so hard it crushed vertebrae in Durant's spine and snapped his femur like a twig against the edge of his seat. "Imagine how high I would have to drop you in the chair you're sitting in so that the G-forces would snap your leg off," says

Durant. "The G-forces were tremendous, but I was alive, we had all survived, and that was the important thing."

But things would quickly go from bad to worse. Pulled from the cockpit by two Delta Force operators, Gary Gordon and Randy Shughart (both of whom would be killed in the firefight and posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their actions), Durant did what he could to hold off the mob, emptying his and Gordon's weapons, before the enemy overran the crash site.

"I had no place to go, nothing to shoot and no other options, so I figured it was over," Durant says. "When they came around the nose of that aircraft, I thought, 'These are the last few seconds of my life.'"

The crazed mob descended on him, ripping off his gear and clothes, beating and kicking him—and, then to his horror and rage, striking him with the severed arm of one of his comrades. "They intended to kill me," Durant recalls. "They broke my cheekbone, my nose, my eye socket, but someone realized, 'This guy's got value as a prisoner.'"

CAPTIVITY AND RELEASE

On the first morning of his captivity, already suffering from devastating injuries, Durant was wounded yet again—this time by a gunshot.

"I call it a drive-by," Durant quips, his keen sense of humor ever intact. "Somebody just walks by the room, opens the door, fires his AK-47 and the bullet ends up in my left arm. Not that I was feeling real good to begin with, but that sent me down a bit further."

Over the next 11 days, with just enough medical care to keep him alive, Durant was interrogated, videotaped, moved twice from his original location (in spite of his serious injuries and lack of pain medication), and publicly displayed on international television.

"They were going for a political statement," Durant says of the videotape. "It aired in 127 countries within 15 minutes of being recorded."

Durant gave them nothing to leverage for political purposes while in captivity, but he always remained respectful and earned the admiration of his captors. They even allowed him a radio.

It turned out to be a lifeline. When Durant's buddies found out from the Red Cross worker who'd visited him that he had a radio, they sent out a constant barrage of song requests and dedications. "They threw me a radio party," Durant says. The party finally ended on an upbeat note with him hearing on that same radio that he would be released.

GETTING IT ALL BACK

Durant's recovery centered on a single idea: He wanted to get all the things back he had before.

"I wanted to get back in the cockpit and go back and fly with my unit," Durant recalls, "but the docs told me I would never fly."

Undaunted, still recovering from his broken back, leg and other injuries, he hatched a plan to prove his readiness for service. "I wanted to prove to the Army that I could fly, and the way I would do that would be to run the Marine Corps Marathon," Durant says.

But first he had to heal, and that's when Embry-Riddle came into the picture. "Mel Evans from the local Embry-

Durant eventually returned to the Night Stalker ranks, where he would fly again and honor his fallen comrades. **"I was going to make them proud,"** he says.



'Above the Best'



After his keynote speech at Embry-Riddle's second Veterans Appreciation Day, Mike Durant took time to honor his fallen comrades and fellow Embry-Riddle alumni by laying a wreath at a special marker near the main entrance of the Embry-Riddle Daytona Beach Campus. "I owe my life to my fellow crew members and comrades," Durant says. The marker bears the following names of those alumni who gave their lives in service to their country:

CW4 Clifton P. Wolcott ('89, '94 [posthumous], WW)
CW4 Raymond A. Frank ('78, WW)
SSG William D. Cleveland, Jr. (Attended)



Riddle office came to me and said, 'Look, this is a good time for you to think about doing this [getting your degree]. If you need some help with the paperwork, let me know, and we'll get this stuff processed,'" Durant recalls. "I had some time on my hands and the university really stepped up to the plate."

Within 18 months, he had his bachelor's and master's degrees. "It was a win-win for the Army and for me," Durant says.

Durant also won in his quest to complete the Marine Corps Marathon, finishing in three hours and 37 minutes, a personal best.

It was only a matter of time before he was permitted to get back into the Blackhawk cockpit. Eventually, he returned to the Night Stalker ranks, where he would fly again and honor his fallen comrades. "I was going to make them proud," Durant says.

'NIGHT STALKERS DON'T QUIT'

True to the Night Stalker motto, "Night Stalkers Don't Quit," Durant's recovery is not the end of his story. Since his ordeal, he's written two best-selling books, shared his story with thousands worldwide and started Pinnacle Solutions, his own flight simulation and training solutions company.

Through it all, in his typically optimistic and pragmatic way, Durant has passed on lessons both profound and practical to a wide variety of audiences. At the national level, his story and its hard lessons have helped shape American foreign policy at a time when decisive and sufficiently resourced military action remains at a premium.

"Somalia left us better prepared for Iraq and Afghanistan," Durant says. "In those 10 years between,

we went from a Cold War-era, force-on-force military to a more unconventional force, better trained and resourced for asymmetrical type warfare. Across the board, we were much better prepared to take on our current conflicts."

At the personal and professional level, Durant took what he learned and applied it to his growing business at Pinnacle. "In any organization, there are soldiers in the field. In my company, software engineers are my soldiers in the field, and if those soldiers are not successful, we are going to fail. My job is to help them succeed," Durant says.

To ensure their success, Pinnacle promotes a culture of innovation that focuses on what the company calls Big Ideas."

"We try to draw innovative ideas out of everyone in our company," Durant says. "If you draw out the ideas from people at all levels within the company and try to appreciate their perspective and how you can take actions or improve upon things that impact each of them, you can often 'create gold out of nothing.'"

Whether Pinnacle Solutions will "strike gold" remains to be seen, but the signs are promising. Within the first two years, they already have 21 employees—a quarter of whom have attended Embry-Riddle—and a steady stream of contracts. "It's been a lot of work, but it's proceeding extremely well," Durant says.

Whatever the future holds for Durant, one thing is certain: He's not going to stop just because things get difficult.

"The only way you can ever attain anything great," he says, "is never quit. You've got to be willing to push through obstacles and find a way around them, over them, through them—whatever it takes to get where you want to go."



A lifetime of inspiration

David M. Vinson's life continues to inspire others through the David M. Vinson Memorial Endowed Scholarship

From the very beginning, the family of David Vinson ('84, DB) recognized David's fascination for aviation and his determination to pursue it. "... from the time he could walk he was looking up, and as soon as he could hold a pencil he was drawing airplanes," recalls his sister, Pam Aldrich. "His favorite word was the sound made by an engine taking off at full-throttle."

Despite a disabling brain tumor and life-threatening obstacles, David pursued his dream of flying at Embry-Riddle and inspired many along the way. Today, in memory of his example, his family has established the David M. Vinson Memorial Endowed Scholarship to ensure that his life continues to inspire other determined students at Embry-Riddle.

**"DAVID WAS NEVER
HAPPIER THAN
WHILE HE WAS AT
EMBRY-RIDDLE."**

His mother, Jewel Vinson, recalls how David's fondest years were spent at Embry-Riddle. "David was never happier than while he was at Embry-Riddle," she recalls. "His love for it continued even in his hospital room, where he brought his diploma with him."

"We know that he would be proud and thrilled that we set up a scholarship at his school to help young people like himself receive career training in all things related to aviation," Aldrich says. "It is our hope that the David M. Vinson Memorial Endowed Scholarship will allow David's

determination and unyielding high standards to be fulfilled through students equally passionate about learning and achieving."

Go online to givingto.erau.edu/givingnews.html to read a remembrance of David Vinson's life, as written by his sister, Pam Aldrich.

A long and happy flight

Glenn MacDonald's love of flight and celebrated aviation career inspire gift for future pilots

If you ask Betty MacDonald about her late husband Glenn's aviation career, she will tell you that he had a long and happy one. She will also tell you that to Glenn it wasn't a career at all. "He used to tell me, 'Betty, I've never worked a day in my life because flying isn't work to me,'" she recalls.

That love affair with flight inspired the MacDonalds to give back to the industry that had given them so much over the years. They decided to set up a charitable trust that would allow them to leave the remainder of the trust to Embry-Riddle in order to establish the Glenn W. & Betty L. MacDonald Aviation Pilot Endowment Fund.

"Setting up a charitable remainder unitrust is a powerful way to take care of your personal income needs and make a future gift to Embry-Riddle," says Bernadine Douglas, assistant vice president of University Development. "You can custom design the trust so that

Betty and Glenn MacDonald's generous gift will provide scholarship support for generations of future pilots.



Inventor Persh Wipff inspired two endowments to Embry-Riddle for scholarships and an annual Avionics Contest.



Electrical Engineering gets a jolt

Two endowments honor avionics innovator Persh Wipff

Embry-Riddle Prescott students pursuing degrees in Electrical or Computer Engineering with an avionics interest will now have the opportunity to receive scholarship support, thanks to two endowments established by a \$500,000 gift from the family of the late Frank Pershing “Persh” Wipff.

Wipff, inventor, avionics pioneer and founder of Airborne Navigation Corporation, spent an illustrious career designing and building sophisticated communication and navigational equipment for small aircraft. Airborne Navigation Corporation continued its advancement in the general aviation and avionics markets for nearly 20 years, before being absorbed by Global Navigation and eventually acquired by United Technologies Corporation.

The two endowments were inspired by the legacy of Wipff, who passed away in 2009 and is remembered for his sharp intellect, keen sense of humor and passion for innovation. One Wipff Endowment will generate four \$5,000 scholarships annually for qualifying students, and the other will fund an annual Avionics Contest to promote innovation by testing students’ knowledge and skills through a design challenge.

Visit the News page at givingto.erau.edu/givingnews.html to find out how Persh Wipff nearly became a cowboy instead of an inventor.

**PERSH WIPFF IS
REMEMBERED
FOR HIS PASSION
FOR INNOVATION.**

it pays an income over your lifetime, gives you a current tax deduction and supports future generations of Embry-Riddle students.”

Betty and Glenn’s foresight will ensure their philanthropic goals are met for years to come. “A few years before Glenn passed away, we had the opportunity to set up the MacDonald Charitable Trust. Today, we want those funds to provide scholarship support for young men and women to attend Embry-Riddle. It is our way of giving back and investing in tomorrow’s future pilots,” she says. “We want them to learn what they need so they can have as great a career as my husband. I believe Embry-Riddle is the perfect place for this scholarship to be put to good use.”

For the complete story about Glenn and Betty’s gift, go to givingto.erau.edu/.



Family honors Jack Hunt

Following the Jack R. Hunt Student Union Building Dedication in August 2009, Lynne Hunt Doten and the Hunt family made a gift of a Jack Hunt Bust, for display and inspiration in Prescott Campus’ newest student living room.

Known as the “father of the modern aviation university,” Jack Reed Hunt was president of Embry-Riddle from 1963 until his death in 1984. He established Embry-Riddle Prescott as the university’s western campus during his tenure.



SPACE IS THE PLACE— FOR BUSINESS

VERONIQUE BALSA KOKEN ('96, WW) overcame her childhood fear of flying to become an important player in the emerging commercial space sector

It's hard to imagine that someone terrified of flying would end up wanting more than anything to be an astronaut, but that's exactly what happened to Veronique Balsa Koken ('96, WW).

Amazingly, her transformation from land lover to space enthusiast began with getting her Master's degree in Aeronautical Science at Embry-Riddle. "As I became familiar with the science behind lift and aircraft and weather, I understood how unfounded my fear [of flying] was, and I slowly began to conquer it, thanks to my studies," Koken says.

She credits her degree from Embry-Riddle for not only curing her fear of flight, but also for furthering her lifelong goal of flying into space. "My master's has always been an asset because Embry-Riddle is [the] premier aviation and aerospace university."

NO GLASS CEILING IN OUTER SPACE

Koken is so excited about spaceflight and the emerging opportunities around it that she came to Daytona Beach to speak at a dinner for graduating female

students, held at the home of President John Johnson. She shared her story with more than 50 young women with a goal of inspiring the graduates not to be intimidated to pursue aerospace careers.

If anything, according to Koken, women should be excited about space and the emerging opportunities. "I think

now there is an open door for commercial space enterprise," she says.

Looking at Koken's current projects and goals, you can see why she's so hopeful for the space market.

Along with her fiancé and business partner, Dr. Howard Chipman, Koken has launched herself into the market with the Aurora Aerospace Space Training Center in Tampa Bay, Fla. "When we started our own astronaut training, we noticed that people around us had an interest, so we expanded our services into something professional," Koken says.

Aurora Aerospace now offers two-day programs designed to prepare people for a "first-level" spaceflight experience, which includes high- and zero-G flights, spacecraft docking simulations, and spatial disorientation and hypoxia training—all things that any reasonably fit and highly motivated space aficionado might experience on a routine spaceflight. "We want to give them a taste of what is to come in space travel. Our programs are meant to train 'space travelers,' and give them a sense of the physical challenges of space travel," says Koken.

THE COUNTDOWN STARTS

Koken and Dr. Chipman also have been selected to be astronauts aboard the Americans in Orbit-50 Years (AIO-50) space mission planned to launch in February 2012. "AIO-50 will commemorate 50 years of American orbital flight since John Glenn first orbited the Earth in 1962," Koken says.

Perhaps even more exciting for Koken, who loves any opportunity to educate, is the fact that the AIO-50 project will include a Space Science Module (SSM) that will house space science experiments. The SSM will function as an orbiting laboratory, allowing students from around the world to send their projects into space and have their results beamed back to Earth. Koken thinks such a program will greatly benefit future aerospace students, allowing them to be more involved in space exploration.

While optimistic that the AIO-50 project will happen, Koken will not be worried if it doesn't launch by the projected date. "The project is there; it is happening. It's not a matter of a precise date."

That's because she understands that "things take longer when dealing with space." The first order of business is the not-so-small matter of proving the safety and comprehensive viability of commercial launch—and that's why Koken and the entire space community are watching SpaceX, the commercial space exploration technology company that will eventually carry her and the AIO-50 project into space.

If SpaceX is able to successfully send the Falcon 9 launch vehicle into space and later add a manned space capsule, it will open the doors for private enterprise and encourage investment in commercial space projects. "Investors are going to come in and foot the bill to make it happen," Koken says.

SENDING DREAMS INTO ORBIT

But even if AIO-50 doesn't happen any time soon, Koken and Dr. Chipman have a backup plan. "We have our own plans to acquire a spacecraft," Koken says. "We have already invested in a company that is creating a first generation of that aircraft." Acquiring such a craft would allow Aurora Aerospace not only to train people for spaceflight, but also actually take them up for that ride of their lives.

Whatever ultimately happens with the burgeoning commercial space industry, Koken wholeheartedly believes that she will indeed make it into space one day. "We'll fulfill our childhood dreams of making it into space, whether it is with AIO-50, or Virgin Galactic, or our own spaceship."

Her unshakable optimism is a large part of the reason that Maurie Johnson, wife of Embry-Riddle President John Johnson, was especially enthusiastic that Koken come to speak to the graduating women of Embry-Riddle. Mrs. Johnson, who has always been a strong advocate for recruiting and retaining more



Veronique Balsa Koken ('96, WW) addressed Embry-Riddle's graduating women during her visit to the Daytona Beach Campus, urging them not to be intimidated to pursue aerospace careers.



"THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN GOOD AND BAD, AND WITHIN THOSE RANGES ONE MUST NAVIGATE WITH STRENGTH OF CHARACTER AND DETERMINATION TOWARD A GOAL."

women at the university, credits successful female alumni such as Koken for their leadership through example. "Alumni like Ms. Koken inspire our female students to go after their dreams, in spite of the many obstacles," Mrs. Johnson says.

Koken echoed that sentiment when addressing Embry-Riddle's female graduates, urging them to stay focused on their dreams, even in the face of challenges. "There has always been good and bad, and within those ranges one must navigate with strength of character and determination toward a goal."

Whether it's spaceflight or some other career dream, defining that goal is the key first step in any great adventure. "If you can answer what your goal is, whatever it is, or how complicated it might be to reach it," Koken suggests, "if that goal keeps you dreaming, you owe it to yourself to try and achieve it."

Letter from the Executive Director

As summer is nearly behind us, I trust that you all have taken some time from your demanding careers for yourself and your family to reconnect and reenergize. As you read this issue of *Lift*, I hope that it will inspire and rejuvenate you even more.

On the cover, I am excited for you to read about Michael Durant ('95, '97, WW), a Blackhawk pilot and one of the most famous POWs of all time. It was a pleasure having Mike on the Daytona Beach Campus to share his story and join us at our second annual Veterans Appreciation Day, where we recognized our amazing alumni, students and local veterans.

In April, I was honored when the Alumni Association staff nominated me for the Vision Award, recognizing my role to advance women's initiatives and help increase the percentage of women on campus. In support of this initiative, Maurie Johnson, the university president's wife, hosted an event for female graduates at her home, where Veronique Balsa Koken ('96, WW) shared her remarkable story of motivation and success. (Read more on page 20.)

I am happy to share that we have launched the Student Alumni Association on the Daytona Beach Campus and have plans to bring it to the Prescott Campus as well. Its aim is to engage our students throughout their time at Embry-Riddle. We welcome alumni back to campus to share their stories, experiences and career paths with our student body through this group.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the Wings and Waves Airshow and Alumni Weekend in October. It promises to be a fun-filled weekend, and what better way to celebrate coming back to your alma mater than with an airshow over Daytona Beach?

As always, we encourage you to stay in touch. We always look forward to hearing from our alumni about how you are doing and the exciting stories you have to share.



Sincerely,

MICHELE BERG
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Military hero Mike Durant ('95, '97, WW) speaks to students at the Daytona Beach Campus.

Michael Durant keynotes Veterans Appreciation Day

The Alumni Association was proud to host alumnus Michael Durant ('95, '97, WW) as the keynote speaker for the 2nd Annual Veterans Appreciation Day held on the Daytona Beach Campus on April 13.

Durant is best known as the Night Stalker pilot who was shot down during the Battle of

Mogadishu in Somalia on Oct. 3, 1993. He was held captive for 11 days before being released. (Read more on page 14.)

During his visit, Durant shared his Somalia experiences with more than 300 students, answered questions, signed copies of his books, and posed for photos with students.



Students experience NYC

The Alumni Association sponsored and hosted seven of the university's top students from each campus at the annual Wings Club Luncheon in New York City on March 24. Students enjoyed hearing from guest speaker Bruce Nobles, president and CEO of Air Jamaica, and Jeff Knittel ('80, DB), newly appointed Wings Club President.

Longtime friend and donor Dorothee Miller sponsored the Wings Club table. The students also joined the local NYC Alumni Chapter members for an Italian family-style dinner in Times Square.

Front row, left to right: Edmund Odartey-Williams ('04, '10, DB), Talia Roffman ('10, PC), Michele Berg and Kaleigh Sides ('11, DB). Back row, left to right: Ricardo Garcia ('10, DB), Joseph Sanzone ('10, PC), John "Jack" DeYoung ('10, WW), Gregory Igel ('10, DB), and Ryan Hendrickson ('10, WW).



Student Alumni Association

The Student Alumni Association (SAA) has been successfully relaunched with more than 20 students at the Daytona Beach Campus. The SAA, a student-run organization that receives guidance from the Alumni Association, provides opportunities for students to meet new people, network with alumni, attend social and professional events, develop leadership skills and gain real-world experience.

SAA Executive Board members met at the Etiquette Dinner on April 14. Pictured above, from left to right, are: Event Coordinator Sara Whitney, President Alan Larsen, Secretary Alyssa Smith, Treasurer Caleb Choge, Vice President Stephanie Moore, and Public Relations Officer Andrew McConathey.



Sun 'N Fun highlights

On Saturday, April 17, more than 100 alumni and friends gathered for the annual Sun 'N Fun Alumni Luncheon. Guests enjoyed hearing from guest speaker Michelle Peterson, vice president of Marketing for AOPA, as well as Dr. Richard Heist, executive vice president and chief academic officer for the Daytona Beach Campus; Matt Chapman, Embry-Riddle's

sponsored airshow pilot; and Elaine Larsen, Embry-Riddle Jet Dragster driver.

Three guests went home with raffle prizes from vendor sponsors: David Gustafson ('90, PC) won a pair of VedaloHD Sunglasses; Ryan Leeward ('10, DB) won a Brightline flight bag; and Ahmed Mohamed ('01, WW) won a Zulu headset by Lightspeed Aviation.



Pictured left to right: Bryan Rankin ('09, PC) and his brother Kevin ('11, PC) during their cross-country flight.

AIR TRIPPIN'

Instead of taking a typical road trip like many new graduates do before facing the “real world,” Bryan Rankin ('09, PC) and his younger brother Kevin ('11, PC) decided a cross-country flight was more appropriate.

“I got the idea to go on the trip about four months before my graduation from Embry-Riddle last spring,” says Bryan. “I wasn’t obligated to start a job right after graduation, so I decided to take a month off and go see the states. Some people go on a road trip after completing school, but we decided to go on a flying trip.”

**“SOME PEOPLE
GO ON A ROAD
TRIP AFTER
COMPLETING
SCHOOL, BUT WE
DECIDED TO GO
ON A FLYING TRIP.”**

The brothers opted to keep their trip spontaneous and only set one goal: to see as much as possible in a month. They brought with them only a few necessities, including camping supplies, an emergency kit and tools for their 1975 Cessna 177rg Cardinal.

“We started off across the center of the country from Northern California and headed to Kentucky.

After that, we went south to New Orleans, then east to Florida, up the east coast to Maine, then along the northern border back to California.”

Although Bryan and Kevin encountered some bad weather, they were able to build camps that kept them dry, and they agreed it allowed for more interesting stops along the way.

ALUMNUS GOES INTERNATIONAL

Luis Alberto Lopez ('96, '99, DB) is using the multicultural experiences he got at Embry-Riddle, along with his Aeronautical Science degree, to succeed in various roles for Bombardier Aerospace.

The Venezuelan-born alumnus credits Embry-Riddle with giving him the international exposure he needed to succeed. "At Embry-Riddle, I had great teachers from different backgrounds and nationalities, and they transferred their knowledge and perspectives of how aviation and aerospace are truly a global community that disregards borders," he says. "Being a member of the International Students Association also gave me the skills to adapt to any culture."

Naturally, his degree hasn't hurt either. "[The Aeronautical Science degree] gives you diverse knowledge that enables you to do a lot," he says. "I have a pilot's perspective, but I also have the flexibility of knowing how aircraft systems work."

His flexibility allows him to wear many hats, including his role as Sales Engineer and, most recently, Mass Properties Specialist, where he has

been a key player in several cutting-edge projects, including the development of the new C-Series jet. "I am doing anything from defining ground and flight envelopes for the aircraft, to calculating its weight and center of gravity," Lopez says. "Because of its design, the C-Series will be able to save money and emissions and reduce the impact on the environment."

In addition to his work at Bombardier, he hopes to influence future aviation professionals from Latin America. "I am able to represent the industry at tradeshow and other events I attend, and I can be a role model to the up-and-coming professionals from Latin America. This is very important to me."



"I HAVE A PILOT'S PERSPECTIVE, BUT I ALSO HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY OF KNOWING HOW AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS WORK."



From top to bottom: Alumni Chapter members in Prescott, New York City and Daytona Beach.



ALUMNI CHAPTER NEWS

Central Florida Chapter members attended an Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) training meeting on March 10. Joe Radosky, chapter leader, says, "It was great to see that Dr. Ted Beneigh had brought Embry-Riddle alumni from Customs/Border Patrol and AAI Corp. to show the career paths that are possible."

Atlanta Chapter members were granted an exclusive tour of Lockheed Martin in Marietta, Ga., on March 27.

The **San Diego Chapter** held a BBQ picnic on April 25 to welcome new graduates into the Alumni Association and into the local chapter. Graduates, family, friends and university staff also were invited to the San Diego Air & Space Museum for a fun and family-friendly celebration. "It was great to talk with alumni about various aviation topics and to get valuable insight from them," says current student Michael Lashchuk.

Prescott Area Chapter members continue to show their Eagle pride and do their part to keep the areas surrounding Prescott Campus beautiful, cleaning up Commerce Road as part of their ongoing service project.

New York City Chapter members enjoyed cocktails and networking on May 27 at Rosie O'Grady's. Chapter leader Amanda O'Brien Brown ('02, '05, DB), says, "Everyone stayed late chatting and had a wonderful time!" The chapter also enjoyed a private guided tour of the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum at Pier 86 in Manhattan in July.

Find out about upcoming events with your local Alumni Chapter in the eaglesNEST at www.ERAUALumni.org/groups.



LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

When Filippo Marchino ('02, '05, DB) earned his bachelor's and master's Aerospace Engineering degrees at Embry-Riddle, he didn't realize that his education would take him to the courtroom, the slopes, and even to the race-track. But today, he is using all of the critical-thinking skills he learned in the classroom to succeed in his high-stakes career and competitions.

"The teachings of engineering—especially the thinking and reasoning skills—really carry over as an attorney," says Marchino, whose law firm, The X-Law Group, is based in the Los Angeles and New York areas. "These are great skills, and I think they give me an advantage over other lawyers who do not have an engineering background."

When he's not in the courtroom, Marchino is often on his snowboard testing his reflexes at regional and national competitions. Soon after graduation, he quickly became a major contender in the United States of America Snowboarding Association (USASA) Regional and National competitions, winning all eight events in Regionals and taking silver and gold in the Slalom and Giant Slalom, respectively, at Nationals.

After that auspicious start, he returned the following year to win the gold in both categories at both the Regionals and Nationals, despite having a broken board in the final race of the Nationals Giant Slalom.

For Marchino, snowboarding goes hand-in-hand with racing cars—and he

is just as good behind the wheel as he is on his board. "Snowboarding keeps my balance and reflexes sharp, which also crosses over into my racing," he explains.

This year, his racing team, WilMar Racing, named after Marchino and his business partner, Jay Wilton, competed in the Daytona 24-Hour Rolex in what he considers "by far the best

MARCHINO IS USING THE SKILLS HE LEARNED IN THE CLASSROOM TO SUCCEED IN HIS HIGH-STAKES CAREER AND COMPETITIONS.

car to race"—the Ferrari F430 GT. "I've been racing cars since I was a teenager, but I got back into it at a higher level last year."

Marchino has many good memories of his days at Embry-Riddle. "I remembered being a student only a few years ago, always trying to sneak in and watch the races," he recalls. "It was cool to be at the Daytona 24-Hour Rolex, now actually driving in the race."

Those good times continue to keep him involved with his local Los Angeles Alumni Chapter. "Being involved with the chapter gives me the ability to stay connected to the people and the university that mean a lot to me," he says. "It provides a link from my past to my future and always reminds me of where I've come from. And now as alumni, we have a sort of brotherhood that is very unique to us."

CONGRATS TO THE GRADS

Graduates from all Embry-Riddle campuses celebrated at their respective commencement ceremonies from Saturday, May 8, to Monday, May 10.

On Saturday, nearly 300 graduates from the Worldwide Campus celebrated at the Daytona Beach Campus ICI Center. They heard from guest speaker U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Dana H. Born, dean of the faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Also on Saturday, the Prescott Campus held an outdoor commencement ceremony for more than 270 graduates, including the commissioning of more than 50 cadets as second lieutenants from the Air Force ROTC, Army ROTC and Marine Platoon Leadership programs. The guest speaker was Frank Robinson, president and founder of Robinson Helicopter Company, which provides Robinson R22 and R44 aircraft for the Prescott Campus flight training program.

On Sunday, more than 900 Daytona Beach graduates, family and friends attended the New Alumni Welcome Reception at the Daytona 500 Experience. Local alumni and Student Alumni Association members attended to help make the event a success for the record number of guests.

The next day, one of the largest Embry-Riddle graduating classes walked across the stage at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach. The 600-plus Daytona Beach graduates enjoyed hearing from NASA astronaut Nicole Stott ('87, DB), who received the University's Distinguished Speaker Award in recognition of her professional accomplishments and national prominence.

To round out the day, Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines ROTC graduates from the Daytona Beach Campus were commissioned as second lieutenants.



In early May, graduates at all Embry-Riddle campuses celebrated commencement.

Celebrate with us

You asked for it—we're bringing it to you! Wings and Waves 2010 and Alumni Weekend will be Oct. 8–10 at the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort in Daytona Beach, Fla.

And, be sure to join alumni and friends in Prescott on Oct. 1–2 for OctoberWest, and in Daytona Beach on Nov. 5–7 for Homecoming Weekend.

Stay tuned to the eaglesNEST at www.ERAUalumni.org/homecoming for more event information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

OCT. 1-2 **OctoberWest**
Prescott, Ariz.

OCT. 8-10 **Wings and Waves 2010 and Alumni Weekend**
Daytona Beach, Fla.

NOV. 5-7 **Homecoming Weekend**
Daytona Beach, Fla.

To be sure your announcements are included in the next issue of *Lift*, become a member of the eaglesNEST, the FREE online community created exclusively for Embry-Riddle alumni at www.ERAUalumni.org.

Members can post their career news, wedding announcements, family updates and more at the eaglesNEST "Class Notes" pages at any time. Please also submit them to Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg ('03, DB) at ashlee.ilg@erau.edu to be included in *Lift* magazine.

CAREER NEWS

1960s

Capt. Robert E. Meyer ('62, MC) received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in March 2010 from the FAA for 50 consecutive years of safe flight operations. He was a pilot for Pan American World Airways and United Airlines, owned and operated two fixed-base flight operations, and has been an active board member of Shades of Blue, an organization devoted to educating students through aviation and aerospace careers. He retired from his airline flying with more than 34,700 hours of flight time, and until recently, had joined Boeing Aircraft as a consultant on their Boeing 777 and the new Boeing 787 training programs. He and his wife, Sandra, live in Denver, Colo.



Joseph Kraujales



Mark Berry

Chuck is now consulting part time, engaged in several local volunteer service efforts, and serves on a non-profit corporation board. He and his wife, Liz, live in Palm Coast, Fla.

1980s

Joseph "Kujo" Kraujales ('84, DB) has been a captain flying the B-757 for America West Airlines, now known as US Airways, since April 1996. He flies between the Hawaiian Islands and Phoenix, and considers himself to be "Livin' the Dream."

Mark Berry ('85, DB) wrote two stories that recently were featured in *Rogue* magazine, as well as another titled "Surviving Probation" in *Airways* magazine and another titled "Teaching Is a License to Learn" in *AOPA Flight Training* magazine. In addition, he is completing two more songs to accompany his second novel *Street Justice*, and is also co-writing a screenplay and a children's book. He plans to complete his Creative Writing MFA degree from Fairfield University in December 2011, and is also a MD-80 captain for American Airlines. Read

his latest piece, "25 Years Since ERAU," at www.ERAUalumni.org/markberry.

John H. Dixon ('86, WW) is a faculty officer teaching Chemistry and Physics at Carson Long Military Institute in New Bloomfield, Pa. He and his wife live in Gwynn's Island, Va.

JJ Garcia ('86, WW) recently renewed a five-year contract as an A320 captain for Starflyer Airlines based in Kitakyushu, Japan. He has been in Japan since October 2005 after leaving the Montego Bay base of Air Jamaica, where he also served as an A320 captain. He enjoys living in Tokuriki, Japan, a small, traditional village near Fukuoka.

1990s

Harold "Butch" Gilbert ('90, WW) upgraded to a B-757 at FedEx.

Arnie Quast ('90, DB) finished captain transition training on the Airbus A320 with United Airlines, based at Chicago-O'Hare International Airport.

CAMPUS LEGEND

MC	Miami Campus
DB	Daytona Beach, Fla.
PC	Prescott, Ariz.
WW	Worldwide Campus
WWO	Worldwide Online

1970s

Chuck Graf ('75, DB) retired from Lockheed Martin Corporation, where he worked as a principal engineer in the intelligence community since 1998. Chuck was also one of the first members of AFROTC Det. 157 at Embry-Riddle. He received his AF commission in 1975 and retired as a colonel in 1998. He was an AF Command Pilot with more than 5,000 flying hours and currently holds the FAA Airline Transport Pilot certificate.

Sean VanHoltz ('91, DB) is instructing in the T-1 Jayhawk at NAS Pensacola, Fla.

Evan Bogan ('95, DB) completed his six-year quest for a master's degree through Embry-Riddle Worldwide and graduated in May 2010.

Maj. John R. Grabowski ('95, PC) is mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and stationed at Fort Benning, Ga., for a year (January 2010–January 2011). He is the Battalion Executive Officer at 1-50 Infantry Battalion, 198th Brigade on "Sand Hill." The mission is to train infantry basic trainees.

David M. Salvador ('95, DB) is a corporate sales manager—Business Aviation Solutions for Aircell LLC.

Brig. Gen. Margaret Woodward ('97, WWO) has been tapped to take command of 17th Air Force (Air Forces Africa) at Ramstein AB, Germany. She has been vice commander of 18th Air Force at Scott AFB, Ill., since January 2009. Woodward entered the Air Force in 1983. She is a command pilot with more than 3,500 flight hours in KC-135 tankers, trainer platforms, and C-37A and C-40B passenger transports.

Yasser Saad ('98, DB) is an Airbus 319/20 first officer with a charter airline, based in Sharm El-Sheikh/Hurghada "Redsea."

2000s

Laura (Smith) Stelmach ('00, DB) is a human factors and systems engineer with Lockheed Martin working



JJ Garcia



David M. Salvador



Dr. Richard Felton

on the En-route Air Traffic Modernization System (ERAMS) for Next Gen.

Martha Baez ('01, WW) earned a Juris Doctor degree from Pontifical Catholic University in Puerto Rico on June 8, 2010.

Benjamin Goodheart ('01, '06, PC) and **Graham Johnson** ('01, PC) established Mercy Wings Network in January 2010. Their network is a nonprofit organization with the sole mission of providing rapid air response to assist in disaster relief and recover efforts. One of their most recent

missions was following the earthquakes in Haiti, where they moved a portable, solar-powered field hospital from Colorado to Haiti to help treat earthquake victims. Find more information at www.mercywingsnetwork.org.

Autumn Young ('01, '03, DB) is an airport planner with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., a transportation, land development, and environmental services company, based in Sarasota, Fla.

Ashley Kirts ('02, '05) received the Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellows award. She

will receive a \$30,000 stipend and enroll in a master's degree program that provides intensive clinical preparation for teaching math and science in the urban and rural high schools that most need strong teachers. She will teach for three years in high-need Indiana schools.

Walter Bazemore ('03, DB) works for Kosola and Associates, Inc., in the aircraft component repair department.

Other

Professor Emeritus Dr. Richard Felton (PC, Dean of the College of Engineering) retired this year as professor and Dean of the College of Engineering after 22 years of service. He joined Embry-Riddle in 1998 as Chair of the Aerospace Engineering department. He served as Dean of the College of Engineering from 1999 to 2002. He then served as Associate Dean until 2008, when he resumed the position of Dean.

Prior to coming to Embry-Riddle, he enjoyed a 27-year career in the U.S. Air Force, from which he retired a full colonel. He graduated from West Virginia University with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering in 1960, commissioned into the USAF and pursued an M.S. in Nuclear Engineering at the Air Force Institute of Technology. He earned his Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering in 1970 from the Air Force Institute of Technology.

He is a member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, American Society for Engineering Education, Tau Beta Pi, Sigma Gamma Tau and Pi Tau Sigma.



Colin Broom

Professor Emeritus Les Kumpula (DB, Aeronautical Science Department) published a new book, titled *Advanced Airmanship Book 1 Precision Flying*, the first of a three-part series. Also, his previous Aeronautical Science textbooks are being updated and reformatted into new editions. Further information is available at www.cchpublishing.com.

Dean Emeritus Robert "Bob" Rockett (DB) retired from Embry-Riddle in summer 2010 after more than 35 years of service as the Director of Counseling, the Dean of Students, and most recently the Director of the Heritage Project. Read more about him on page 5.

FAMILY NEWS

1980s

Brian Ward ('85, PC) and his wife, Qian, had a baby boy, Valentine Stephen Ward, born Oct. 30, 2009.

1990s

Stephen Smyth ('95, DB) and **Alicia Smyth** (Career Services, DB) had a son, Sean William, born on Feb. 26, 2010.

Vince Wright ('96 DB) and his wife, Deborah, welcomed their third daughter, Corah Marie, on Nov. 25, 2009. She was 8 pounds and 21½ inches long. They live in Muncie, Ind.

Andrew Broom ('97, '00, DB) and his wife welcomed their third son, Colin, on March 31, 2010. Andrew is the vice president of Communications at AOPA in Frederick, Md.

2000s

Andy Ilg ('03, DB) and **Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg** ('03, DB) are expecting their first child, Owen Kenneth, in

September 2010. They live in Peachtree City, Ga.

MARRIAGES/ ENGAGEMENTS

2000s

Tony Beruvides ('06, DB, WW) and Krystal Haman were married Nov. 21, 2009. He is a pilot for SkyWest Airlines and Krystal is a flight attendant for SkyWest.

IN MEMORY

1940s

Dr. George E. Lovatt ('41, BFTS Miami) Feb. 8, 2009

Carlton C. Small ('46, '47, MC) June 19, 2009

1950s

Clement Bergeron ('50, MC) Dec. 1, 2009

1970s

Allan R. Schmidl ('76, DB) May 25, 2010

Charlie R. Tennstedt ('79, DB) April 4, 2010

1980s

Dr. William L. March ('81, WW, Professor for Worldwide) Jan. 14, 2010

Dale A. Krohn ('82, DB) Sept. 4, 2009

2000s

Bruce E. Wineburgh ('02, WWO) April 25, 2010

Capt. Joseph M. Gauthier ('05, DB) Feb. 15, 2010

Capt. Jose E. Montes, Jr. ('05, WW) Dec. 4, 2009

Scott Vincent Wiebold ('08, WWO) Nov. 21, 2009

Nichole Lynn Mooney ('09, DB) Feb. 20, 2010

Earl R. Scott ('09, WW) Nov. 8, 2009

Manuel "Manny" A. Mosquera Alfonso ('12, DB) April 3, 2010

Others

Roland J. Charlebois (University Friend) Jan. 27, 2010

Dr. R. Blaine O'Neal (Daytona Beach Board of Visitors) April 9, 2010

Tammy Parker (Employee at WW Headquarters) April 6, 2010

Eunice Bennett Spruance (Wife of Gen. Bill Spruance, Chairman Emeritus of Embry-Riddle's Board of Trustees) March 18, 2010

Professor Emeritus Chandler P. Titus (AMS Instructor) Feb. 10, 2010

Caroline Rand, Julie Adams Rand, Leila Adams, and Jay Adams ('08, Hon.)



FLORIDA
ARIZONA
WORLDWIDE

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