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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RICHARD WHITTEMORE EARNS NAFI MASTER INSTRUCTOR ACCREDITATION

KALAMAZOO, MI — 8/10/2021 The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Richard Whittemore has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor. This is Whittemore's second NAFI Master Instructor accreditation.

Whittemore is from Chattanooga. He says he fell in love with aviation at the age of 14. He worked two jobs in landscaping and as a construction hand in order to pay for flight training as a 16 year old student. At the same time, he also began studying aviation at the local community college. Later that year he soloed and, just a year after beginning flight training, gained his Private Pilot certificate at the age of 17. Not long after completing it, he



attended language school in Argentina. It was there that he studied the Amazon jungle in South America. After becoming fluent in Spanish, Whittemore returned to Chattanooga and completed a degree in aviation management and began managing the small airport/FBO and flight school where he learned to fly. While there, Whittemore completed advanced flight training and began instructing for the school. Shortly thereafter, Richard began flying a Beechcraft Baron corporately.

In 2012, Whittemore earned his helicopter rating and later that year moved his family to Brazil, where his youngest daughter was born. There he flew a float plane on the Amazon River for a short time. After the government shut down the aviation program, Whittemore and his family adopted a young child and

also started an orphanage. In search of a way to remain involved in aviation, he moved his family across the border to Colombia. After two years of persistently trying to get an air ambulance established, it became clear that the local political atmosphere would keep that from happening. So, after starting a local, fair labor company in Colombia he moved his family to Laredo, Texas.

There Whittemore started an aviation service company while working for a Part 91 operator. He also co-founded and acted as the chief instructor for the only dual rated flight school on the Texas/Mexico border. While he was acting as chief instructor the school operated with a 100 percent pass rate and safety record. During the beginning of 2020 Whittemore and his family moved back closer to his roots in Birmingham, Alabama where he remains involved with the non-profit organization by serving on the board and managing the various entities his family started in the Amazon. His full-time job is working as an Emergency Medical Helicopter pilot in the Southeast and on his off days he continues to instruct and hold safety seminars. He has completed the DPE training courses and looks forward to one day serving as a DPE.

Whittemore holds an Airline Transport Pilot certificate with Airplane Single and Multi-Engine Land and Rotorcraft-Helicopter as well as Commercial privileges for Airplane Single Engine Sea. He also holds a Gold Seal Flight Instructor Certificate for Airplane Single and Multi-Engine, Rotorcraft-Helicopter and Instrument – Airplane/Helicopter. He is also an Instrument Ground Instructor and Commercial Drone Operator. He currently holds SIC type ratings for the Beechcraft PremierJet and the Cessna Citation XLS+. He is also the current FAA Safety Team (FAAST) Representative with the Birmingham FSDO.

Whittemore's goal is to continue his personal aviation education and pass that on to aspiring and current pilots in order to promote a safer environment in the industry.

*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 30 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.*