

Stephens Is New AMSRO President

Michael S. Stephens, M.D., is the 2024-2025 President of the Aerospace Medicine Student and Resident Organization (AMSRO). He is a first year RAM at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, where he completed a residency in Emergency Medicine. Prior to medical school, He spent 6 years as an active-duty U.S. Navy aircrewman. He supported Operation Iraqi Freedom, earning three strike Air Medals. Through this, he was introduced to Aerospace Medicine. When not deployed, he worked as an intelligence analyst and linguist for



the National Security Agency. He will be commissioned in the U.S. Navy Reserve later this year and was recently named an Associate Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA).

Dr. Stephens holds undergraduate degrees in Arabic, Psychology, Nuclear Chemistry, and a Graduate Certificate in Biomedical Ethics from the Medical College of Georgia, where he earned his Doctor of Medicine in 2021. He is currently pursuing his MPH at the University of Minnesota.

Prior to serving as President of AMSRO, Dr. Stephens served as the Vice President for two terms and represented AMSRO at three AsMA Council Meetings. He also serves on the ASTM F47 committee for Commercial Spaceflight. His interests lie primarily in operational aerospace medicine as well as the ethics and standardization of crew medical requirements, selection, and recertification. He hopes to continue this work as a NASA flight surgeon upon completion of his fellowship.

In Memoriam: Tom McNish

AsMA HQ staff were saddened to hear of the death of Tom McNish, B.S., MPH, M.D., COL (Ret.), USAF, in mid-July. A native of Madison, TN, USA, he graduated in 1964 from the U.S. Air Force Academy. He served in the Vietnam War. During that conflict, he was shot down in 1966, spending over 6 years as a prisoner of war, during which he decided to study medicine upon returning home. When he was released in 1973, he attended Emory University School of Medicine, graduating in 1978. He completed residencies in Family Practice and Aerospace Medicine. He was one of a few pilot physicians and served as Hospital Commander at Myrtle Beach AFB and Holloman AFB.

Dr. McNish led the mission during Desert Storm to evaluate and repatriate returning prisoners of war in 1991. He retired as the Command Flight Surgeon for the Air Force



Reserve in the Surgeon General's office in the Pentagon. He then joined Biodynamic Research Corporation, San Antonio, TX, as a consultant and partner.

Dr. McNish's awards included three silver stars, the Legion of Merit, three Bronze Stars with the V device, two Purple Hearts, five Air Medals, and the Air Force Commendation Medal. He was a Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association and received their Julian E. Ward Memorial Award in 1986. Within the Association, he was a member of the Education and Training Committee and an Emeritus Member of the Society of U.S. Air Force Flight Surgeons.

An online obituary can be found at <https://obits.cleveland.com/us/obituaries/thefranklinpress/name/tom-mcnish-obituary?id=55673141>.

In Memoriam: Joe Zellers

AsMA HQ Staff were saddened to hear of the death of Robert "Joe" Zellers, MS, Maj. (Ret.), an Associate Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA). He received a BS in Zoology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1967 and was commissioned a 2LT in the U.S. Air Force Biomedical Science Corps. He later earned an MS from the University of Southern California through AFIT. He served as an Assistant Professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy for 5 years and retired as Chief of Aerospace Physiology at Pease AFB, NH. He was the first Chief of Aerospace Physiology unit to use a full-time, human factors tailored training curriculum to focus on training by weapons system.

Mr. Zellers was Principle Investigator of genetic engineering for the Defense Intelligence Agency for 4 years. He began the first U.S. Air Force-wide, coordinated, High Altitude Airdrop Mission Support (HAAMS) program for Aerospace Physiology and coined the HAAMS acronym. He was also a voting member of a MAC-wide 20-member team which focused on C-130 accident prevention. In 1987, after his retirement from the Air Force, he consulted as an aerospace physiologist for American Safety Flight Systems, Inc., and Conax Florida Corporation. Starting in October 1997 he was employed as the Staff Physiologist for Conax and then Carleton Aerosystems.



Mr. Zellers was a long-time member of the Aerospace Physiology Society, where he was President from 2006-2007, and AsMA. He was certified in Aerospace Physiology in 1984, through AsMA, and held two 3-year tenures as a member of the Aerospace Physiologist Certification Board, where he prepared and gave the test for 2 years. He was also a member of the Aerospace Human Factors Association and an active member at the government/industry Oxygen Standardization and Coordination Group meetings. In addition, he was a long-time member and active participant at the annual SAFE meeting.