The World Joins the Effort!

As more people around the world become aware of the effort to get the permanent home for the International Skydiving Museum & Hall of Fame built, they are asking how they can join. For many individuals, that means making donations, contributing to the museum’s collection, attending the annual Hall of Fame Celebration or all three! For national skydiving organizations worldwide, there is the International Affiliate program.

Most countries with active skydiving communities have federations, associations, committees or aero clubs. In the United States, that organization is the U.S. Parachute Association (USPA). The International Affiliate program allows these organizations to officially affiliate with the Museum & Hall of Fame.

We are thrilled to announce that four countries have or are in the process of becoming official Affiliates!

The USPA was the first to join when in July, its Board of Directors voted to become the museum’s Host Country Affiliate. In December, the Board of Directors of the Australian Parachute Federation voted to become the museum’s first International Affiliate. Since January, both the Brazilian Confederation of Parachuting and the Bulgarian National Aeroclub have been in the process of finalizing their agreements to become International Affiliates.

Affiliates benefit by seeing their national records and competition results presented in the museum. They will also have their member drop zones included on the Drop Zones Around the World touch screen. This display will have an interactive function that allows visitors to the museum to let drop zone owners know of the visitor’s interest in doing a jump. Recipients of Affiliates’ national awards will be presented at the museum, their banner will be displayed in the museum hangar and they will see their national flag prominently displayed on one of the flag poles lining the museum entry.

Museum & Hall of Fame President/CEO James F. (Curt) Curtis III commented, “We are pleased and honored to have these forward-thinking organizations join us early in this process. We know that many more countries will be following their example.”

On November 30, 2018, following a long illness, the skydiving community lost its most internationally recognized member, George Herbert Walker Bush, US D-20,000. After making his first accelerated free fall in 1997, President Bush became a champion for the International Skydiving Museum & Hall of Fame, providing his name and strong support to the effort. He was, for nearly two decades, the museum's honorary chairman. We will miss his annual video appeal to the attendees of the Hall of Fame awards ceremony and banquet in which he enthusiastically challenged, "Now let’s get this thing built!"

Photo by Tom Sanders
Presenting the Dream of Human Flight

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A special thank you to those donors who, cumulatively, have contributed more than $10,000 to the International Skydiving Museum (through 2018):

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**Trustee Pat Thomas Receives USPA’s Lifetime Achievement Award**

Patricia “Pat” Thomas was the 2018 recipient of USPA’s Lifetime Achievement Award for nearly three decades of advancing the sport of skydiving by sponsoring US competitors and teams, being a leader in the harness-and-container industry and masterfully organizing the PIA Symposium.

Pat is considered a fiercely loyal and honorable business woman whose impact traverses the globe. As president and owner of Sun Path Products for nearly 30 years, Pat is very close to seeing her company produce its 50,000th Javelin harness-and-container system. In addition to Sun Path, she is involved in five other business ventures including Complete Parachute Solutions and Tactical Training Facility, both sister companies of Sun Path that cater to the military. When she celebrated her 60th birthday in 2017, Pat attempted retirement but, in 2018, she was out of retirement and back on the job.

Born and raised in the UK, Thomas immigrated to the US in 1992. With a lifetime of achievements in the skydiving industry under her belt, Pat still considers her greatest life achievement her “family” which she defines as family, friends and employees. According to her daughter-in-law and Sun Path CFO Jessica Blay, “(Pat’s) heart is bigger than anyone’s I know. Family is most important to her, but the skydiving industry is part of her family.”

The USPA’s Lifetime Achievement Award was conceived in 1970 and has been awarded 30 times to date. The recipient is chosen annually by the USPA board of Directors and is awarded to an expert sport parachute jumper, active or retired, in recognition of outstanding sportsmanship, skill or personal contribution to both the sport of skydiving and USPA.