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Virginia Teacher Selected as the 2023 A. Scott Crossfield Aerospace Educator of the Year

*The National Aviation Hall of Fame names
Hillsboro Charter Academy's Megan Tucker the 36th "Crossfield Kid"*

(DAYTON, Ohio – August 11, 2023) The National Aviation Hall of Fame (NAHF) announced today that Megan Tucker STEAM Specialist and Dean of Curriculum at Hillsboro Charter Academy in Hillsboro, Virginia, has been selected as the NAHF's 2023 [A. Scott Crossfield Educator of the Year](#).

The Crossfield Award, founded in 1986 by NAHF Enshrinee Scott Crossfield, is a juried annual competition to recognize a teacher for *his or her exemplary use of aerospace in their classroom curricula*. Crossfield, who was inducted into the NAHF in 1983, was a renowned test pilot, research pilot, and aerospace researcher. His tests with pressurized suits led to the development of the space suit.

The successful nomination was made by Ms. Susan Mallett, Aerospace/STEM Education Outreach Coordinator for Civil Air Patrol and 1992 Crossfield Educator of the Year. In her nomination, Mallett said, "Megan is one of those unique treasures who never stops thinking of ways to help others understand, feel valued, and seek to accomplish great things. She is the epitome of a teacher who Scott Crossfield was speaking of when he looked for teachers 'who possessed those honorable attributes we expect from American teachers.'" In support of her nomination, Hillsboro, Virginia, Mayor Roger Vance shared, "As well as being at the forefront of building an award-winning STEM-based curriculum, Megan has infused aviation and aerospace education into a wide spectrum of the school's teaching regime that enriches traditional subjects and creates an extraordinary level of awareness and knowledge among the young scholars. Megan has ensured that the themes of aerospace engineering are key components in the classroom, and she has demonstrated boundless creativity in activities and projects to encourage and enhance the teaching of aerospace."

Tucker's teaching career and accomplishments span almost 20 years in elementary and middle schools in Florida, California, and Virginia, and include the development of engaging science and space curricula and programs for her schools, students, and other educators, as well as for national organizations. Megan has been instrumental in building the curriculum at Hillsboro Charter Academy, where she has taught every kindergarten through fifth-grade student all aspects of STEAM, with an emphasis on aerospace, technology, and engineering. She has created a club called Girls in Gear (Guiding Engineering, Aerospace, and Robots) and implemented a plethora of special programs for the students as she collaborated with organizations such as NASA, CAP, AIAA, Project Lead the Way, Girls Who Code, SeaPerch (underwater robotics), the Space Foundation, and CASIS (The Center for the Advancement of Science in Space -the ISS National Lab). Notably, Megan creatively supported her school's pivot during the COVID-19 pandemic. She ensured the students in her entire school were provided rigorous and relevant STEAM instruction via weekly "Tucker Tuesday" online sessions that provided innovative lessons and engineering design challenges to students, making sure the tasks assigned could be accomplished with items readily found in every home (a design challenge in its own right!). When school slowly opened, she innovatively plotted the path toward continued hands-on learning and engagements.

Lars Hoffman (Vice President, Government Sales at Blue Origin) and Jill Rutan Hoffman (Founder & CEO of Path 2 Flight), who were guest speakers in Megan's 7th grade STEM class and AERO (Aviation, Engineering, Rocketry, and Outreach) Club at The Palmdale Aerospace Academy in California said in a letter of support, "What sets Megan apart is not only her ability to effectively teach aviation and STEAM concepts but also her commitment to the holistic development of her students. She understands the importance of instilling confidence, perseverance, and a growth mindset in her students, encouraging them to pursue their dreams and overcome challenges."

Tucker has earned multiple honors and awards for her work with students in science and engineering. These include being one of twenty selected internationally for the initial group of the Limitless Space Institute's Educator Program in 2022, 2021 National AFA/Rolls Royce Aerospace/STEM Teacher of the Year, 2020 Virginia State Air & Space Forces Teacher of the Year, and the recipient of Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) Grant in 2020.

Mr. Frank Craven, NAHF Awards Chair, said, "Ms. Tucker's nomination was unanimously selected for the 2023 Crossfield Award. After reviewing her extraordinary list of career accomplishments, previous Crossfield winners were truly impressed. Megan's addition brings honor to this already prestigious group of educators."

Tucker will receive the award on September 21, 2023, at the President's Reception as part of the National Aviation Hall of Fame's 59th Enshrinement events. Over 600 people are expected to attend two days of events in Washington D.C. that feature the formal installment of the NAHF Enshrinee Class of 2023; pioneers (the late) Velta Benn and (the late) Cornelius Coffey, visionaries Angela Gittens and (the late) Ed Stimpson, and aerospace heroes Fred Haise and Kathryn Sullivan.

The 59th NAHF's Annual Enshrinement Dinner & Ceremony is open to the public by advance registration only. Limited sponsorship opportunities and individual seats are still available. To purchase tickets or find more information, visit www.nationalaviation.org or call 937-256-0944 ext.16.



About The National Aviation Hall of Fame- The National Aviation Hall of Fame, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, is the *only* Congressionally-chartered aviation hall of fame in the U.S. Based in Dayton, OH, the NAHF's Heritage Hall & Education Center is committed to informing the public of American aviation heroes, their accomplishments, and their impact on advances in aviation from Early Flight to Space Travel. The NAHF strives to create a distinctive educational resource that will inspire future generations to appreciate our nation's extraordinary aviation heritage through the men and women who created it.