



Frasca has delivered more than 2,200 training devices to 80 countries worldwide. *Image credit: Frasca International.*

industry in the development of cost-effective generic simulation for single and twin reciprocating engine aircraft, jet and turbo-prop fixed wing, and helicopters. In 1983 Frasca used PC technology, barely a couple years old, to transition from analog to digital simulation. A year later it developed electric control loading, which was followed the next year by its first visual system.

In 1987 motion bases were first applied to its general aviation devices. Its graphical instructor's station became an industry standard for its ease of use and instructional value.

Sixteen years ago Frasca produced its first FFS. In 2003 a Caravan FFS was approved to FAA Level B and in 2005 a KingAir FFS to Level C.

Last year Frasca delivered the first Level 6 helicopter FTD and introduced TruVision Global, a highly detailed visual system.

Frasca International's 160 employees work at a 70,000 square-foot facility with offices and manufacturing areas. The HQ is adjacent to Frasca Field – 'Charlie 16', with a 4,000-foot east/west lighted concrete runway, two grass strips, and the Frasca Air Services FBO.

You will also discover the Frasca Air Museum with Rudy's collection of vintage and classic aircraft. There is now even a Frasca Industrial Technology Park, comprised of several hundred acres along Interstate 74 and US highway 45, to encourage other entrepreneurial companies.

Among the numerous honors that have been bestowed on Chicago-born Rudy Frasca, one he especially cherishes is the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) Flight Simulation Silver Medal. He has also received the Spirit of Flight Award from the National Aviation Hall of Fame, the National Air Transportation Association's Excellence in Pilot Training award, the Illinois Governor's Export Award, the Peat Marwick High Tech Entrepreneurial Award, and the W.W. Estridge, Jr. Award from the University Aviation Association for 'a lifetime of dedicated service to aviation education'.

Rudy is also a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association's Warbirds of America Hall of Fame.

All in all, a pretty impressive first 50 years. **cat**

## Frasca Celebrates Half-Century Of Service To Aviation Training

In an industry where new entrants frequently appear and disappear quickly, and sustaining players often morph through takeover and merger, there is only one company which has kept the same family product label for 50 continuous years. **Rick Adams** reports.

**I**n 1958 the dominant simulator manufacturers were Link and Curtiss-Wright. The latter has long been out of the training arena and the Link name has hibernated on a couple occasions, though now resurrected by L-3 Communications. Only Frasca International, today managed by three generations of the Frascas, can boast an unbroken five-decade history of delivering training devices carrying the family name. To put this milestone in some perspective consider that, in 1958:

- The word 'aerospace' was first coined.
- The US Congress formally created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).
- The first successful American satellite, Explorer I, was launched into orbit.
- B707 and Lockheed Electra aircraft entered service.
- Gulfstream Aerospace was founded.

When the author attended the University of Illinois, a couple of decades after Rudy started the business in his garage, you could not help but notice the Frasca presence in the Champaign-Urbana area.

The Frasca name was on the company, an airfield, and an aviation museum, and Rudy Frasca was well known and highly regarded as a leading community patriarch. Rudy's son, John, is vice president. John's siblings – Tom, Bob and David, Mary, Peggy and Liz – are involved in marketing, management, production, finance, and other areas of the privately owned company, as are several in-laws and grandchildren. And many of the Frasca family and employees have caught Rudy's infectious love of flying and are active pilots. Love of aviation is the driving force behind Frasca International's mission to help train safer pilots by providing tools to training operators at every level -- from flying schools to universities to air carriers. The company takes pride in the more than 2,200 training devices delivered (over 90% estimated to still be in service) to about 80 countries, as well as the technological innovation they have consistently demonstrated.

Since Rudy's first mechanical computing 'gray box' device for general aviation training, the company has led the civil