

NAHA presents awards at 2017 annual meeting

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Vince Russo holds the 2017 Ivonette Wright Miller award with (l to r) Tony Sculimbrene, Mike Heil and Frank Winslow.

DAYTON, Ohio—Vince Russo received the National Aviation Heritage Alliance’s 2017 Ivonette Wright Miller Award on Tuesday, Aug. 22, at NAHA’s 2017 annual meeting.

NAHA’s annual awards also recognized aerospace engineer and philanthropist W. Craig Willan of Fort Worth, Texas and the United States Air and Trade Show Inc., producer of the [Vectren Dayton Air Show Presented by Kroger](#).

The 2017 annual meeting took place in the community room of the Dayton Metro Library’s new main facility in downtown Dayton.

The Ivonette Wright Miller Award honors the memory of the niece of Wilbur and Orville Wright, who served as the family spokeswoman and preserved valuable Wright family records and artifacts. Russo is honored for his leadership roles in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs, including [Air Camp USA](#).

“He has an extraordinary ability to nurture young talent, from the very earliest of years to those who found themselves working for him just out of college,” NAHA Trustee Michael L. Heil said of Russo in presenting the award.

Russo is a retired Air Force senior executive who served in several senior positions at Wright-Patterson Air Force. He holds a Ph.D. in metallurgical engineering from The Ohio State University. He is actively involved in 16 professional and community

organizations, including as a NAHA trustee representing Air Camp.

The Wick Wright Award is named for Wilkinson “Wick” Wright, grandnephew of Wilbur and Orville, who represented the Wright family for many years. It recognizes a person or organization that has been supportive of NAHA or a NAHA partner. NAHA partner [Wright B Flyer Inc.](#) nominated Willan for the award.

“His financial and material support has enhanced the ability of the Wright B Flyer organization to tell the history of Dayton’s aviation legacy. For example, his financial support has enabled the Wright B Flyer to design and build a new airplane that will extend the mission of the Wright B Flyer for the next 30 years,” Jay Jabour, president of Wright B Flyer, wrote in his nomination submission.

Jack Hudson, director of the [National Museum of the U.S. Air Force](#), added that Willan was one of the five most significant donors to the capital campaign for the museum’s new building. Russo noted Willan also has sponsored Air Camp trips for four students and their teacher from a Fort Worth school for the past three years.

The PROPS (Partner Recognition of Phenomenal Support) Award goes to a NAHA partner for outstanding support of one or more NAHA partners. The United States Air and Trade Show received the award for outstanding support of NAHA partner exhibits at the annual air show.

Tony Sculimbrene, NAHA executive director, also noted the air show boosts tourism in the National Aviation Heritage Area every year, increasing visitation at the National Museum of the United States Air Force and other NAHA partner sites.

About NAHA

The National Aviation Heritage Alliance (NAHA) is a nonprofit chartered by Congress in 2004 as the management entity for the National Aviation Heritage Area, a region of national historical importance encompassing Montgomery, Greene, Miami, Clark, Warren, Champaign, Shelby, and Auglaize counties. The Heritage Area is one of 49 National Heritage Areas in a program administered by the National Park Service, and the only one dedicated to aviation heritage. Visit aviationheritagearea.org for more information.