

# Aviation *for* Women<sup>®</sup>

MARCH/APRIL 2017

The official publication of Women in Aviation International<sup>®</sup>

**HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF INDUSTRY GATHERINGS**

SHARING THE WISDOM OF THE

**WASP**

**PATTY WAGSTAFF**

**PROVIDING AEROBATIC AND UPSET TRAINING**

*Learning How to Be a Mentor*

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MARCH/APRIL 2017

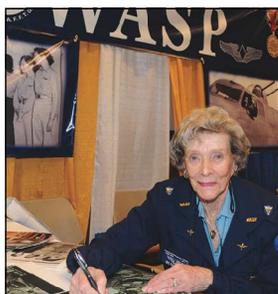
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Patty Wagstaff in her brand new Extra 330LX at her world-class aerobatic and upset training school in St. Augustine, Florida, home of the U.S. Extra aircraft dealer, Southeast Aero.

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KELLY MURPHY

*At the last Orlando Conference in 2014, I enjoyed catching up with Peggy and Michelle Haynes, Cape Air executive editor of the Bird's Eye View magazine, during the WAI Chapter Reception.*

## COUNTDOWN TO CONFERENCE

Are you ready? As I write this piece, we are just a few weeks away from our 28th annual conference, and the many details of our three-day event are being finalized. The

March/April 2017 issue of *Aviation for Women* is your conference guide to help you make the

most of your trip to Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

As you will read in the 40-plus pages of our conference program starting on Page 21, there are loads of workshops, educational sessions, keynote speakers, more than 100 exhibitors, Girls in Aviation Day Orlando, as well as dedicated events for our new, experienced, and rusty pilots!

To help you navigate our event we've included some carefully selected features by our longtime contributors. **Jo Damato** explains the fine art of being a mentee and a mentor, and the great news is that WAI has such a program for our members. **Amy Laboda** takes you behind the scenes to the philosophy of industry gatherings. Why are they important, and how do you make the best of the WAI gathering of 5,000 attendees? Read Amy's tips starting on Page 74.

We look forward to hearing from a long list of keynote speakers at #WAI17 with fascinating and various backgrounds to give you a range of perspectives on general aviation, manufacturing, space programs, cargo transport, as well as combat and aerobatic flying. You'll learn more about flying (literally—upside down!) in our exclusive interview with aerobatic champion **Patty Wagstaff** on Page 14. Visit with the WASP attending this year's conference, and read about their life perspectives in a feature compiled by **Patricia Luebke** on Page 70.

I hope to meet many of you at the conference, and our dedicated writing team will bring you updates from Florida in our three issues of *The Daily*. We encourage you to build the excitement and record this year's gathering through social media by using our official hashtags #WAI17 and #IamWAI! ➔



DISNEY'S CORONADO  
SPRINGS RESORT  
March 2-4, 2017

### Join the conversation!

Help share the excitement of attending the 28th Annual International Women in Aviation conference by using the hashtags

**#WAI17**  
**#IamWAI**  
and  
**#IamWAIYP**  
on social media.

Save the dates!



**WAI Connect**

WAI Connect Dayton  
September 29-30, 2017  
Dayton, Ohio

WAI goes back to its roots in 2017. Come to Dayton, the birthplace of aviation, and WAI headquarters! Tentative tours include the National Museum of the United States Air Force and Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park sites. Details to come at

[www.WAI.org/  
wai-connect-dayton](http://www.WAI.org/wai-connect-dayton)

## See You at SUN 'N FUN

The annual Sun 'n Fun International Fly-in & Expo will be here before we know it, and WAI will be on site all week April 4-9, 2017, with an exhibit booth in Hangar A (Booth A-056). On site or online, be sure to tune into Sun 'n Fun radio each day at 11 a.m. Eastern for Women Shine at Sun 'n Fun hosted by Dr. Peggy Chabrian. You can stream our show live at [www.LiveATC.net/SNF](http://www.LiveATC.net/SNF), or listen locally on 1510 AM.

WAI members receive a discounted rate on Sun 'n Fun admission online using the code: **WAI453**. You will be asked to show proof of membership at the gate.

Don't forget to add the WAI Connect Lunch to your plans on Friday, April 7, at noon at the Buehler Aerospace Restoration Center. The lunch is a fantastic place to meet and network with WAI staff and other WAI members. For more information and to register, visit [www.WAI.org/events](http://www.WAI.org/events). ➔

# Mentoring Magic

## *Finding the right mentor for each stage of your career*

CHRIS MILLER



The demographics of the workforce are changing rapidly. In 2017, there are four generations currently in the workplace ranging in birth-date from as early as 1925 to as recently as the 1990s. The youngest of these four generations—labeled “millennials”—make up the largest generation in the workplace. In aviation, cultivating this generation’s commitment to becoming aviation professionals is essential so that they can both sustain the industry and also grow to become the future leaders in place of today’s industry veterans.

**by Jo Damato, CAM**

As many nonmillennial aviation professionals focus on their own industry “origin” stories they will recall someone who gave them the piece of advice, connection, or open door they needed to get started in their careers. Many more will want to credit a specific person they view as a mentor to them. While the words “mentor” and

“mentee” may not have been formally used, both parties were likely invested in the relationship. If you are an industry veteran then hopefully you’ve had a chance to be a mentor to someone already. If you are an up-and-comer in this industry then perhaps you are looking for a mentor. How can you do that, and what should you do once you find one?

While entering into a relationship with a mentor takes a commitment from both the mentee and the mentor, the first step has to come from the mentee. A veteran most likely is not going to suddenly ask you if you want to be mentored by them. Although a good mentor should be engaged, the mentee will need to take primary responsibility for initiating, nurturing, and growing the relationship. The mentee should be prepared to be an active listener who can handle both praise and constructive criticism. The mentee also needs to be respectful of the mentor’s time, and when a call or meeting has been scheduled the mentee should always do their best to honor that appointment and be on time and focused on the conversation at hand. Most importantly, the mentor and the mentee need to both understand the goals of the relationship. The mentee should know why they need a mentor. Is there a skill the mentee lacks in an area where the mentor excels? Does the mentor have expertise and experience in the career or position that the mentee aspires to hold in the future? And is there something the mentor hopes to gain from the relationship? Has the mentor set a personal goal to reach down the ladder to help the next person up, or is the mentor hoping to hone his or her own leadership skills by taking on the mentor role? Maybe the mentor is looking to gain experience working with a different generation, or to spark his or her own professional innovativeness or creativity. Before proceeding with a mentor/mentee relationship these are all good things to consider. Mentors are everywhere, but you have to know how to find the right one.

*“When entering a mentorship program really think hard about what you want to accomplish. It’s not just about making a friend or networking contact who has more time in the industry than you do, but it’s also about shooting for something that you want to improve on and engaging somebody who can help you make it happen. A good mentor will help you hold a mirror up to your face to see where you are blocking your own success. Sometimes that is going to be very hard, but that is how you break through to the next level. Being a mentee takes strength and fortitude.”*

Sheryl Barden, Aviation Personnel  
International president & CEO

*“When choosing a mentor, I think the most important thing is to find someone who you really enjoy being around. Having a good connection with your mentor, along with being someone who you respect and admire, will lead to the most effective relationship for both of you.”*

Scott Moore, ACC, CAM, Moore Life Leadership leadership adviser and personal life coach

## For students

If you are a student pursuing an aviation career path, where can you find a mentor? First, consider your professors, instructors, and guest lecturers as potential mentors. You don’t have to establish a formal mentor/mentee relationship with them to ask questions, discuss relevant issues, or obtain feedback or advice. Rather, this relationship is one that already exists in the construct of the classroom or airplane hangar. To take it from traditional student/instructor interactions you’ll have to be the more active pursuant, letting your inquisi-

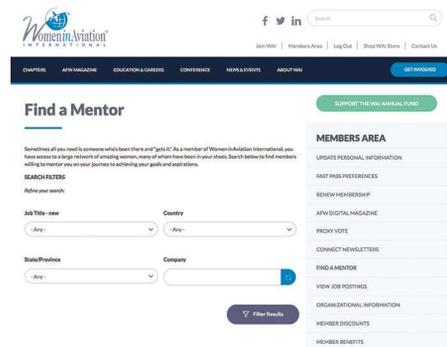
tiveness shine through. Showing that you are engaged, competent, and sincere makes you memorable. When it’s time for you to ask for a recommendation, an introduction, or for some career advice you’ll be building on an already-established foundation. Keep in mind professors and instructors manage a number of students, and their valuable availability may be limited. While these are not the types of relationships that you typically “take with you” when you progress from a learning environment to the workplace, this is a terrific proving ground for you to hone your professional communication skills and your role as the active participant in the mentor/mentee relationship.

Another avenue for students is to consider alumni as potential mentors. Many alumni stay connected with their alma maters and of those who do, many want to find a way to give back to the system that helped them reach their own career heights. A strong alumni network might even have a formal program to help match students with willing mentors working in the same field. Your shared experience at the university already gives you something in common as a starting point for the relationship.

## For aspiring entrants to the industry

You have the passion for a career in aviation, but you are having trouble getting your career to take flight. You have the education, skill, or qualifications—or all of those combined—and now just need to get someone to hire you. A mentor can indirectly help. Consider this: Can you just go up to someone in the industry who does not know you and beg him or her for a job? No, typically you cannot. Can you approach someone and ask him or her to be your mentor? No, typically you cannot do that either. What you can do is get engaged with your local aviation community. Attend events for aviation professionals—conventions, conferences, trade shows, air shows, fly-ins, regional events, FAA-hosted events, and job fairs. (See Amy Laboda’s feature on gatherings on Page 74.)

Dress professionally, and bring professional-looking business cards. Eat beforehand so you’re free to make professional connections without a hand holding a plate or a mouth chewing food. Ask questions, and listen to the answers. Be an active participant in the conversation. When it turns to your own ambitions then it’s your cue to politely ask for career advice. Note, you are not asking them for a job. For example, you might ask them one of the following questions instead: “How did you get your start in aviation?” “Do you have any advice for me as I actively pursue my career in aviation?” “I just applied to company X. Do you have any insight into the company culture?”



## Mentoring Resources

One of the greatest perks of being a member of the WAI community is the mentoring relationships made by connecting with other members. Making these important connections is now easier through WAI’s website.

If you would like to offer yourself up as a potential mentor for another WAI member, log in at [www.WAI.org](http://www.WAI.org) to update your mentor profile today. Once you are logged in, head to the Members Area and select Update Personal Information. Under your name and member number you’ll see the option to select Mentor. Check the Online Mentor box, fill in your details, and you’re all set! Within 15 minutes the site will display your name as a ready and willing mentor for the WAI community at [www.WAI.org/members/mentors](http://www.WAI.org/members/mentors)

For mentees, the Find a Mentor options are only available to WAI members logged in at [www.WAI.org](http://www.WAI.org) and do not display your personal information openly. Members interested in reaching out to you will be sent to a contact form that will generate an email to you, and you will have the option to reach out from there.

Help us grow a robust community of women helping women through these enhanced website options. ➔



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**Meet Jo at the WAI  
Young Professionals and the  
Future of Business Aviation  
panel, Friday, March 3,  
from 3-4 p.m. at Disney's  
Coronado Springs Resort.**

“Would you possibly take a look at my résumé and offer any advice on how I can polish it?” None of these questions were asking this person to hire you, but now you have made a good impression. They may leave the conversation feeling “invested” in you and with a willingness

to help you in your job search. You might close the conversation asking to exchange business cards and if you can keep in touch to let them know how your job search is progressing. Chances are when that person hears of an opening, they are going to remember you.

## For new entrants to the industry

If you are new to the industry then you may have just gotten your foot in the door and are happy to be there, but “there” is not necessarily where you want to be after a while. First of all, congratulations on wherever it is that you may be. You are on the first leg of what will hopefully be a wonderful lifelong journey. Now that you’re en route, you may be looking for a mentor to help you navigate. Luckily a mentor will see you as a solid investment. They can already tell that you are serious about being an aviation professional, and hopefully see your passion for the industry through your attitude and reputation. You are a person a mentor wants to invest in, because he or she wants you to love this industry as much as he or she does.

So where is the best mentor for you? Well, he or she could be someone who is in your company and with whom you’ve already established a nice rapport. Or he or she could be someone you have gotten to know through industry involvement attending an event, sitting on a workgroup, task force, or committee. You are not looking to ride the coattails of your mentor, and you are also not looking for a mentor who you are trying to get to promote you from within or hire you from your current job. Instead, you are hoping to establish a long-term relationship with someone whose opinion you value and who can be available to you for career advice.

While you may not be in your “forever” job right now, give yourself time to settle in and master it. There is no urgency to keep looking for the next best job whether lateral or one rung up. When you allow yourself to grow roots, you start to build a reputation among your co-workers, customers, and industry colleagues as a stable, responsible, and dedicated professional who embraces challenges and puts in the hard work. →

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*Joanne M. Damato, WAI 6829, is a mom, certified aviation manager, marathoner, and director of educational development and strategy for NBAA.*