



Elizabeth Bendel of Monadnock Aviation in Keene Is SBA's 2018 NH Veteran Owned Small Business of the Year

The SBA's New Hampshire Veteran Owned Business of the Year is awarded a ten year veteran of the U.S. Navy and Naval Reserve who served in the Phillipines, Japan and the Pentagon as an aviation intelligence officer. During her service Elizabeth Bendel earned a Master of Science Degree in Strategic Intelligence and several Navy Achievement Medals and a Defense Meritorious Service Medal.

Elizabeth's introduction to aviation was early in her career at Naval Air Station Cubi Point, Philippines, working with P-3 Orion aircraft. It was here that she discovered her love for aviation and also became a pilot. Following her military service, she became a federal law enforcement officer and used her training and skills in intelligence operations to pursue and apprehend drug dealers and international child pornography traffickers.

In 2008 with a broad background in public service and an understanding of aviation and government processes, Elizabeth sought out opportunities in the field of aviation. While living in Florida she discovered an opportunity in Keene, NH that could combine her interest in business and her passion for aviation. She put herself on the task and was able to secure an agreement with the City of Keene to be the provider for aviation services at the airport in Keene.

As a new business owner Elizabeth found local help from SCORE to assist her with business planning and financing. She was able to secure an SBA loan to construct a new hanger building at the airport. She also learned about other SBA service partners and has used services from the Veteran's Business Outreach Center, the Women's Business Center and the NH Procurement and Technical Assistance Center.

As Elizabeth approaches a tenth anniversary in ownership of Monadnock Aviation, Inc. she is proudly able to point to real success. Employment has increased from 3 to 10 employees. Revenues have consistently grown and services have expanded to include classes for both ground and air certifications being conducted year round in their classroom and simulator. The classes with students ranging from 14 to 84 years of age have provided training for nearly 300 to be licensed for personal recreational flying and several who have gone further to gain commercial pilot status.

Elizabeth is very active in her community in Keene and the surrounding towns. She has volunteered professional services and tours to local scouts as well as produced two airshows. She has served on the Board of Directors for the Samaritans Suicide and Crisis Hotline as well as on the Board of Directors for the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce.

Commenting on the announcement SBA District Director for New Hampshire said "Elizabeth Bendel has done an outstanding job in making aviation in the Monadnock region a true regional asset and like veterans business owners across the state she is capable, confident, willing to take risks and committed to help others. It is an honor to celebrate her success and her service."

Elizabeth Bendel will be recognized locally at the NH SBA Small Business Awards event on May 2nd at the Manchester Country Club in Bedford. For additional information visit www.monadnockaviation.com

*For info on the May 2nd event call Warren Haggerty at 603-225-1405 or warren.haggerty@sba.gov
To register for the event click [here](#) or visit www.nhbankers.com Event Schedule*