



For more information contact:
John Niehaus
Director of Program Development
National Association of Flight Instructors
(269) 355-6500
jniehaus@nafinet.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VONDA BENSON EARNS NAFI MASTER INSTRUCTOR ACCREDITATION

KALAMAZOO, MI — 2/27/2024 The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Vonda Benson has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor.

After a discovery flight at age 50, Benson researched aviation and discovered the industry was lacking professional full-time flight instructors. Her husband Brian was surprised when she announced she was going to retire from her 30-year career with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections to finish her journey to become a fulltime flight instructor and that they were going to start their own business. Brian put his own flight lessons on hold and supported her journey.

After obtaining her instructor certificate in May 2020 and CFII in December of that year, Brian was the third student she signed off for a checkride. Brian is now a pilot, an Advanced Ground Instructor, and is working on his instrument rating.

Together, they own a thriving flight school in central Wisconsin where an emphasis is placed on ground instruction along with the flight instruction. They are adding an additional full-time flight instructor this year. They value building strong relationships with the aviation industry across the state. Benson says her favorite aspect of being an instructor is watching students build their internal skills, which she loves to watch happen in real time. She is honored to make a difference in two totally different fields — corrections



and aviation. Benson's own journey to becoming a CFI was filled with many challenges, the biggest of which was figuring out her learning style. As a result, her motto has become: If we don't quit, we win.

*The **NAFI Master Flight Instructor Accreditation** is earned by aviation educators based upon a system of advanced professional standards and peer review. The accreditation identifies and publicly recognizes those teachers of flight who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to excellence, professional growth, and service to the aviation community. The NAFI Master Instructor accreditation is for two years and may be used to renew an FAA flight instructor certificate. Applicants must have been a CFI for two years and have given 1,000 hours of flight instruction. In addition, candidates must meet and document activity in four NAFI Master Instructor categories (Instructor, Educator, Service to the Aviation Community, and Professional Activity).*

*Members of the **National Association of Flight Instructors** work as independent instructors, at flight schools, universities, FBOs, corporate flight departments and in the military. Since 1967, NAFI and its members, who teach in thirty countries, are dedicated to increasing and maintaining the professionalism of flight instruction. NAFI members influence active pilots daily: students working to become pilots, current pilots training to advance their skills with new ratings or certificates and pilots who seek to improve their skills with recurrent training. NAFI also serves as an advocate with industry and government as a voice for flight instruction. NAFI helps shape the current and future direction of flight training. For more information about NAFI or the NAFI Master Instructor program call **866-806-6156** or visit www.NAFINet.org.*