



For Immediate Release

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The Aero Club of Washington Names NTSB and Federal, State, and Local DCA Crash First Responders as 2025 Persons of the Year

Washington, DC – The Aero Club of Washington proudly recognizes the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the dedicated federal, state, and local first responders who led the emergency response during the January 29, 2025 midair collision at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), naming them the 2025 Persons of the Year.

Established by the Aero Club of Washington’s Board of Governors in 2024, this honor is presented to individuals or groups who have made a positive and significant impact on aviation at the national level within the preceding 18 months. In the immediate aftermath of the DCA crash that claimed the lives of 67 individuals, these professionals demonstrated exceptional coordination, courage, and commitment to safety. Their swift response, technical expertise, and compassionate service ensured a thorough and transparent investigation critical to strengthening our national aviation system.

In recognizing the NTSB and the first responders from across agencies and jurisdictions, the Aero Club honors a shining example of public service at its finest. Their actions reflect the highest ideals of our nation, and we are deeply grateful for their dedication and commitment during one of the most challenging moments in recent aviation history.

“The individuals we honor this year exemplify what it means to serve with integrity and professionalism,” said Steve Morrissey, President of the Aero Club of Washington. “When the call came, they dropped everything and rushed to the aid of those in need. Their actions reinforce that aviation safety depends not only on technology and procedures but on the people who dedicate themselves to the mission. We honor their service with this award.”

“After the devastating midair collision near DCA, the world saw what I have the privilege of seeing every day: dedicated safety professionals, all experts in their fields, working with quiet determination to draw knowledge from tragedy to improve safety for all—work we could not accomplish without our vital federal, state, and local partners, many of whom supported search-and-recovery efforts and assisted in our on-scene investigative work,” said NTSB Chairwoman Jennifer Homendy. “The difficult yet vital work of these public servants makes each of us safer. We all owe them a debt of gratitude.”

The Aero Club of Washington will present the Persons of the Year Award at the 77th Annual Wright Memorial Dinner on Thursday, December 11th at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, DC. Joan Sullivan Garrett, Founder of MedAire, will also be honored with the [National Aeronautic Association’s 2025 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy](#) at the same event. For more information, please visit www.aeroclub.org.

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Background on the Aero Club of Washington

As an industry cornerstone, the Aero Club of Washington is dedicated to providing a forum for discussion of aviation and aerospace issues and achievements. Hosting hundreds of national and international aerospace leaders at its monthly luncheon meetings over the years, the Aero Club has fostered and promoted interest in the principles and development of aeronautics since 1909.