



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Media Contact:

ASU

Scott Emerine

423-956-0352

[scott@brandingiron.com](mailto:scott@brandingiron.com)



## Aviation Specialties Unlimited Receives Seven Seals Award from ESGR *Chris Schoonover Receives Patriot Award*

(BOISE, IDAHO – 12/15/2021) Aviation Specialties Unlimited (ASU) in Boise, Idaho, announced today the company was given the Seven Seals Awards from the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR), for the company's efforts to support ASU employees in the National Guard and Reserves.

ASU Director of Aviation Services Chris Schoonover also received the ESGR Patriot Award. The Patriot Award reflects the efforts made to support citizen warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families, and granting leaves of absence if needed. Both the Seven Seals Award and Patriot Award are given by the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the United States.

Both Awards were presented by representatives of the National Guard. ASU Owners Mike and Chris Atwood received the Seven Seals Award on behalf of ASU.

"This is a tremendous honor to receive," said ASU Founder Mike Atwood, an Army Veteran himself. "We love our country and the men and women that work at ASU know that supporting our nation, our troops and our National Guard members is an integral part of ASU. In fact, more than 40% of ASU's workforce have served or are currently serving in the United States Military."

Schoonover is an Afghanistan veteran and former AH-64D Battalion Commander. He retired from his full-time position in the Idaho Army National Guard in 2019 as a Lieutenant Colonel. Schoonover was nominated for the Patriot Award by ASU Senior NVG Instructor Pilot K Kirkendall, who is a Standardization Pilot for A/1-183<sup>rd</sup>.

"ASU greatly values veterans' service, and one of the first things that you see when you come into the building is the Armed Forces "Wall of Honor," said Kirkendall. "ASU has honored the service of its veterans by displaying individual photos with their Branch of Service and dates to celebrate their service to this great Country. They also value the experience our Veterans have gained through their service in the Armed forces."

"It would be difficult to describe the amount of time it takes to manage the responsibilities this position requires, but I am consistently communicating with my commander and pilots to ensure that we are prepared to deploy in support of combat operations. I also spend many nights training and evaluating our pilots, and ASU allows me the flexibility to manipulate my schedule to ensure that I can satisfy military crew rest requirements. ASU has supported me in my service to the National Guard even when it wasn't convenient or easy. They are a stellar organization that deserves recognition for their patriotism and service to our veterans," added Kirkendall.

ASU Vice President of Sales and Marketing Chad St. Francis is also a retired 22-year Veteran of the United States Army.

"Supporting our military is in the very fabric of our DNA at ASU," said St. Francis. "We are extremely honored to receive the award and to employ so many great men and women that serve and have served our nation. ASU's



mission is to help save lives. Our National Guard members are ready to do that every day. That is why we will continue to support the ESGR mission not only in the United States, but around the world.”

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### **About Aviation Specialties Unlimited**

For more than 25 years, Aviation Specialties Unlimited Inc. (ASU) in Boise, Idaho, has proudly served those who protect and defend worldwide with Night Vision Solutions that Save Lives! The experienced team supports safe and sustainable aviation night vision programs with military-grade NVGs, specialized tools and test equipment, custom aircraft lighting, and a full array of training and Night Vision Imaging System integration services. For more information, call +1 208-426-8117 or visit [asu-nvg.com](http://asu-nvg.com).

### **Photo Outline**

Aviation Specialties Unlimited (ASU) in Boise, Idaho, announced today the company was given the Seven Seals Awards from the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR), for the company’s efforts to support ASU employees in the National Guard and Reserves. ASU Director of Aviation Services Chris Schoonover received the ESGR Patriot Award. The awards were presented by representatives of the National Guard to ASU Founder Mike Atwood, a retired Army National Guard pilot, wife Chris Atwood at the ASU headquarters in Boise, Idaho on December 15, 2021. The Seven Seals Award and Patriot Award are given by the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the United States. (ASU photo by Sarah Pokorney)

### **Patriot award outline:**

The Patriot Award reflects the efforts made to support citizen warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families, and granting leaves of absence if needed. The award was presented by representatives of the National Guard to Schoonover, an Afghanistan veteran and former AH-64D Battalion Commander, at the ASU headquarters in Boise, Idaho on December 15, 2021. The Patriot Award is given by the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the United States. (ASU photo by Sarah Pokorney)

### **Keywords:**

ASU, ASU Inc., Aviation Specialties Unlimited, Idaho National Guard, Seven Seals Award, Patriot Award, Secretary of Defense