

TAA Airport Awards Announcement

Airport of the Year

This award recognizes the Airport that demonstrated the best level of achievement for airport operations, customer service, safety, and positive promotion of aviation for the previous calendar year in the state of Tennessee.

Eligibility: Must be a Public Use Airport licensed in Tennessee.

Winner: **NASHVILLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

A review of the past calendar year (2021) at Nashville International Airport,® also known as BNA®, reflects the monumental success gained through superior customer service, operations, strategic planning, ongoing renovation and expansion, safety programs and from the talent and dedication of its 300-plus-member team. Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, BNA® saw more than 15.5 million passengers in 2021—87.3 percent higher than in 2020 and just 15.1 percent lower than in 2019. That growth is no surprise, considering that BNA set record passenger numbers for seven consecutive years pre-pandemic. An important note about the airport is that it is owned and operated by Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority and receives no local tax dollars.

Governing Body of the Year

This award recognizes the Airport Governing Body that, in the estimation of voters, contributed the most to the positive promotion of their Airport, Airport planning and/or airport improvements for the previous calendar year in the state of Tennessee.

Eligibility: Must be the recognized and established governing body, per T.C.A., of a Public Use Airport licensed in Tennessee.

Winner: **BENTON COUNTY**

Benton County Government has noticeable shown importance on the county airport. Complicated by the deployment of the county mayor to changeover of the airport manager, the governing body has assisted in all needs of the airport board to meet compliance and safety regulations. The airport has undergone many changes in the past fiscal year greatly affected by the recent COVID pandemic. From government shut down to decreased in available funds, the governing body continues to make decisions in the best interest of the voters along with general aviation. The county government has always focused its intension on compliance with state inspections along with new federal safety guidelines recommended throughout the year. The county leadership and airport board continues to work effortlessly with TDOT to complete projects. With help of local resource programs and the tourism board, the county is able to address the county citizen's request for continuation of our Aviation day. This day has always assisted with the community knowledge of the airport department along with introducing individuals to the general aviation field. I hope you greatly consider the Benton County Government in the Governing body of the year as they have truly demonstrated excellence in the expectations of a rural county airport.

Airport Manager of the Year

This award recognizes the Airport Manager that contributed the most to the development, safety, customer service, airport promotion and/or airport operations for the previous calendar year in the state of Tennessee.

Eligibility: Must be the Manager (or like position) of a Public Use Airport licensed in Tennessee for at least the previous calendar year.

Winner: **MARK FIDLER - CLEVELAND REGIONAL JETPORT**

Mark Fidler displays excellent customer service skills and is the face of Cleveland Regional Jetport. He takes a hands-on approach to the daily functioning on the airport and is invested at every step for grant execution/invoice processing. Mark has led RZR to Airport of the Year in years past and continues to bring aviation outreach to Bradley County by hosting events featuring historic planes like the Flagship Detroit.

Career Contributions to Aviation This award recognizes an individual whose contributions to Aviation in the State of Tennessee are significant and lasting.

Eligibility: Nominated and selected to receive award. Award may not be presented every year.

Winner: **JENNIFER CAIRNS BAKER - BAKERS SCHOOL OF AERONAUTICS – LEBANON AIRPORT**

Jennifer Baker is a fervent advocate for the aviation Maintenance technician. She was FAA's Tennessee Safety Counselor of The Year in 1999 and serves on the National FAA AMT Awards Committee. Mrs. Baker has been the "anchor" of the Tennessee Mid-South Aviation Maintenance Conference for more than 30 years. Baker's School of Aeronautics enrolls more than 1,100 AMT students annually from 125 countries worldwide.