

General Aviation Awards Program Nomination
FAA Safety Team – Representative of the Year – Mandy Johnson

In the small world of aviation, it is a blessing when you meet an individual who has such passion for aviation and a willingness to share in their accomplishments and encourage fellow aviators around them. I had the fortunate opportunity to meet Mandy Johnson during the Walla Walla Balloon Stampede in early 2014.

Mandy is the owner/operator of Columbia Balloon Port, an FAA Repair Station specializing in Lighter Than Air (LTA) maintenance. She holds a Commercial Pilot Certificate LTA and is a long-term Flight Instructor often sought after for your expertise in LTA operations. Over the months that followed and numerous conversations regarding the safe operations of LTA in the National Airspace; I found Mandy's knowledge, skills, training expertise and commitment to aviation safety second to none. It is within this developed relationship and her commitment to safety that Mandy became the focal FAA Safety Team Lead Representative in LTA with the Spokane WA FSDO.

Since joining the FAA Safety Team, Mandy has been a key safety proponent in the LTA outreach, education and training within the Pacific Northwest and its cities and communities. She is highly sought after for LTA education, training and promotional events within varies public and private industries. She is often the keynote speaker in safety seminars and events, has developed safety products and training materials, provides counseling and mentorship to students, airman and businesses, and has always been very generous of his time, knowledge, and talents. She has been recently recognized as the 2025 Balloon Federation of America Maintainer of the Year. Mandy is the example in what every FAA Safety Team Program Manager is looking for.

I am truly honored to nominate Mandy Johnson and extremely grateful for her dedication to safety. The National Airspace System and the Aviation Industry are safer due to her efforts. Mandy is truly worthy of the FAA Safety Team Representative of the Year.

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