



Anne Simpson

2024 Pathfinder Award Recipient in The Flying and At Large Categories

The Museum of Flight's Annual Pathfinder Awards honor individuals with ties to the Pacific Northwest who have made significant contributions to the development of the aerospace industry. Pathfinder Award recipients are selected by The Museum of Flight, the Pacific Northwest Section of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and representatives of other aviation and aerospace organizations and companies throughout the Northwest.



Pathfinder Awardee Anne Simpson is an accomplished pilot and leader who advances opportunities for women in aviation. She achieved great success in her career, from her hiring as the third female pilot at Northwest Airlines at age 25 to her term as chairwoman of the Board of Trustees for The Museum of Flight.

Anne's mother earned her wings in 1943, but there were no opportunities for women to fly commercially at the time. Decades later, while attending University of California, Berkeley, following her mother's footsteps, Anne earned her own pilot's license in an astounding 30 days. By the time she graduated college, she held all ratings required as an airline pilot. After time as a pilot instructor in Seattle, a series of flying positions led her to Northwest Airlines in 1981. Anne flew several Boeing and Airbus aircraft, and when she checked out as Captain on the 747-400 she was one of only four women in the position at the time.

Anne rowed for UC Berkeley's crew team where she practiced dedication, perseverance and discipline that set the foundation

for her leadership in the flight deck, at The Museum of Flight and as an advocate for women in aviation. She led the campaign to acquire the Lockheed Electra 10-E, one of two surviving examples of the type of aircraft famously flown by Amelia Earhart. The project became the foundation for the Museum's Amelia's Aero Club program for girls.

In every aspect of her life, Anne's dedication to excellence has been pioneering, leading to her induction as an aviation Pathfinder.