

## **Robert A. Rivers**

### **Oxford, North Carolina**



Inducted in 2015, Robert A. Rivers was a NASA Test Pilot for 14 years at the Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia. While at NASA Langley, he became the only pilot in the world to have flown and tested both the Concorde and Russian Tu-144 Supersonic Transports as the NASA Project Pilot for the High Speed Research Program established to design a new High Speed Civil Transport. He taught Astronauts how to land the Space Shuttle while flying the Shuttle Training Airplane and flew the WB-57 high altitude research airplane all over the world investigating global climate issues and testing satellite sensors. Mr. Rivers was one of the first WB-57 pilots to successfully track a shuttle launch from pad to solid rocket motor separation with a sophisticated video tracking system flown at 65,000 feet altitude. He authored or co-authored over 25 technical papers and wrote two extensive case studies of NASA flight test programs for a two volume NASA special publication. Mr. Rivers was the lead NASA Project Pilot on many programs including the HL-20 Spaceplane (later to become the Sierra Nevada Corporation Dreamchaser), the Aircraft Synthetic Vision System Program, the Small Aircraft Transportation Systems (SATS) Program, the NASA Wake Vortex Hazards Program, and the Atmospheric Sciences Earth Albedo Program. He has flown over 13,000 hours as pilot-in-command in over 70 different aircraft types including the F-8, F-5, F-16, T-38, B-757, WB-57 F High Altitude Research Airplane, OV-10, and the NASA G-II/Shuttle Training aircraft, as well as numerous general aviation aircraft. Mr. Rivers' many awards include NASA's Aviation Professional of the Year Award for 2002, a NASA Exceptional Service Medal, a NASA Director's Commendation, and numerous NASA Safety and Outstanding Performance Awards. As a Navy Fighter Pilot, he flew 2,000 accident free hours and accumulated over 250 carrier arrested landings in the Navy F-8 Crusader. He won the first International Tactical Reconnaissance Meet in 1981, competing against teams from the Air Force, Navy, Marines, Air National Guard, and Canadian

Armed Forces. A resident of Virginia for over 21 years, he received his Master's Degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Virginia in 1985.