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ASU President Jim Winkel Announces Retirement

(BOISE, Idaho — October 1, 2020) Aviation Specialties Unlimited, Inc. (ASU) announced today that ASU President Jim Winkel will retire at the end of 2020. Winkel has served as the President of ASU since September of 2013 and his remarkable career in the night vision industry spanned nearly four decades.

“Some of the greatest memories I have during my time at ASU is the outstanding friends and colleagues whom I've been privileged to work and form a relationship with,” said Winkel. “My ASU family is replete with wonderful innovators, always focused on developing solutions for those whom we serve. I'll treasure the great community we have built as well – from the ASU soccer team to our annual retreat, and the many conversations we've had because of the trust and confidence we've built with one another.”

ASU founder Mike Atwood hired Winkel as President. Atwood previously held the role for almost two decades.

“Jim had a vast knowledge of the night vision world and his aviation background was a plus when we hired him,” said Atwood. He has a tremendous amount of international experience and worldwide contacts gained from his previous employment. I knew him from past working relationships and knew he was an honorable and honest person. Through his leadership in the last seven years, ASU has grown, expanded, and entered many new markets. Jim has been a stable force during the many challenges that ASU has faced over the years. We are thankful for his time at ASU and wish him the very best.”

Winkel first began his distinguished career in NVGs in 1978 as a Soldier for the United States Army. In 1982 he began flying with PVS-5 goggles. Before retiring from the Army in 1998, Winkel was flying all mission profiles – formation, sling loads, air assault – at night using NVGs and with NVIS compatible aircraft lighting. It was after he retired from the Army when he formed Moon Shadow Training. He trained law enforcement pilots all over the United States.

In 1999, he joined Litton Industries, now L3Harris, full-time. With Litton, Winkel was on the development team of the M949 aviation NVG. He also served on the RTCA committee, as the co-Chair along (with Lorry Faber of the FAA). Around a hundred industry and military saints from North America, Australia, and Europe labored together for nearly two years to develop the standards for NVG, NVIS lighting, and NVG operations that have been adopted for use by FAA and civil aviation authorities around the world. Mike Atwood was among those on the RTCA committee. Winkel's influence on the world of NVGs has touched military, corporate, and civilian operations worldwide. Winkel says he has had many great mentors in the last 40 years that contributed to his career and growth.

“It has been a real privilege to work with great mentors like Tom Wiecks, Colonel Just, Bill Underwood, Charlie McWhite, Kim Geist, Bob Wallace, Mike Nolan, Gary Glover, Kathy Hernandez, Jeff Slusher, Tom Healy, Ian Clark, Wendy Sanderson, Tom Horwath, David Merry, Russ Camacho, Rich Carmen, Colonel Bill Berkley, Sean Kirk, Don McConnell, Bob Delzell, Steve Perez, Pat Ralston, Bob Alexander, John Robinson, Ben Bethke and Maureen Kalinski – to name a few -- who guided, counseled, corrected, encouraged and inspired me,” said Winkel.

“I'm also amazed and appreciative of the wonderful success many of my former bosses and colleagues have enjoyed, as they have become leaders and captains in our aerospace/defense industry. Friends like Steve Lambert, Gregg Bell, Marion VanFosson, Chandra Sankar, Jon Piatt, Marco Trefanitz, Chris Beuparlant, Pascal and Isabel Michotey, Giueseppe DiRocco, Shehzad Shafiq, Todd Gautier, Jonn Bekkevold, Keith Marshall, Roger Hogan, David Davis, Leon Yates, Dave Smith, Chris Tenaro, Greg Love, Eddie Miller, David Jones, John Wyatt, Roger Moses, Steve Raker, Joe Langlois, Brian McCandless, Steve Foster, John Holland, Danny Schmoltdt, Tom Farris, Clint Sanderson, Bill Underwood, Frank Kanauka, Jeff Goree, Paul Osterman, Jose Rodriguez, Jim Roycroft, Tina Tolbert, John Labelle, Rich Jennings, Jennifer Lastra, Rich Johnson, Kip McDermott, Justin Watlington, Erika Pook, Pete Ferrero, Hannah Gordon, Joe Estrera, Ken Solinsky– and so many more – come to mind as leaders in the aerospace and military world. These individuals (and countless others whom I've met along the way) continue to lean forward and advance our ability to operate at night, safely and with impunity,” added Winkel.



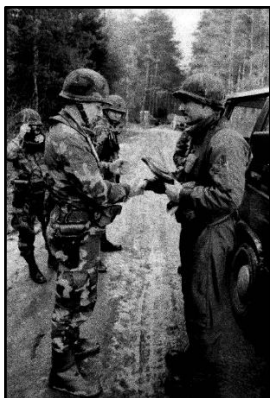
Winkel and Atwood knew each before Winkel arrived at ASU. Their friendship and mutual respect impacted Winkel's decision to join ASU.

"I believe that it took exceptional courage for the Atwood's to bring an 'outsider' into the company – in particular someone with an extensive, corporate aerospace/defense background," said Winkel. "I had known and respected Mike since the late 1990's when he and I competed with one another in the NVG flight training market. In early 2000, I got to know him very well when we worked together for nearly two years on the RTCA committee – whose efforts facilitate today the many cottage NVIS industries that support global aviation NVG flight. I first met Chris as she and Mike were considering becoming a distributor for a former company I worked with. Her talents are amazing, as is her perseverance and drive. Turning the reins over, after having 'poured every ounce of energy' (as Bob Seger crooned) for 18 years into 'their baby', is not an easy thing for any business owner to do. I am grateful Chris and Mike for your mentorship, trust, and friendship. I remember fondly the many evenings we spent 'cussin' and discussin' (as Mike Atwood says) after a wonderful meal at the Atwood home. Thank you both for inviting me to become a part of the ASU family and legacy. May God's provision continue to bless you."

Winkel, a father of nine kids, four in-laws, and ten grandkids, says he is looking forward to retirement.

"I am looking forward to serving and enjoying the Lord in ways that more time will enable, and being a better husband to my bride, Sandy – getting to know her again. I will become active in more tangible ways with my children and grandchildren; and, my parents, sisters, brothers-in-law, and their families. Retirement will enable me to renew and maintain friendships -- and more faithfully serve my church and our community."

ASU plans to announce Winkel's replacement next month.



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About Aviation Specialties Unlimited

Celebrating their 25th Anniversary, Aviation Specialties Unlimited Inc. (ASU) proudly serves those who protect and defend around the globe with the most advanced night vision system integration. Their experienced team supports safe and sustainable night vision programs with military-grade NVGs, flexible training, and custom aircraft lighting modifications to fit your needs. For more information, call +1 208-426-8117 or visit asu-nvg.com.