



WHO WILL RECEIVE NBAA 2019 AMERICAN SPIRIT AWARD?

News / Business aviation, Events / Festivals



What do you know about American Spirit Award? Just to remind the official wording: *The NBAA American Spirit Award is presented in recognition of an individual within business aviation who exemplifies the courage, pursuit of excellence and service to others that characterize men and women who created and nurtured the American aviation community.*

Looking forward to live the NBAA Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition there are several announcements that can be defined as "teasers". One of them is regarding the NBAA the association's 2019 American Spirit Award.

Barrington Irving, who in 2007 became the youngest pilot to fly solo around the world in a single-engine airplane and who has continued to inspire young people to pursue careers in aviation and aerospace, will receive the award during the Day 2 Keynote at NBAA-BACE, which takes place Oct. 22-24 at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV.



Irving was born in Kingston, Jamaica and grew up in inner-city Miami, FL believing that college football represented his only opportunity to receive a higher education. Although Irving received several scholarship offers out of high school, he instead opted to pursue a career in aviation under the guidance and mentoring of a Jamaican airline pilot.

Those experiences set Irving on a course that culminated in his 97-day solo flight around the globe in a single-engine piston aircraft – appropriately christened “Inspiration” – to demonstrate to young people worldwide that they could also achieve their dreams. He then founded Experience Aviation, based at Opa-Locka Executive Airport, and established the Experience Aviation Learning Center dedicated to empowering middle and high school students in the Miami area to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM+) careers, including within aviation and aerospace.

“After discovering his own future in aviation, Barrington Irving has dedicated his life in a tireless effort to promote STEM+ careers as accessible and attainable paths by which others may pursue and realize their own dreams,” said NBAA President and CEO Ed Bolen. “He embodies a tremendous spirit of inspiration and mentorship that not only serves as an important example for the students who have benefitted from his guidance, but for everyone working in business aviation.”

Irving has continued to encourage students from all walks of life with the Flying Classroom, combining air, land and sea expeditions with a digital curriculum to engage millions of children throughout the world. He also has been a frequent presence at NBAA events over the past decade, including as a speaker and mentor during the annual Careers in Business Aviation Day at NBAA-BACE.

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07 AUGUST 2019

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