

Leverne Seversike



## Insights

### Encouraging the Stars

#### *When Leverne Seversike*

wanted to get a doctorate in aerospace engineering in the early '60s, Iowa State University didn't yet have a Ph.D. program in the field.

Instead, Seversike earned his doctorate at Iowa State in electrical and computer engineering. The university added the aerospace doctorate program two years later in the midst of the country's race to space.

"That was Iowa State growing up," said Seversike. As an Ames native, three-degree graduate of Iowa State, and later professor of aerospace engineering at the university, he witnessed continued advancement at the land-grant institution and in human flight.

Seversike received his bachelor's degree at Iowa State in aerospace engineering in 1958, just a few months before the National

Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was established. He continued his studies in Ames, receiving a master's degree in aerospace engineering in 1961, the same year President John F. Kennedy announced an American would land on the moon before the end of the decade.

Seversike wasn't just sitting in the front row of the changes around him, he was a participant. With his doctorate in hand in 1964, Seversike had job offers from Aerospace Corporation, Douglas Aircraft Company and General Dynamics. But he had his eye on another option – teaching at Iowa State.

He got the chance when his department chair sent a letter asking him to teach Iowa State's orbital mechanics courses. "They

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#### Inside This Issue

Scholarship support from Leverne Seversike and others is rocketing Rachel Schmerbach toward her dream: working in the aerospace industry. One of a handful of women in a male-dominated field, Schmerbach will return to Boeing this summer for a second internship.

# Encouraging the Stars

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were going to pay me more than I was going to get at Iowa State,” said Seversike of the private corporations. “But I was very interested in teaching. I really enjoyed the interaction with the students.”

Set up in his new office in Building J, which was part of a group of structures north of Black Engineering initially constructed to house the influx of WWII veterans going to school after returning home from service, Seversike began a teaching career that lasted more than 30 years.

He spent the school year advising students, expanding course curriculum, helping groups such as the Iowa State Space Society and teaching. During several summers, he worked on projects such as NASA’s Apollo program in Houston, where he helped develop the heat shield for the astronauts’ Apollo Command Module. The heat shield protected the module from burning up from the 4,000-degree heat generated while re-entering the Earth’s atmosphere. He also worked for NASA in Huntsville, Alabama, on an unmanned mission to Jupiter. “It was an interesting time,” Seversike noted.

He brought his industry-knowledge back to the classroom, where he taught and inspired students such as Clayton Anderson (’83, aerospace engineering) who became an astronaut and spent time aboard the International Space Station. When Seversike reflects on his career, which included awards for teaching and advising, he says, “What I’m happiest about is not anything that I did, but what my students have gone on to do.”

Now retired, he continues to inspire and support students through the Leverne K. and Carole A. Seversike Educational Advancement Fund and the Leverne K. Seversike Scholarship. He established the advancement fund through a cash gift in memory of his late wife, Carole, and it supports the College of Engineering’s outreach efforts to K-12 students. Seversike also wanted to help Iowa State students majoring in aerospace engineering and used an insurance policy to help him do so. He donated a policy he no longer needed to the Iowa State University Foundation, which, in turn, surrendered it for its cash value to establish the scholarship fund.

For Seversike, whose career paralleled the progression of space flight and of Iowa State University, helping students reach for the stars is a natural fit. “People are able to do things themselves if they really want to, but sometimes they just need a little encouragement.”



*What I’m happiest about is not anything that I did, but what my students have gone on to do.*

**– LEVERNE SEVERSIKE**



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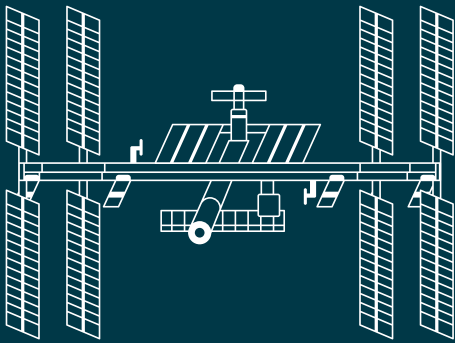
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## FUN FACTS

# Aerospace Engineering

Aerospace engineering focuses on the design, construction, testing and science of aircraft and spacecraft:

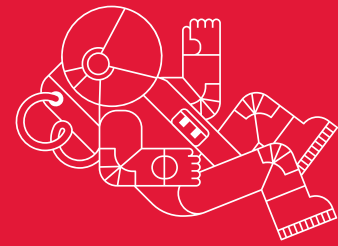
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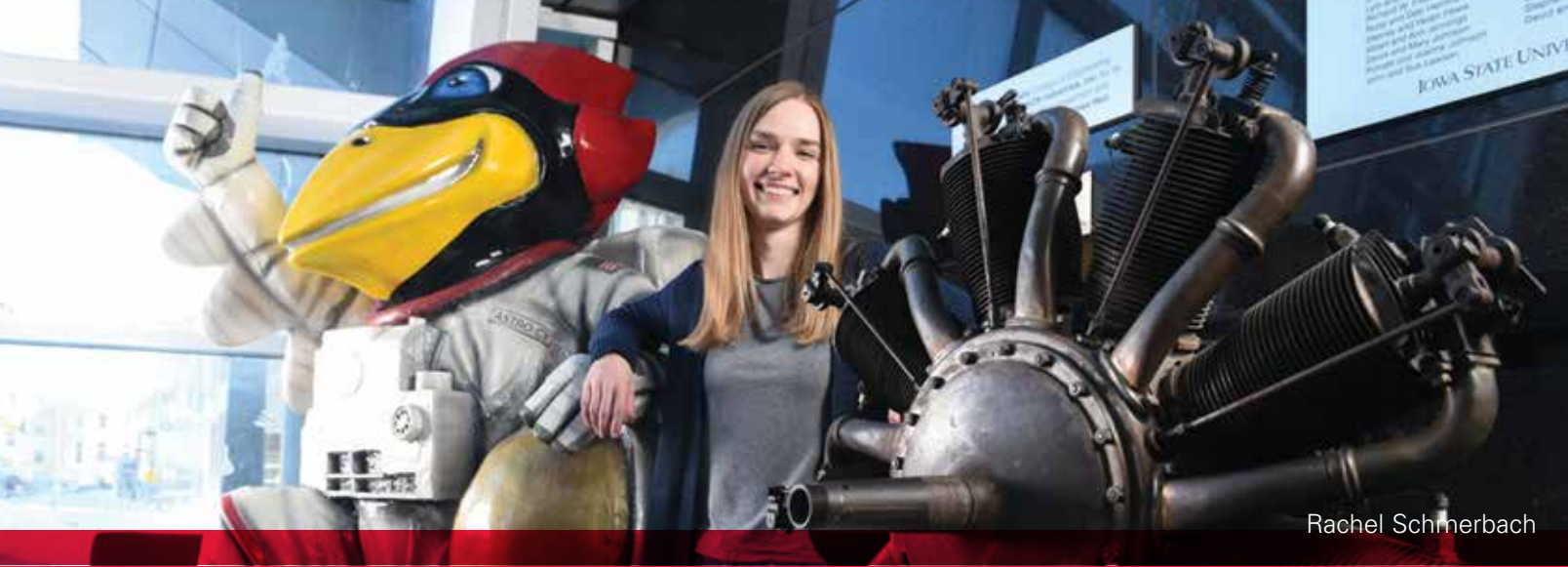
at Iowa State University.



“When I came back from space, I was interviewed by National Public Radio. They had someone call in who wanted to ask me a question. Well, it was Dr. Seversike. That was quite a tribute for him to be listening, and for me to reconnect with a professor who was instrumental in my career at NASA. I salute him, and I think it is awesome that he is giving back to Iowa State University.”

**- CLAYTON ANDERSON**

**'83 Iowa State graduate** in aerospace engineering and retired United States astronaut



Rachel Schmerbach

## Support That Takes Flight

*As a woman* seeking a degree in a male-dominated field, Rachel Schmerbach has gotten used to being one of the few women in her aerospace engineering courses. “It can be intimidating at times to be in a classroom with only a handful of other women,” the junior from Dubuque, Iowa, said. “I have used this adversity as inspiration to encourage younger female students to pursue engineering majors.”

To do so, Schmerbach is heavily involved in organizations that focus on outreach. As a Student Role Model for Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE), she visits K-12 classrooms and after-school programs to provide STEM-based activities – like extracting DNA from a banana – in hopes of piquing students’ interest in STEM majors, especially young women.

Schmerbach is also a peer mentor for a WiSE freshman learning community, in which she supports first-year female STEM majors at Iowa State, and she serves as a co-chair for WiSE University, a weeklong summer camp for high school girls who are interested in engineering.

Additionally, Schmerbach is involved in the Society of Women in Engineering, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and Iowa State’s SAE Aero

Design team, a group that designs and builds an RC aircraft for an annual competition against more than 75 universities from around the world.

This past summer, Schmerbach interned at Boeing and is looking forward to doing so again this summer. She plans to work in the aerospace industry in either structures or flight dynamics upon graduation.

Receiving support from scholarships such as the Leverne K. Seversike Scholarship have played a profound role in Schmerbach’s life, as they have served as a source of encouragement and motivation.

“I had the privilege of meeting Leverne Seversike this past fall on campus, and I truly enjoyed seeing his passion for aerospace engineering and students majoring in the field,” she said. “Having donors like Leverne who care for Iowa State helps make the university a place where students feel inspired and supported.”

### **Create a universe of opportunities for this and future generations of Cyclones.**

Include a gift to the Iowa State University Foundation in your will or long-term financial plan. Contact the office of gift planning at 800.621.8515 for assistance with your gift.



### *Simple Ways to Fuel the Future*

Discover powerful gift options that are easy to make and won’t cost you anything today. Return the enclosed reply card to request your complimentary guide *Four Simple Gifts That Deliver Big Results*.





## Raising the Bar

*Iowa Staters* have achieved unprecedented success, raising \$1.1 billion for the *Forever True, For Iowa State* campaign two years earlier than expected. The university is now aiming to build on that momentum, increasing the fundraising goal by \$400 million and extending the campaign another year to June 30, 2021.

Gifts of all sizes have made this accomplishment possible, including Leverne Seversike's gift to inspire and support Iowa State students majoring in aerospace engineering (see *front cover*). The Leverne K. Seversike Scholarship supports a key campaign priority: making an Iowa State education as affordable as it is exceptional.

To learn how you, too, can make a meaningful gift that raises the bar on an outstanding student experience and furthers the momentum of *Forever True, For Iowa State*, contact the office of gift planning.



Having donors like Leverne who care for Iowa State helps make the university a place *where students feel inspired and supported.*

– RACHEL SCHMERBACH, JUNIOR



## HOW TO REMEMBER IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

Share the following language with your estate planning attorney to add to your will or living trust.

*I give, devise and bequeath to the Iowa State University Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation existing under the laws of the State of Iowa and located at Ames, Iowa, \_\_\_\_\_ (percent of my estate, dollars, property, securities, etc.) to be used for \_\_\_\_\_ (however you wish for your gift to be used) at Iowa State University.*

## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

The Iowa State Foundation is acknowledged by Iowa State University as the preferred channel for administering trust and estate gifts that benefit the University. This is accomplished by using the name Iowa State University Foundation in your legal documents. Please contact the foundation for additional information.

2505 University Boulevard  
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# Propel Students Toward Their Dreams

## CONSIDER A GIFT OF LIFE INSURANCE

*The life insurance policy you own* may have less value to you as you age. Why not use it to benefit Iowa State students and secure important tax savings for you and your family?

Here are three ways to donate life insurance to the Iowa State University Foundation:

**1. Let it go.** A gift of a paid-up life insurance policy makes an excellent charitable gift. The foundation will either elect to cash in the policy to support the university's most immediate needs or keep the policy for use at a later date. At the time of the gift, you qualify for a tax deduction amounting to the cost of replacing the policy with a single premium life insurance policy at your current age (but not more than you've invested in the policy).

**2. Start anew.** You can take out a new policy with the Iowa State University Foundation as owner and beneficiary. Your continuing premium payments, usually given directly to the foundation, may be income tax deductible.

**3. Keep it up.** You can also donate an existing policy and continue paying the premiums. If you should lapse on the payments, the foundation can:

- + receive the surrender value of the policy,
- + buy a smaller, yet paid-up policy with the cash value or
- + continue the premium payments for the life of the insured.

### Put Your Policy to Work for Iowa State Students

Please call the office of gift planning today at 800.621.8515 to learn how a gift of life insurance can ignite students' futures.

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*Quick fact: Gifts of life insurance are usually deductible up to 60 percent of your adjusted gross income. If necessary, you may carry over any unused deduction for an additional five years.*