Army Aviation Hall of Fame 1986 Induction

A highly respected commander and staff officer who served in his final assignment as Comptroller of the Army on the General Staff, Lieutenant General John M. Wright, Jr., was, first and foremost, a leader.

An aviator with considerable combat experience, he was the Assistant Division Commander of the 11th Air Assault Division (Test) at Ft. Benning, Georgia, during the 1964-1965 period. He provided strong leadership and guidance during the extensive testing of the division's units and equipment which resulted in the adoption of such a division by the Army.

As the ADC of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in Vietnam during 1965-1966, he personally engineered the clearing of a division base in the jungle near An Khe, retaining the area's grass in order to reduce the dust problems generated by the hundreds of helicopters to be stationed there. He dubbed the world's largest helipad, "The Golf Course."

In 1966, General Wright was appointed by the Army Chief of Staff to direct a study entitled "Aviation Requirements for the Combat Structure of the Army" - which became the blueprint for the future development of Army Aviation. During 1967-1969, he served as Commandant of The Infantry School, where he established programs to ensure that ground commanders were aware of the capabilities and limitations of air assault tactics and techniques developed in Vietnam.

In 1969 Jack Wright returned to Vietnam as Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile). His extensive experience with 11th Air Assault Division and 1st Cavalry Division enabled him to maximize the unique capabilities of the unit and to develop new air assault tactics and techniques. Not a chairbound leader, General Wright was awarded the

Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with 59 Oak Clusters. The 1st Cavalry Division and the 101st Airborne Division were each recognized as the "Outstanding Aviation Unit of the Year" by the Army Aviation Association while he served with them in Vietnam.