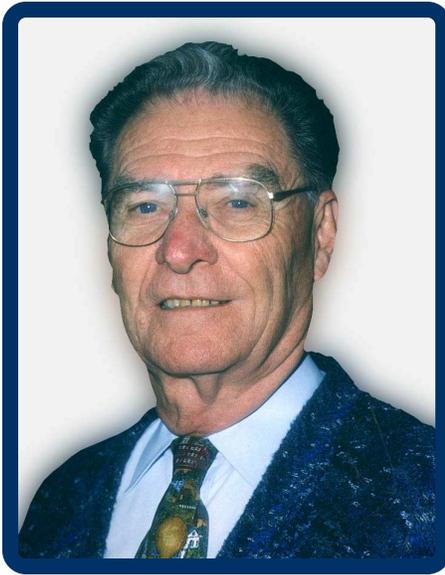




Executive Assistant to the Director



John W. Boyd
Executive Assistant
to the Director

NASA/Ames Research Center

I started at the Ames Aeronautical Laboratory in its early days (1947). I have been an aeronautical research engineer studying supersonic and subsonic characteristics of fighter/bomber aircraft in wind tunnels, and I pioneered early research on the design of unmanned planetary probes for exploration of Mars and Venus. Working closely with other NASA Centers, together we developed early configurations for Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo capsules, as well as the Space Shuttle design. Later, as adjunct professor at the University of Texas (Austin, El Paso), and Pan American, I taught aerodynamics and history of space flight. In my 54 years of service to NASA, I've worked as the Associate Administrator at the Headquarters, and Deputy Director at the Dryden, and Ames Research Centers. Over the years, I've enjoyed teaching, and sharing my vision and my love of science with students and with my own children and grandchildren.

Areas of expertise:

- Aerodynamics
- Aircraft/Spacecraft design
- Management of Research Institutions
- Teaching

How I first became interested in this profession:

In my youth, I had two great math teachers. But I credit my cousin, who got me my first flight in a bi-plane, with forever getting me hooked on airplanes.

What helped prepare me for this job:

My work in wind tunnel testing while I was in college gave me valuable practical experience. I was also fortunate to work with many outstanding scientist/engineers when I came to Ames.

My role models or inspirations:

My parents, who wanted more for me than working in a cotton mill were instrumental. I also had great teachers in high school, and later on great mentors when I came to Ames as a young research engineer. Last but not least I thank my wife, Winnie, who runs our home and is a loving mother and partner.

My education and training:

- B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering, Virginia Polytechnic Institute
- Advanced Studies in Physics and Aerospace, Stanford University
- MBA from Stanford Sloan School

My career path:

- Fifty-four years of service to NASA and the academic community:
- Fifteen years at Ames as an aeronautical research scientist beginning in 1947
- Twenty-four years as Ames Associate Director, Dryden Deputy Director, and Associate Administrator for Management at NASA Headquarters
- Eight years as Research Assistant to the Chancellor and Adjunct Professor at three University of Texas System Campuses
- Five years as Senior Scientist at Penn State and Universities Space Research Associations
- Four years as Executive Assistant to the Ames Center Director

What I like about my job:

I find it exciting to work in developing new concepts for the aircraft that flies on earth, and beyond, the spacecraft that will go out to research the solar system. I also enjoy working with other scientists, engineers, and students in a broad range of disciplines and projects.

What I don't like about my job:

I do not like the paper work that goes with selling new programs, but it must be done.

My advice to anyone interested in this occupation:

Dare to be a starter. The only way to reach your full potential is by continuing to learn and to start new things. Get the training you need, find the mentor you want, and above all keep your mind open to new ideas.