

NATA Recognizes 2007 Industry Excellence Award Winners (**Raymond N. Fitzgerald (21)**).

Ray received an LLB from University Of Connecticut School Of Law in 1968 following graduation from USNA and active duty. After graduation Ray served as a Navy fighter pilot, flying 850 hours in the F-8 Crusader, including 285 carrier landings, and about 500 hours in the A-4 Skyhawk in the Naval Reserve. In 1971, he transferred to the Connecticut Air National Guard, flying the F-100 Super Sabre (870 hours) and later the A-10 Warthog (850 hours). He was commander of the 118th Tactical Fighter Squadron (1981-82) and retired in 1986 as a colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve.

After law school, Ray joined Kaman Corporation as in-house attorney. In 1972, he transferred to their aviation service subsidiary, AirKaman, at Bradley International Airport as vice president/general manager. From 1978-1982, Fitzgerald led the government contracts division at Hamilton Standard. In 1982, he returned to the Bradley International Airport FBO, after it was purchased by Combs Gates. He was a senior vice president with AMR Combs until 1997 when he was recruited to become the President and CEO of Atlantic Aviation. Atlantic was then-owned by Legg Mason Merchant Bank and was sold in 2000 in one of the first private equity transactions in general aviation.

Today, Ray is vice chairman and director of Landmark Aviation, which in March of 2008 was purchased by Encore FBO and GTCR, a private equity firm. The surviving company will retain the Landmark Aviation name and consists of 41 FBOs throughout the US, Canada and Europe. Landmark is the third largest FBO chain in the world.

Ray has also been active with Habitat for Humanity since 2003. He has participated in homebuilding programs in New Zealand, in Cape Town and Lesotho, South Africa, and in Northern Ireland. He is participating in another house build in Madagascar in April. Sports have been a big part of Fitzgerald's life. He participated in the Marine Corps Marathon at age 55 and still plays tennis and golf, participates in triathlons, snow skis and sails.

Ray lives in Wilmington, Delaware with Alice, his wife of 43 years, and spends his summers on the Connecticut Shore. They have five children and nine grandchildren.