

Dubuque native, a UI engineering grad, is Boeing's next CEO

O. Kay Henderson July 31, 2024



A Dubuque native who led Cedar Rapids based Rockwell Collins for five years will become chief executive of Boeing next week.

Robert “Kelly” Ortberg was CEO at Rockwell Collins from 2013 to 2018. Ortberg graduated from the University of Iowa in 1982 with a degree in mechanical engineering and got a job at Texas Instruments making semiconductors. Ortberg’s Rockwell Collins career started in 1987. At one point Ortberg led a division of the company that produced electronics and communications equipment for Boeing’s 787 “Dreamliner.” It’s a different plane, Boeing’s 737 MAX, that has sparked the company current safety and financial problems.

Ortberg, who is 64, said “there is much work to be done” at Boeing and he looks forward to getting started on August 8.

Ortberg led Rockwell Collins through its merger with United Technologies as well as the company’s name change to Collins Aerospace and its acquisition by Raytheon. He retired from Raytheon, now known as RTX, in 2021.

Dennis Mullenberg, a native of Sioux Center, who earned an aerospace engineering degree from Iowa State University, started at Boeing in 1985 as an intern and rose to

become its CEO in 2015. He was fired in late 2019 after the Boeing 737 MAX was grounded worldwide following two overseas crashes that killed 346.

The CEO who replaced Mullenberg is now being replaced by Ortberg.