



DR. TULINDA LARSEN

Resiliency and Perseverance

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After 40 years in aviation, I have learned that the most important traits needed to succeed are resiliency and perseverance. Aviation, especially unmanned aviation, is constantly changing and opening new opportunities. Resiliency is required to adapt in a changing environment, and perseverance is essential to achieve your goals.

I set a goal of teaching at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) as a way to contribute to the industry I love and to continue to be active in aviation as I approach retirement. To achieve this goal, I decided to pursue a doctorate in management at University of Maryland University College in my 50s and graduated at 59. My dissertation, *A Behavioral Framework for Managing Massive Airline Flight Disruptions through Crisis Management, Organization Development, and Organization Learning* concluded that the industry needs a single source of real-time operational data to improve airline management of flight disruptions.

Through my research, I learned about a start-up software company, masFlight. Its cloud-based platform created a single source for airline operational data and cut through data silos to enable analysis used by the U.S. Department of Transportation for its Tarmac Delay Program. This tool became the basis of masFlight's commercial platform supporting near-real-time analysis of 800 parameters for 100,000 flights daily. In 2015, masFlight was sold to Global Eagle.

After the sale of masFlight, I finally achieved my goal to be an adjunct professor in ERAU's School of Business teaching economics.

In 2016, I turned my research from the commercial aviation industry to the developing drone industry. The excitement of the new technology and the emerging uses has opened new opportunities for me. I believe drones are the biggest development in aviation since the jet engine. My current projects are focused on commercial applications for drones including sports management and agriculture.

My drones for sports management projects include working with sailing organizations to develop policies and procedures for the use of drones for junior sailing programs, race committee, to promote the club to attract new members, filming of club races to share with

members and promote the fleet, and filming of development projects to share status updates with members, just to name a few.

Additionally, I am working with the snow-sport industry to develop policies and procedures for the use of drones for chair-lift inspections. I am sponsoring a study by George Mason University to provide the fundamental research to create a program for the use of drones by snow-sport areas.

As far as my involvement with the use of drones in agriculture, I serve as the executive director of the Agricultural Aerial Remote Sensing Standards Council, which is developing standards for the imagery gathered by drones used in analysis in agriculture.

One of my favorite activities is flying my DJI Phantom 4 Pro drone. I love that my three-year old granddaughter, Naomi, considers it normal for her grandmother to fly drones!

I began my aviation career as a staff economist for the U.S. DOT, Office of the Secretary, and in 1977 served as a transportation economist for the National Transportation Policy Study Commission. Later I joined the Regional Airline Association as vice president representing the interests of U.S. regional airlines and providing testimony to Congress and industry organizations.

At 35 years old, I had the opportunity to move to Alaska and become the president of the Alaska Air Carriers Association and executive director of the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation.

At this stage in my career, I welcome being a mentor to younger women to foster their careers in aviation, especially in unmanned aviation. My experience with the regional airline industry when it was in its infancy is very similar to where the drone industry is today. The growing drone market means there are unlimited opportunities. Read everything you can, and reach out to other women in the unmanned industry. Step up and take a seat at the table now; the tables are just getting set. ➔

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Dr. Tulinda Larsen, WAI 76118, is a private pilot, Part 107 remote pilot in command, and has been involved with numerous aviation organizations during her 40-year aviation career.