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Jim Gormley

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Gormley: Aviation Education Pros Gather at GAMA
AVIATION EDUCATION LUNCHEON
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FEBRUARY 14, 1991
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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AVIATION EDUCATION PROS GATHER AT GAMA

Jim Gormley

WASHINGTON DC, March 6, 1991. Nearly forty aviation education professionals representing all facets of the aviation and space community recently participated in a symposium sponsored by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) in Washington, D.C. They used the opportunity to exchange information and ideas on the challenges facing the field of aviation education in America today.

One of the highlights of the event, which was held in late February, was the presentation of papers on key issues in aviation education written by a distinguished panel of aviation education experts including [listed alphabetically]: Dr. Peggy Baty representing Parks College, Dr. Tom Connolly of the University Aviation Association, Dr. Henry Lehrer of Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Frank Mitchell representing Beech Aircraft Corporation, Professor

Jack Moore of the Aviation Technical Education Council, and Phil Woodruff from the Federal Aviation Administration.

The papers will be published in *The Journal of Aviation/Aerospace Education and Research*, a scholarly publication for educators and researchers as well as for professionals in the aviation and aerospace industry. The *Journal* is printed and distributed by Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida.

Frank Mitchell, Chairman of GAMA's Aviation Education Subcommittee, said of the symposium:

"At last year's National Congress on Space and Aviation Education, GAMA hosted a special luncheon in order to discuss the current issues in aviation education. We found it to be a highly successful and worthwhile meeting. It seemed to

many of us that a gathering of the aviation education professionals, representing as many major aviation and aerospace organizations as possible, would be an extremely valuable experience."

Shelly Snyder, GAMA's Manager of Aviation Education, organized the meeting on behalf of the GAMA Aviation Education Subcommittee whose members also attended the conference. "We all were very pleased with

the attendance and the high level of participation. I think everyone enjoyed meeting their counterparts from a wide range of organizations and the presentations gave us a number of important issues to consider," she said.

According to Mitchell and Snyder, the successful symposium may set the standard for future events. "We are seriously considering making this gathering an annual event. In fact, we are polling the participants of the conference about their interest in attending others

in the future," Mitchell.

GAMA is a national trade association headquartered in Washington, DC, representing 33 American manufacturers of general aviation aircraft, engines, avionics, and related equipment. GAMA's members also operate fleets of aircraft, fixed based operations at many airports, and pilot training facilities across the U.S.

For more information on GAMA's aviation education programs, contact Shelly Snyder at 202-393-1500.



A CLEARINGHOUSE NEED FOR AVIATION EDUCATION

Frank G. Mitchell

During April the FAA, NASA, and the Civil Air Patrol will again sponsor the National Congress on Aviation and Space Education. This congress is significant in that it will be the 24th annual meeting which consists of general session speakers, field trips, and small group exchanges on aviation/aerospace subjects. Most important, the congress appears to have established its ongoing role as the major national educational event of the year.

GAMA has been represented in the congress with one of the display booths, and even though our role at the congress is small, we have found tremendous interest from participants in teaching materials on aviation subjects. In fact, over 1,000 sets of GAMA materials have been distributed to teachers and educators at each congress in recent years.

The issue, which I submit in the form of a question, is: In view of the success of the congress, do we need to do anything else at the national level to promote aviation education in the nation's schools?

My answer is yes, in the sense of providing an ongoing channel of communicating with formal education. I believe we have a definite gap in this area at the national level, and to close that gap we should establish a national clearinghouse in aviation education to work more effectively with the formal field of education, particularly at the elementary and secondary levels.

There are a number of national efforts ongoing today in addition to the congress, and they are primarily those programs dealing with the FAA, CAP, NASA, and Young Astronauts organizations.

All very valid efforts but loosely coordinated mainly through the annual congress program agenda. The difficulty is that the brief time duration of the congress meeting doesn't allow for any serious planning coordination with formal education.

In addition, there are other efforts in various stages of activity that are national in scope including the national 4-H club organization, Aviation Exploring Division of the Boy Scouts, Public Affairs Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, the NASAO Education Foundation, ADMA, AEA, EAA, UAA, AIAA,