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Profile of Mary Ann Elliot

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Mary Ann Elliot
Chairman of the Board
Arrowhead Global Solutions, Inc.

Mary Ann Elliott, entered semi-retirement October 2007 as Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Arrowhead Global Solutions, Inc., following the sale of the company to CapRock Holdings a private firm headquartered in Houston, TX in May 2007. Ms. Elliott is a recognized expert in mobile satellite services and international private satellite networks. Arrowhead was founded January 1991, as a Native American, Woman-Owned, Small Business. Arrowhead provides end to end telecommunication solutions, information technology, and professional support services to the federal government with "On Target Quality Solutions." Mary Ann is a frequent lecturer and author on the subject of commercial satellite services. Ever the entrepreneur, since 2003, she has been instrumental in the founding of three new companies where she is either Chairman of the Board or on the Executive Board of Directors. Each of the three new firms is growing successfully with revenues ranging from \$4 to \$24 million in 2008.

Arrowhead experienced dramatic growth under Mary Ann's leadership. Founded in 1991 in the basement of her townhouse, a staff of one, and first year revenues of \$64 thousand the company grew to \$11M in its first decade. Following the events of September 11, 2001 the company's revenues have grown from \$15M in 2001 to \$100M in 2005. Arrowhead is a trusted contractor for the US Military, Intelligence Community and the Department of Homeland Security. The firm won 3 contracts valued at over \$1 Billion with 10 year periods of performance. Arrowhead's headquarters are in Northern Virginia with field offices in 13 states and two international locations.

Ms. Elliott worked across the gamut of the wireless communications revolution. She made her entry into the field working as the first female with Motorola in the traditional wireless terrestrial market and then moved into the new technology field of navigation and communication by satellite. Prior to founding Arrowhead, she held management positions with COMSAT International, Contel's American Satellite Division, Talon Technology and Navidyne.

Ms. Elliott is active in numerous professional organizations including the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Associations (AFCEA), Women in Technology and Society of Satellite Professionals. She was given the Life Time Achievement Award by Women in Aerospace in 1995, named among the forty most influential people in global defense, aerospace and national security by Defense Daily, one of only two women so honored. Ms. Elliott was honored by the Virginia Foundation for Women in History in March 2003. She was also nominated for Satellite Executive of the Year in 2003, the first female nominee in

this awards 18 year history. Ms. Elliott was inducted into the Society of Satellite Professionals (SSPI) "Satellite Hall of Fame" in 2007 for her work in creating demand and acceptance by the US Military for the use of commercial satellite capabilities. She is only the second female to ever be so honored by SSPI. In 2009 she received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke for her life and professional accomplishments, and ongoing support to the university and for students in financial need.

Mary Ann's heritage includes the Native American Tuscarora and Lumbee Indian tribes of Robeson County, North Carolina. She has three children and four grandchildren and currently resides outside of Washington, DC in the Northern Virginia area. Mary Ann is also known for her generosity in assisting those less fortunate. When her children were growing up the home was known as the local spot where children and pets would be taken in and cared for. In 2004, she sponsored two African refugees, assisting them in settling in this great nation with housing and jobs. Ms. Elliott established the Morningstar Foundation in 2008 to support educational initiatives, children's charities, and medical research.

1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

I owe my entrance somewhat to what was then a "men's only business lunch group." During a regular monthly lunch in 1979, several members were discussing the problems of hiring good sales staff when a man that I supported spoke up and started telling the others about a fantastic female Motorola had hired as the very first women in commercial sales. Later, at a networking event, I met a CEO who was at that lunch meeting. He was looking, literally, for a sales man, but asked me to come in for a discussion. Navidyne was a firm specializing in shipboard terminals for the then infant maritime satellite communications market. I joined the firm, with no experience in satellite or maritime communications, but my lack of knowledge was outweighed by my commitment to learn and desperate need to earn a living for my children and I. From self study, walking the assembly line, pestering the engineers with non-stop questions, and working with my customer base I gradually gained expertise and became known as a knowledgeable individual who could provide answers to most questions. Representing the company and speaking at Industry Trade Conferences was a component of my sales and marketing position responsibilities. This led to my first speaking engagements and writing articles for industry magazines. Many lateral job moves, new opportunities and finally starting my own business all contributed to my success.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

I have had the wonderful opportunity to participate in an industry that was expanding in terms of market size, new market segments, and technology innovation. Through hard work and continuously monitoring and studying industry material, I managed to become an industry expert and a go-to person for accurate industry forecasts, opinions, and knowledge.

I was particularly interested in helping the US military take advantage of commercial satellite communications (see below), and have worked for the last 20+ years to improve the manner by which our Warfighters can benefit from commercial satellite services.

Along the way I have been witness to dynamic changes in the legal, regulatory, acquisition and globalization of the space industry. New ground based as well as space based technology and innovative global network concepts fueled market growth and segments.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

There are two events that stand out.

First was the regulatory success of PamAmSat. This led to the innovative technology leaps and entrepreneurial funding of new space-related projects that came about in the 1990's.

Second was the opening and later full acceptance of the US Military and Intelligence community to the use of commercial satellite service offerings. Prior to the early 90's, these entities primarily utilized government-owned designed, deployed, and operated networks with limited capabilities. The 90's brought acceptance of commercial imaging, voice, data, and video transmissions while maintaining the security requirements through government and industry furnished encryption equipment.

The loss of the monopoly hold by COMSAT in the United States and the acceptance of commercial space by the military led to a new operating paradigm. These in turn provided tremendous opportunities for small and start up businesses that could and did provide value for services received. Thus a new market segment was created.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

When I started in the industry, the women's movement had not begun. Overcoming the outright male chauvinism and prejudice against women as professionals was daunting to say the least, and challenging at best. Establishing oneself required more than just being good but being an unquestionable authority. This led to constant study to stay abreast of all aspects of the industry.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

Satellite offerings will continue to grow in various market niches. The new companies that are successful will be those that are able to reach full scale operations within a time frame that allows them to take advantage of an unfilled market segment and need. To accomplish this difficult task without expending the investment community's patience, time, and money, firms must approach new ventures based on small technology improvements and not major leaps in technology innovation. Even more efficient is the use of existing ground station hardware and software to minimize the time-to-market along with hosted payloads for market entrance. I would also recommend that companies wait until the venture has achieved a few major milestones prior to building out full constellations whenever feasible.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

Plan a course of academic study that will establish a foundation for lifelong learning in an industry that is constantly evolving. Become involved with industry organizations such as SSPI to stay current on technology and meet other industry members both men and women. Develop relationships with at least two women colleagues in your chosen industry segment. Also, seek the friendship of an experienced business person who will provide guidance and serve as a mentor. Never stop learning and perfect the skill of listening. You know what you have learned in school, business, and life experiences. It is only through truly listening to others that you can learn what they know. By combining your own and others knowledge and experiences, you have the opportunity to gain wisdom.