

## Daniel Guggenheim Medal

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### MEDALIST FOR 1961

*For his lifelong dedication to the cause of flight safety and his constant and untiring efforts to reduce the hazards of aviation.*



**JEROME LEDERER**

Aviation safety is invisible and intangible, and of vital importance. Jerome Lederer made it his life's business, for which aviation can be duly thankful. He was born in New York City on September 26, 1902, and attended New York University, graduating in 1924 from the newly instituted aviation curriculum. Remaining at NYU as Assistant to the Director of Aeronautics of the College of Engineering, he received the degree of M.E. in 1925.

There being few positions in aviation available at that time, Lederer accepted a job on the West Shore Railroad as a surveyor. Soon afterward he became head of an engineering department of the U.S. Air Mail Service, where he developed specifications, tested parts, and examined wrecks to determine whether damaged aircraft could be repaired. In 1929 he became Chief Engineer of Aero Insurance Underwriters, in charge of loss prevention and safety.

President Roosevelt in 1940 reorganized the Civil Aeronautics Authority, consolidating its functions with those of the Civil Aeronautics Board. Lederer was asked to head up the Safety Bureau of the CAB. In World War II he was named Director of the Airlines War Training Institute, and there developed a program in which 10,000 pilots and mechanics were trained for the Air Transport Command. He returned to Aero Insurance Underwriters, but was soon called to serve as Consulting Operations Analyst for the U.S. Army Air Forces and later as a bombing research analyst with the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey.

In 1947, at the request of airlines engineers and executives, he set up an aviation safety information service, which later became the Flight Safety Foundation, at the offices of the Institute of the Aeronautical Sciences. In 1948, aided by Laurence Rockefeller and others, it began to attract solid support. In addition to disseminating information on current operational problems relating to safety, this non-profit organization soon entered the field of research, undertaking a study for the Federal Aviation Agency on medical requirements for airmen, and a contract with the National Institutes of Health for studies of safety in private flying. In 1959 it

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took over from Cornell University the Aviation Crash Injury Project (AVCIR) at Phoenix, Arizona.

In 1950 the Cornell-Guggenheim Aviation Safety Center was established by The Daniel and Florence Guggenheim Foundation, and Lederer was asked to become its Director. He also headed the Flight Safety Foundation in its formative years and was a director until 1967.

In 1967, following the deaths of three astronauts at the Kennedy Space Center, NASA appointed him director of the Office of Manned Space Flight Safety for the Apollo Program. In 1970, he became director of safety for all of NASA.

Lederer also served on numerous governmental committees. He was a member of the Aviation Facilities Survey Group of the Bureau of the Budget; served with the Jet Task Force of the International Civil Aviation Organization; was a member of President Kennedy's Task Force on National Aviation Goals, and of the Research Advisory Committee on Aircraft Operating Problems of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

An American aviation-safety pioneer, widely known as "Mr. Aviation Safety," Lederer died on February 6, 2004 in Laguna Hills, California at the age of 101.