



News From

Maggie Brooks

Monroe County Executive

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BROOKS TAPS FORMER U.S. NAVY PILOT, OFFICER TO SERVE AS AIRPORT DIRECTOR

Commander Michael Giardino (U.S. Navy, ret.) selected for impeccable qualifications, background in aviation operations, financial management, and emergency preparedness

Monroe County Executive **Maggie Brooks** today announced her appointment of **Michael A. Giardino** to the position of Director of Aviation for Monroe County's Greater Rochester International Airport. Giardino, a retired United States Navy Commander, possesses over two decades of military experience in the fields of aviation program planning, emergency preparedness, and community relations, in addition to financial, facilities, and human resources management. Giardino's appointment follows an intensive national search process that yielded more than 100 applicants.

"With over twenty years of experience in aviation operations, financial management, and emergency preparedness, Commander Michael Giardino is both eminently qualified and tremendously prepared to serve Monroe County as Director of Aviation," said Brooks. "Commander Giardino's breadth of knowledge and expertise, accumulated over a decorated career of service in the U.S. Navy, certainly make him a tailor-made candidate to lead our airport. In light of his impeccable qualifications, I am proud to entrust Michael Giardino with the task of building upon the Greater Rochester International Airport's already strong reputation as one of the best mid-sized airports in the nation."

Prior to his retirement in 2011, Giardino served as the Executive Officer and Deputy Commander of Naval Air Station Key West, Florida, which supports operational and readiness requirements for the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, National Guard units, federal agencies, and allied forces. As the station's second-in-command, Giardino served as de-facto Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff, directing operations of the 7 annex, 6,300 acre facility which supports 39 tenants; houses 5,500 employees and family members; receives 20,000 visitors annually; controls nearly 100,000 general aviation/military flight operations per year; and operates on a \$55 million annual budget. The Air Station also has the exact same regulatory oversight (FAA, Homeland Security, OSHA) as civilian airports.

Before accepting his post to Naval Air Station Key West in 2007, Giardino served as Chief of Air Operations (Kabul) and Lead Planner (Kandahar) during two deployments over the course of three years, where he supervised all North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allied command air operations in Afghanistan. Prior to his dual deployments to Afghanistan, Giardino held a variety of high-ranking positions within the U.S. Navy leadership, including serving as a top research analyst at the Pentagon during the 9/11 terrorist attacks and accumulating 2,540 mishap-free flight hours over the course of 26 years.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to serve Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks, the Monroe County Airport Authority, and, most importantly, the citizens of our community as the next Director of Aviation for Monroe County,” said **Giardino**. *“The military provided me with the opportunity to develop 26 years of effective problem-solving experience in some of the most complex and demanding environments on earth. I hope to bring those experiences to my new role as Monroe County’s Director of Aviation and look forward to expanding upon the airport’s exceptional standing as our community’s ‘Gateway to the World’ in the days to come.”*

“I would like to thank Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks for carrying-out an exhaustive and thorough search for a highly-qualified Airport Director – a process which yielded an outstanding candidate in Commander Michael Giardino,” said **Monroe County Airport Authority Chairman James G. Vazzana**. *“The Monroe County Airport Authority Board looks forward to working in partnership with Commander Giardino to continue the record of exceptional operational success and customer satisfaction that the airport has built over the past several years.”*

“Michael Giardino is the ideal candidate to serve as Director of Aviation for Monroe County,” wrote **Admiral James G. Stavridis, U.S. Navy; Commander of United States European Command** in a letter of recommendation. *“He has trained and worked in aviation for over 26 years, he has experience in running multi-million dollar enterprises both in and out of the military, he has worked at the highest levels of government both nationally and internationally, and he works well in a multitude of environments from the taxiway to the boardroom.”*

Giardino is a graduate of Charlotte High School in Rochester, NY. He has studied at the University of Rochester and Monroe Community College, and holds a BS in Meteorology from SUNY College at Brockport. Over the course of his service with the Navy, Giardino completed two graduate programs, including Information Systems Management at the Naval Postgraduate School and an MA program from the Naval War College in National Security and Strategic Studies. Upon returning to Monroe County in 2011, Giardino was appointed Village Manager/Treasurer for the Village of Brockport, a position he holds currently. Giardino is a resident of the City of Rochester’s Charlotte neighborhood.

Giardino’s appointment is subject to confirmation by the Monroe County Legislature and will be addressed in the March committee cycle and subsequently at the April meeting of the full Legislature. Giardino will also be subject to appointment as the Executive Director of the Monroe County Airport Authority at a future meeting of the Authority Board. Giardino is slated to assume his new role within 30 days as he transitions from his current post.

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