AEROCLUB OF WASHINGTON
Since 1909

78th Annual Wright Memorial Dinner™

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About the Event

Join the Aero Club of Washington and the National Aeronautic Association for the aviation community's biggest celebration of the year!

78th Annual Wright Memorial Dinner

Honoring the National Aeronautic Association's
2026 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy Recipient:

Robert Sumwalt

And the Aero Club of Washington's 2026 Persons of the Year:

The Artemis II Mission Team

Thursday, December 17, 2026

The Westin DC Downtown - 999 9th St NW, Washington, DC 20001

Reception: 6:00 p.m. Dinner & Program: 7:00 p.m.

Cocktail Attire

$395/seat $3,950/table of 10

Room Block Available

The Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy



Established by the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) in 1948 to honor the memory of Orville and Wilbur Wright, the Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy is awarded annually to a "living American for significant public service of enduring value to aviation in the United States." The trophy is presented at the Aero Club of Washington's Wright Memorial Dinner, held near the anniversary of powered flight.

The Wright Trophy represents a timeline of the most innovative inventors, explorers, industrialists, and public servants in aeronautics and astronautics. Past recipients include Charles Lindbergh, Igor Sikorsky, Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, Olive Ann Beech, Fred Smith, Herb Kelleher, Neil Armstrong, John Glenn, Norman Mineta, and the 2025 recipient, Joan Sullivan Garrett.







2026 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy Recipient

Robert Sumwalt



The Aero Club of Washington and the NAA are honored to present the 2026 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy to Robert Sumwalt, Former Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Sumwalt's distinguished career spans 24 years as a commercial airline pilot, logging over 14,000 flight hours, followed by pioneering human factors research with NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System. Appointed to the NTSB in 2006, he served as its 14th Chairman under multiple presidential administrations until his retirement from federal service in 2021. He currently serves as the Executive Director of the Boeing Center for Aviation and Aerospace Safety at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, continuing his lifelong mission to ensure the skies remain safe for all who fly.

Robert's visionary leadership and dedication have enhanced aviation safety for decades, permanently raised industry standards, and embodied the spirit and legacy of the Wright Brothers.

The Persons of the Year Award



The Aero Club of Washington proudly recognizes the Artemis II Mission Team as its 2026 Persons of the Year.

Established in 2024, the Person(s) of the Year Award honors those who have made a significant national impact on aviation and aerospace within the past 18 months.

Through its historic journey, Artemis II has reignited national pride, inspired future explorers, and demonstrated the teamwork, leadership, and resilience that have renewed excitement for science, aviation, and space exploration. Through this recognition, the Aero Club celebrates the mission and the people behind it for advancing a new era of American exploration and inspiring the generations who will carry it forward.

Photo Credit: NASA

Be a Part of Aviation History

For 78 years, the Wright Memorial Dinner has been a must-attend event for the aviation and space community. Often referred to as "aviation prom," the gala brings together hundreds of government officials, industry leaders, and VIP guests to honor the historic achievements of the Wright Trophy recipient and celebrate the bright and exciting future of our industry.

2025 Wright Memorial Dinner by the numbers

47

Corporate and Association Sponsors

765

Total Attendees

90

Government Guest Attendees

$16K

Raised for the Aero Club Foundation of Washington

Sponsorship Opportunities

	Presenting Sponsor (Limit 1) $25,000	Diamond Sponsor (Limited) $15,000	Platinum Sponsor $10,000	Gold Sponsor $7,000	Silver Sponsor $3,000	Bronze Sponsor $1,500
Recognition from Podium, in Program, and on the Club's Website & Socials	✈	✈	✈	✈	✈	✈
Included Number of Tables or Individual Seats	✈ 2 Tables (20 seats), Premier Placement	✈ 1 Table (10 seats), Excellent Placement	✈ 1 Table (10 seats), Preferred Placement	✈ 4 Seats, Preferred Placement	✈ 2 Seats, Preferred Placement	
Opportunity to Seat Preferred Guests with Your Organization	✈	✈	✈	✈		
Exclusive Hospitality Experience	✈	✈	✈			
Complimentary Advertisement in Event Program	✈ Full Page Ad	✈ 1/2 Page Ad	✈ 1/4 Page Ad			
Complimentary Seats at Head Table	✈ 2 Seats					
Opportunity to Feature your Brand on Custom Event Materials	✈					

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