December 2022

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ngpa.org

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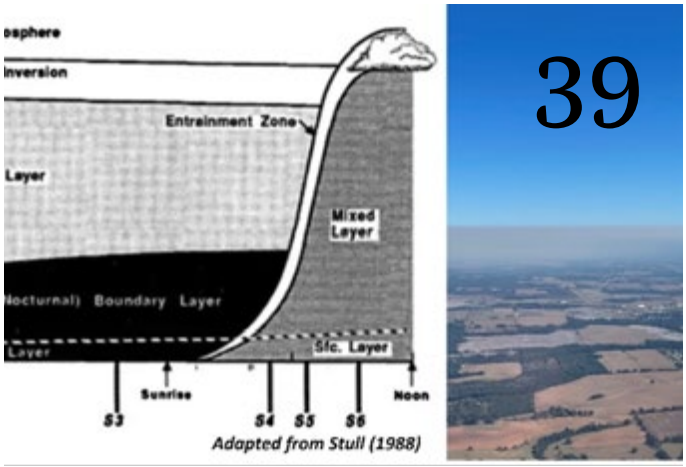
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

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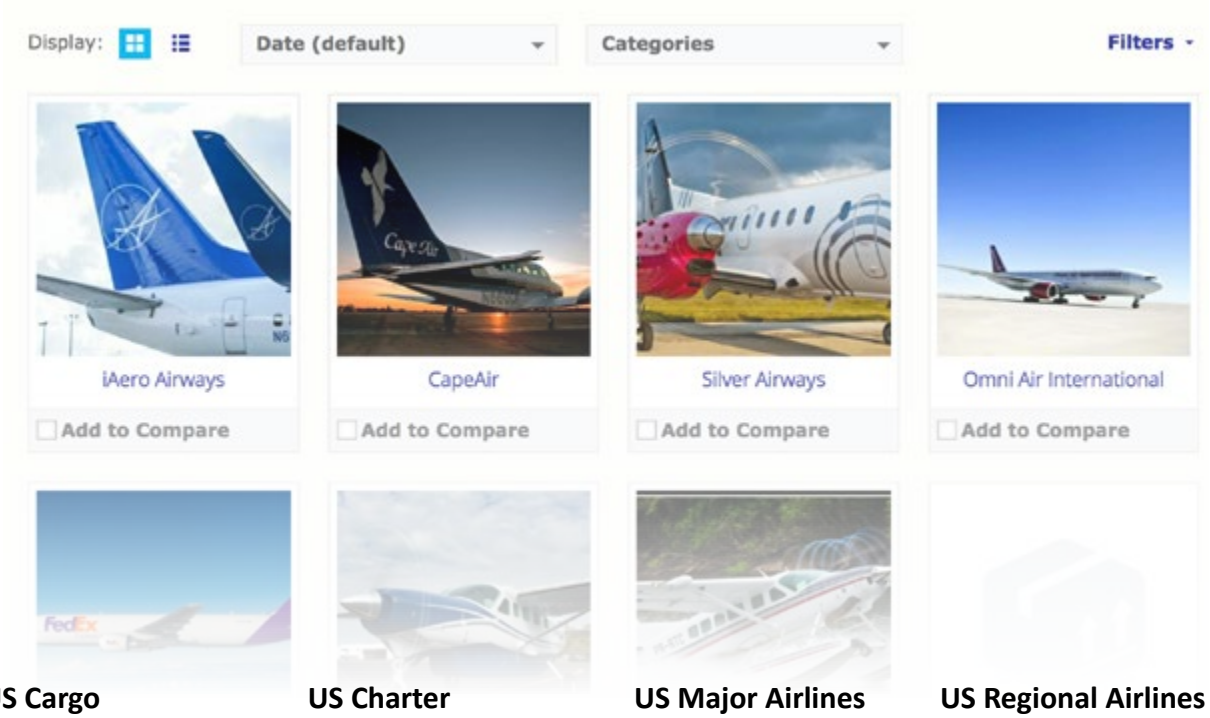




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US Cargo

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Alaska Seaplanes
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FEBRUARY 23–25 2023

Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, California

34th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference

February 23–25, 2023

WAI2023







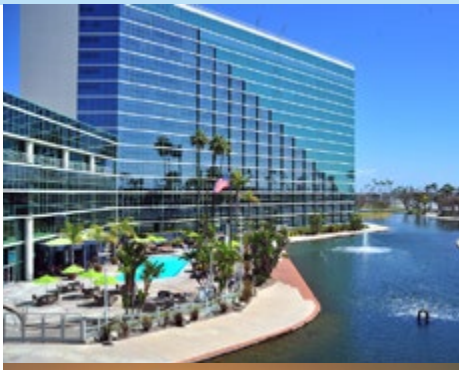
WAI is headed to Long Beach, California, and we want you to join us for WAI2023!

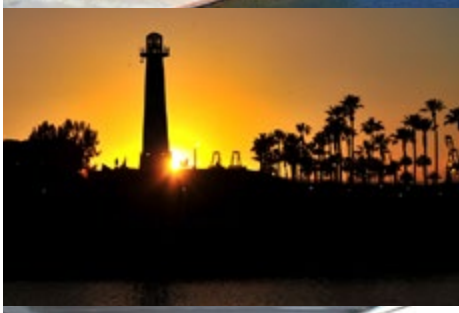
The 34th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference will be held at the Long Beach Convention Center, February 23-25, 2023, in Long Beach, California. Come experience our trademark positive energy found at our annual conference. You will network with aviation industry professionals and continue your career development at education sessions, professional development seminars, and industry briefings. Plan to attend this unique three-day gathering for more mentoring and fun!

To register to attend or exhibit visit www.WAI.org/2023-conference.

Women in Aviation INTERNATIONAL

WAI.org/2023-conference







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Dear readers,

As I promised last month, we are featuring what you missed at RTAG. More than five thousand people attended the two-day event in Fort Worth, Texas where one hundred thousand dollars in scholarships was given out to nine fortunate recipients, a couple of whom joined in via FaceTime. Please see the FEATURE story this month for highlights of this great even. But don't worry that you've missed out. There will be another next year and I encourage everyone who is even remotely interested to attend.

At the end of every year, we naturally take time to reflect on what has transpired during our latest trip around the sun and I believe we have made great strides toward establishing our new post-Covid normal. Travel is back, the airlines are posting profits and we all feel less encumbered having ditched the face masks. My reflections include great appreciation for all our faithful readers who hang in there with us and gratitude for the many new subscribers who have joined us this year. I know our eMagazine brings value to so many in so many ways so if you run across anyone who doesn't subscribe but who could benefit from our content, please point them in our direction. We continue to bring relevant news and information to our readers, month after month. And need I mention that those months seem to start and end more rapidly than ever? As a dear friend is fond of saying, "Dates on the calendar are closer than they appear."

I wish all our readers and everyone on the Aero Crew News production team a safe and joy-filled holiday season. What do you say we do this all again next year?

Fly Safe,

Craig D. Pieper

Craig D. Pieper

About the Publisher



Craig Pieper is the Publisher and Founder of Aero Crew News. Craig obtained his Bachelors of Science in Aeronautical Science, along with a minor in Aviation Weather, from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2001. Craig is also a First Officer for a major airline with a type rating in the Boeing 737 & Embraer 145 and has logged over 8,000 hours of flying time since his introductory flight on November 14th, 1992.

November 2022

Our November issue was full of good reads. You might start with Reini Thijssen's article in BAGGAGE titled Improve Communication About Sex – 5 Tips. Reading the piece is the easy part. Applying the ideas she imparts might be a little tougher for many. After that stimulation, how about an escape to Victoria Falls with Lia Ocampo who took us away with her to Zimbabwe in her LOVE FLYING travelog. As winter comes upon us, you might be thinking about investing in some home-gym equipment. Eric Ray provided some pros and cons on choices he's reviewed in his FITNESS piece. In Sergio Sovero's quest to educate us, remind us, or explain, in KNOWLEDGE BASE, he provided all of that in Diversions, and he's not talking about fun. As always, PERSPECTIVES offered food for thought in John McDermott's piece titled, Consideration for Flowing into Your Dream Job. We received a timely market update from Andy Stout in our November MONEY column. The FEATURE for November was the exciting story, BAILOUT, BAILOUT, BAILOUT. Don't miss this riveting account by Major Angelo Piscopo of the Italian Air Force. On our FEEDBACK page we shared a letter to our publisher about October's FEATURE article on the pilot shortage. As always, we invite your feedback too. Send your comments, criticisms, stories, or ideas to info@aerocrewnews.com.



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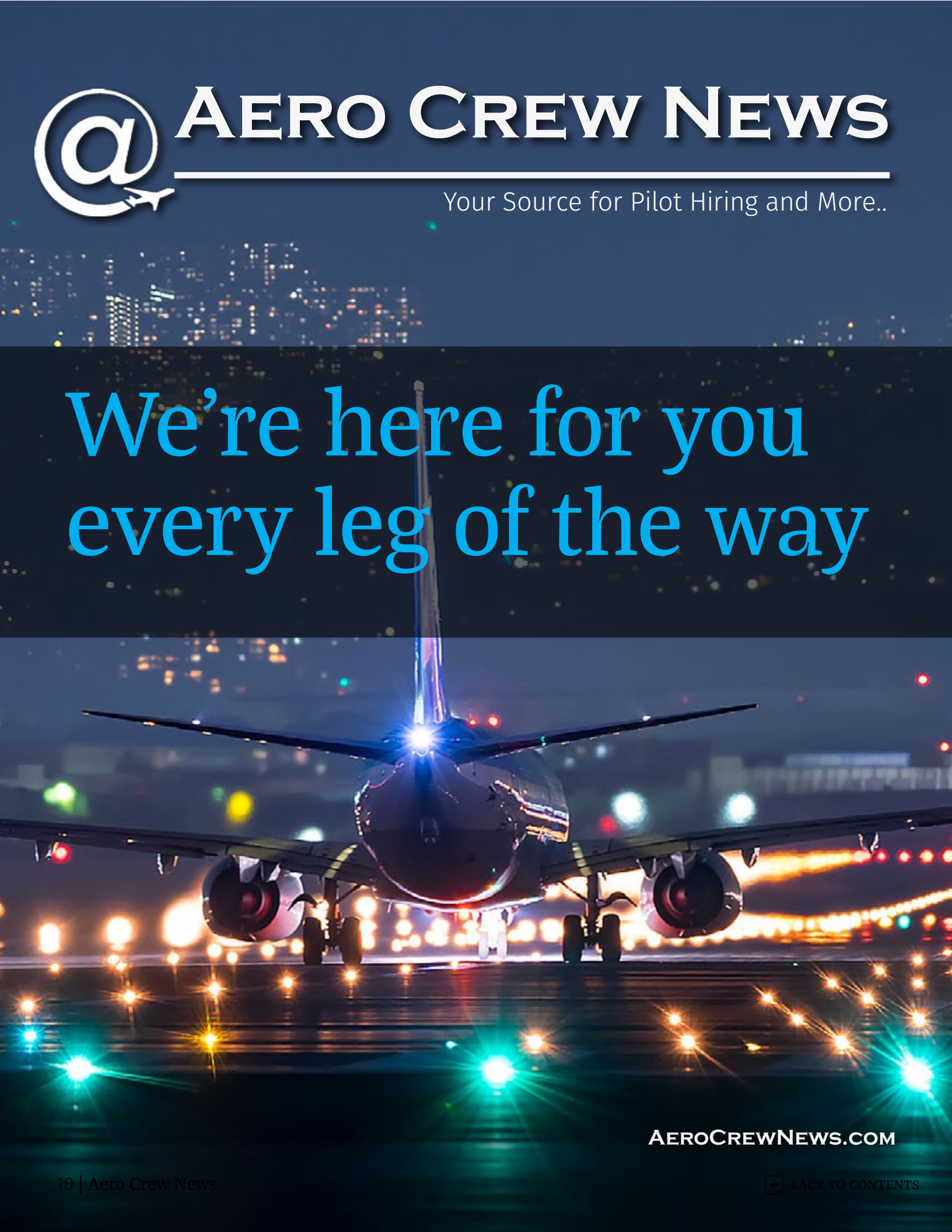
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PROFESSIONAL PILOTS OF TOMORROW

Free mentor program • Unbiased info • Connect to a growing network

Professional Pilots of Tomorrow is a mentor program comprised of volunteers and designed to assist up-and-coming pilots make informed decisions regarding which regional airline will best suit their needs.

Our aim is to provide confidential, insightful, and unbiased mentoring to pilots by more experience and seasoned professional pilots from the airlines throughout the aviation industry.

We've created an environment where aspiring pilots are well prepared to make the critical early career and lifestyle choices unique to the aviation industry.

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Visit our website, and fill out the "interested pilot" form

www.theppot.org **info@theppot.org**



United Becomes First U.S. Airline to Invest in Biofuel Refinery

NEXT's flagship facility will provide a unique strategic location and assets to distribute biofuel throughout the West Coast, could increase United's sustainable aviation fuel supply

United has invested in more sustainable aviation fuel production than any other airline in the world*

Today, United Airlines Ventures (UAV) announced a strategic investment in NEXT Renewable Fuels (NEXT), which is permitting a flagship biofuel refinery in Port Westward, Oregon, with expected production beginning in 2026. NEXT is a Houston-based company developing the biorefinery which, at full production, could produce up to 50,000 barrels per day of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), renewable diesel, and other renewable fuels. UAV could invest as much as $37.5 millioninto NEXT, as long as the company meets certain milestone targets.

"Right now, one of the biggest barriers to increasing supply and lowering costs of sustainable fuel is that we don't have the infrastructure in place to transport it efficiently, but NEXT's strategic location and assets solve that problem and provide a blueprint for future facilities that need to be built," said Michael Leskinen, President of United Airline Ventures. ***"We believe this investment will not only bolster NEXT's ambitions and create near-term solutions to expand our SAF supply, but further demonstrates our commitment toward producing SAF at the scale necessary to decarbonize the aviation industry."***

NEXT's biorefinery offers several unique benefits including access to a deep-water port, an existing industrial-grade dock, and multi-modal logistics options, which facilitates access to feedstock options and fast-growth SAF offtake markets on the west coast. NEXT has secured an agreement with BP for sourcing 100 percent of its feedstock, further de-risking supply issues smaller facilities have historically experienced. NEXT has also received a crucial air permit from the State of Oregon. Once all the necessary approvals and permits are obtained and the biorefinery is operational, it has the potential to be used as a platform to scale SAF and deploy additional future technologies.

"The clean fuels industry is taking off and our access to feedstocks, multi-modal distribution, and major industry players positions us to be a leading SAF supplier on the West Coast," said Christopher Efird, CEO and Chairperson of NEXT. ***"United's investment in NEXT strengthens our resolve to be one of the clean fuels leaders in the transportation sector."***

Today's announcement marks UAV's fifth SAF-related technology investment, and its first investment directly in a biorefinery. United has been an industry leader in advocating for alternative jet fuel for years – including investing in more SAF production than any other airline in the world and flying the world's first passenger flight using 100% SAF in one engine. United also launched the Eco-Skies Alliance program, which among its 30 corporate participants, has collectively purchased more than 7 million gallons of sustainable aviation fuel.

Launched in 2021, UAV is a first-of-its-kind sustainability-focused ventures fund that targets startups, upcoming technologies, and concepts that will complement United's goal of net zero emissions by 2050 – without relying on traditional carbon offsets such as voluntary offsets or planting trees. To date, UAV's portfolio includes SAF producers and other companies advancing technologies including carbon utilization, hydrogen-electric engines, electric regional aircraft and air taxis.



As Negotiations Continue, JetBlue Pilots Call on Company to Deliver a Contract Now

JetBlue Airways pilots, represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA), met with JetBlue management this week in effort to reach a short-term contract extension with economic improvements. The parties have two additional bargaining sessions in the next month, where the pilots are calling on management to recognize their contributions to the airline's success during one of the most turbulent times in the industry's history.

"While JetBlue management looks toward a merger, JetBlue pilots must first receive the contract they have earned," commented Capt. Chris Kenney, chair of the JetBlue unit of ALPA. ***"It is completely reasonable for JetBlue to deliver compensation improvements before the end of the year—just as JetBlue pilots delivered for JetBlue over the past several years."***





In October, the pilots proposed to management that the difficult and resource-consuming bargaining issues in a full contract negotiation be set aside for the time being. Instead, negotiations would focus on a short-term contract extension that would provide the pilots with economic improvements. This would allow the pilots to advance their careers in an industry with a rising market for pilots, while also affording JetBlue management the opportunity to devote their resources to running a quality operation and pursuing a merger with another airline, rather than the distraction of a protracted negotiation. The pilots' contract became amendable on August 1, 2022, and the refocused negotiations are limited to only key economic issues in an effort to complete a contract extension this year.

"We have every expectation that we can come to a mutually beneficial agreement with the Company at these next negotiating sessions," continued Kenney. "There should be no delay for a contract now."

Founded in 1931, ALPA is the largest airline pilot union in the world and represents more than 66,000 pilots at 40 U.S. and Canadian airlines, including the more than 4,600 pilots at JetBlue. Visit ALPA.org or follow us on Twitter @ALPAPilots.



Breeze Airways™ Debuts First-Ever Transcon Service from Westchester County Airport; Now Offers More Destinations from the Airport than Any Other Airline

New Nonstop Flights to Los Angeles International from Just $109* One Way, and to Sarasota-Bradenton from $74*

Breeze Airways, the Seriously Nice™ low-fare airline founded by aviation entrepreneur David Neeleman, is adding two new routes from Westchester County Airport (HPN) today: nonstop to both Los Angeles, CA, and Sarasota-Bradenton, FL, from just $109* and $74* one way, respectively. Just five months after its first flight from HPN, Breeze now flies to nine destinations from the airport, more than any other airline.

Nonstop Flights to:

- Charleston, SC**
- Jacksonville, FL
- Los Angeles, CA** (Daily, starting November 2, from $109* one way);
- Nashville, TN
- Norfolk, VA
- Sarasota-Bradenton, FL (3x weekly, starting November 2, from $74* one way)
- Savannah, GA
- Vero Beach, FL

BreezeThru Flights (one stop/no plane change) to:

- New Orleans, LA

"As a former resident, I know first-hand that HPN is the most convenient New York-area airport for many travelers!" said David Neeleman, Breeze Airways' Founder and CEO. ***"However, before Breeze, there was very limited commercial service – especially nonstop flights. Now Westchester and Fairfield County residents can save time and money when flying to the West Coast and beyond."***

Breeze offers a la carte and bundles options so Guests may select and customize a travel experience that meets their needs. The Nicest bundle is only available on flights operated with an Airbus A220-300 aircraft and includes a First Class-style seat in a two-by-two configuration. Seat pitch for a Standard Economy seat is 30 inches on the A220s and 31 inches on the E-195s, while seat pitch for Extra Legroom is 32 inches on the A220s and between 34 and 39 inches on the E-195s, depending on the row selected. First Class seats feature 39 inches of seat pitch, 20.5 inches of seat width, and special features, such as a footrest, for added comfort and in-seat AC power and USB/C ports.

Breeze doesn't charge change or cancellation fees up to 15 minutes prior to departure and offers other benefits such as free family seating and a la carte pricing. With seamless booking, no change or cancellation fees, up to 24-months of reusable flight credit and customized flight features delivered via a sleek and simple app, Breeze makes it easy to buy and easy to fly. Flights are now on sale at www.flybreeze.com and via the Breeze app.

***Promotional fare is only available when booking a new reservation. Supply is limited and not available on every flight/every day. Promotion must be purchased by November 30, 2022 (11:59 pm ET), for travel from January 8 through May 16, 2023. Price displayed includes taxes and government fees. Fare prices, rules, routes and schedules are subject to change without notice. Black-out dates include February 18-26 and April 1-9, 2023. Other restrictions may apply.**

**** Route operated by Airbus A220 aircraft**



Delta increasing service from Atlanta to Chile and Argentina with daily flights

Nonstop flights from Delta's hub in Atlanta to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and to Santiago, Chile, now operate daily.

Delta Air Lines is making it easier to connect between North and South America by increasing services to two important cities. The airline has increased nonstop flights from its Atlanta hub to Ezeiza International Airport in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from five-times-weekly to daily service as of Oct. 26. Additionally, Delta's three-times-weekly service from Atlanta to Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport in Santiago, Chile, as of Oct. 29 operates daily. With this new schedule, Delta is offering more than 2,300 seats weekly between Atlanta and Santiago and more than 1,600 between Atlanta and Buenos Aires.

"The increase to daily flights from Atlanta to Argentina and Chile makes it easier for friends and family to reunite for the upcoming holiday festivities and for leisure and business travelers to discover all that these two important cities in South America have to offer," said Rodrigo Bértola, Delta Director of Sales for South America. ***"And thanks to our partnership with LATAM Airlines, our customers will have more access to award-winning customer service and more connection opportunities between the U.S. and South America. We look forward to introducing more South American travelers to the Delta Difference."***

Delta's flights to and from Argentina operate with 238-seat Boeing 767-400(ER)* aircraft, featuring Delta One, Delta Premium Select, Delta Comfort+ and Main Cabin service. To Chile, the route operates with Airbus A350-900* aircraft with capacity for 339 passengers, featuring Delta One, Delta Comfort+ and Main Cabin.

Delta passengers will enjoy a journey designed to ensure their comfort on long-haul flights between the U.S. and South America, including locally-inspired cuisine, and award-winning service from Delta´s cabin crew. Premium amenities in the Delta One and Delta Premium Select cabins include noise-canceling headphones, a plush blanket made from recycled materials and amenity kits handcrafted by Someone Somewhere with travel essentials, luxurious clean beauty products from Grown Alchemist, cozy bedding, and noise-canceling headphones, all designed to make the onboard experience more comfortable and relaxing.

CONNECTING MORE OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA THROUGH THE DELTA-LATAM PARTNERSHIP

Delta's partnership with LATAM allow passengers to access more than 300 destinations between the U.S./Canada and South America (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay). The partners are working closely to connect the Americas to the world like never before after the U.S. Department of Transportation granted final approval to their Joint Venture.

The approval enables Delta and LATAM Airlines Group, LATAM Airlines Brazil, LATAM Airlines Colombia, LATAM Airlines Peru and LATAM Airlines Paraguay to begin the work of unlocking new customer benefits – including enhanced service and expanded route offerings – that will add to the codeshare routes and reciprocal loyaltybenefits already in place. More details on the benefits of the partnership will be shared in the coming months.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICE BETWEEN ATLANTA AND BUENOS AIRES*

Origin	Destination	Departure (Local time)	Arrival (Local time)
ATL	EZE	8:50 PM	9:00 AM (next day)
EZE	ATL	9:15 PM	5:45 AM (next day)

SCHEDULE OF SERVICE BETWEEN ATLANTA AND SANTIAGO DE CHILE*

Origin	Destination	Departure (Local time)	Arrival (Local time)
ATL	SCL	8:15 PM	7:00 AM (next day)
SCL	ATL	10:30 PM	5:40 AM (next day)

***Aircraft and flight schedules subject to change.**



Frontier Airlines to Open a Crew Base at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport

340 Flight Attendant and Pilot Positions, Plus Airport Jobs, to Generate Over $78 Million Annually in Local Wages; Details on Additional Routes from DFW Unveiled

Ultra-low fare carrier Frontier Airlines (NASDAQ: ULCC) today announced it will open a new crew base at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) in May 2023. The base is expected to employ up to 120 pilots and 220 flight attendants within its first year of operation. Combined with airport positions, the airline is expected to generate more than $78 million annually in local wages with further growth anticipated in the coming years.

Frontier, which has been the fastest growing carrier at DFW since 2019, also provided a preview today of five new routes from DFW that will go on sale next week, including nonstop service to Montego Bay, Jamaica (MBJ). The other new nonstop routes include Baltimore (BWI), New York-La Guardia (LGA), Raleigh-Durham (RDU) and Orange County, Calif. (SNA). The new service, which is scheduled to begin in spring 2023, will bring the airline's total number of nonstop routes from DFW to 19, making Frontier the airport's third largest carrier based on destinations served.

"We are thrilled to partner with the outstanding leadership at DFW to bring new jobs and meaningful economic impact to the Dallas Forth Worth community," said Barry Biffle, president and CEO, Frontier Airlines. ***"Opening a crew base here demonstrates our strong commitment to continued growth and expanded service. Frontier is an ultra-low cost carrier and consumers appreciate the value offered by our 'Low Fares Done Right' approach to air travel now more than ever,"*** Biffle added.

"DFW Airport is excited to be a part of Frontier Airlines' growth here in North Texas," said DFW Airport CEO Sean Donohue. ***"We look forward to welcoming the new Frontier employees to the Dallas Fort Worth region."***

New Service from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW):

SERVICE TO:	**SERVICE START:**	**SERVICE FREQUENCY:**
New York City (LGA)	April 18, 2023	Daily
Baltimore (BWI)	May 21, 2023	4x/week
Orange County, Calif. (SNA)	May 21, 2023	Daily
Raleigh-Durham (RDU	May 22, 2023	4x/week
Montego Bay (MBJ)	May 22, 2023	3x/week

Frequency and times are subject to change. Please check https://flights.flyfrontier.com/en/flights-from-dallas for additional information.



Alaska Airlines' new holiday-themed plane is all about giving the gift of travel

This holiday season we're inviting our guests to give the gift of travel! We are donating 1 million miles to our CARE Miles program, a unique and meaningful way Mileage Plan members can support important causes.

Traveling is truly the best gift, and this year, our holiday-inspired plane embraces the reason for the season: ***giving.***

In honor of the season and our festive new aircraft, we're donating 1 million miles to our CARE Miles program! This program offers Mileage Plan™ members a unique and meaningful way to support important causes.



Scholarship winners and presenters (L-R): Landon Bosco, Epic Founder and CEO Danny Perna, Aaron Perez, New Smyrna Beach Mayor Russ Owen, and Austin White (Not pictured: Ethan Harpending and Roland Ireland)

Epic Flight Academy Announces 2022 Scholarship Winners

Epic Flight Academy celebrated its 7th Annual Aviation Scholarship Awards and Career Fair event by awarding $70,000 in scholarships to five high school students on Saturday, November 5th. Students from 13 states applied. Epic awarded three pilot scholarships and two aircraft mechanic scholarships. Sponsors and Career Fair participants included: Air Wisconsin, Ameriflight, Breeze Airways, Cessna/Textron, CommuteAir, Daytona State College, Envoy Air, FEAM Maintenance & Engineering, Fly Exclusive, Piedmont Airlines, PSA Airlines, Ravn Alaska, Republic Airways, Silver Airways, SkyWest Airlines, and United Airlines. Piedmont Airlines donated $5,000 to provide an additional pilot scholarship.

2022 Scholarship Winners

Landon Bosco

Landon Bosco is from Port Orange, Florida. He received a **$5,000 flight training scholarship**. Landon is a junior at Spruce Creek High School and has been involved with ROTC, sailing, and scuba. A pilot encouraged him to learn to sail, explaining that a plane's wing works much like a sail. So, he did learn to sail and even won a sailing regatta as part of a sailing team.

Ethan Harpending

Ethan Harpending is from Knoxville, Tennessee. He attends Christian Academy of Knoxville and will graduate in 2023. He received a **$20,000 scholarship** to attend the Aircraft Mechanic Program at Epic. Ethan shares a passion for aviation maintenance with his older brother, a project engineer at Lockheed Martin, and hopes to work with his brother someday.

Roland Ireland

Roland Ireland is from Oxford, Florida where is a junior at The Villages Charter High School. He received a **$5,000 pilot training scholarship**. Roland is a member of Science National Honor Society, the National Junior Honor Society, and many other organizations. He has done extensive volunteer work in his community.

Aaron Perez

Aaron Perez is from Cape Coral, Florida. He graduated earlier this year from North Fort Myers High School. Aaron worked this past summer at an FBO before enrolling at Epic as he was determined to become an aircraft mechanic with or without a scholarship. Aaron's letters of recommendation described his determination and commitment, which Epic can now vouch for. He received a **$20,000 scholarship**.

Austin White

Austin White is a senior at T.R. Robinson High School in Tampa, Florida. Austin received a **$20,000 flight training scholarship**. He has been involved in scouting for years, even receiving the Eagle Scout award, and has an impressive record of community service. He has served in the Tampa Mayor's Youth Corps and was elected to the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council where he currently serves as a senior leader. His letters of recommendation praise his hard work and commitment to his community.

Epic Flight Academy was established in 1999 and trains pilots and aircraft mechanics. Epic began awarding scholarships to U.S. high school students in 2016. To date, Epic has awarded more than $280,000 to 20 high school students. Epic is based in New Smyrna Beach with a satellite location in Ocala, Florida.



The American Airlines Cadet Academy Announces New Partnership With Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology

Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology is American's first collegiate partner for its Cadet Academy.
Since 1928, Spartan College has been training aviation pilots and technicians.

Cadets can earn their FAA certificates and ratings, as well as their Associate of Applied Science degree simultaneously.

Cadets graduating from Spartan qualify for a restricted Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) certificate at 1,250 flight hours.

American Airlines and Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology announce a new partnership to expand the American Airlines Cadet Academy for aspiring pilots. Spartan, based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is the Cadet Academy's first collegiate partner offering an Associate of Applied Science degree in Aviation Flight and increases its training network to five locations.

"The American Airlines Cadet Academy is designed to address all of the obstacles associated with a traditional flight training path," said Christina Flores, Managing Director of Aviation Recruiting and Programs at American Airlines. ***"We are thrilled to offer a new pathway which includes building flight time while working towards a college degree with the support of mentorship and financial aid."***

Through this new partnership with Spartan College, American Airlines cadets have an opportunity to earn their FAA certificates and ratings, as well as their Associate of Applied Science degree. The Aviation Flight program at Spartan College can be completed in as few as 17 months with reduced ATP hours, housing options, and financial aid for those who qualify. Certified Flight Instructors may also continue their education to earn a Bachelor of Science in Technology Management degree from Spartan.

"Spartan is well known for providing broad access to aspiring pilots from all backgrounds and for the high standards of our flight training," said Rob Polston, Chief Executive Officer at Spartan College. ***"We are committed to working with American Airlines to train a pipeline of new pilots to meet their needs for years to come. We are honored to partner with one of the world's leading airlines and train the next generation of pilots in their innovative Cadet Academy."***

Since its launch in 2018, nearly 700 cadets have entered the Cadet Academy, and more than 100 have already graduated with the program.

The American Airlines Cadet Academy has a unique financial partnership dedicated to supporting cadets entering the program. The goal is to eliminate the financial barriers prospective pilots face and support the growth of the pilot population while creating greater diversity among future and current pilot ranks.

Students enrolled in the Cadet Academy will be paired with an American Airlines pilot mentor to guide them through the journey. Qualifying cadets also have access to American Airlines Federal Credit Union's Cadet Loan Program for financial assistance in covering the cost of training. Upon completion of the required flight hours, American's three wholly owned regional carriers (Envoy, Piedmont, and PSA) will offer graduates an interview. If hired by one of these regional airlines, cadets are well on their way to working at American Airlines.

American Airlines Cadet Academy and Spartan College are enrolling now. For those interested in learning more about pilot training and how to get started, visit: AA Cadet Academy or American Airlines Cadet Academy at Spartan College - Spartan College.



Piedmont Airlines Offers Limited Time $100,000 Up Front Bonus for Experienced Pilots

This bonus recognizes the talent Direct Entry Captains will bring to Piedmont

In a year of unprecedented announcements, Piedmont Airlines is making another bold move: $100,000 up front to pilots who can sit in the left seat of the flight deck and $75,000 to pilots who are close to upgrading to captain. This limited opportunity – pilots must accept a conditional job offer by the end of the year – will help propel Piedmont's projected growth in 2023.

"Passengers are back, and the demand for travel is high, but our industry hasn't settled into steady state yet," said Eric Morgan, Piedmont's CEO. "Piedmont has the opportunity to grow even as many other airlines are shrinking. We are in a unique position to say to pilots 'come to Piedmont, help us expand our fleet and our routes, and here's a big check to spend while you do it.'"

The $100,000 bonus replaces the current pilot retention bonuses that expire at the end of the year. Instead of paying multiple bonuses over a five-year period, Piedmont will now pay $100,000 up front to qualified pilots.

"We've done a tremendous amount of work to get all of our resources aligned to grow," added Morgan. ***"But we have a gap in 2023-2024 between the number of airplanes we want to fly and the captains we need to fly them. We're looking for pilots who can bring their knowledge and experience to Piedmont, fly in the left seat and get us through that 24-month time period. It's a $100,000 bonus and top tier pay for a two-year commitment to Piedmont. These pilots will also be able to take advantage of our contractual flow to American."***

In June, Piedmont reached a deal with the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) to raise the starting pay for all pilots significantly above the industry standard, and for the first time, base new hire pay on experience at other airlines. The new captain pay scale ranges from $146 per hour to $213 per hour. The deal also included new work rules, enhanced bid schedules and additional hotel rooms for commuting pilots.

In October, Piedmont ratified a new contract with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) for increased wages and better work rules for aircraft maintenance technicians (AMTs) and ground mechanics. The four-year deal ensures Piedmont will have the work force needed to support a growing number of aircraft in seven maintenance locations.

"Every investment we make in our people and our partnerships moves us toward growing the safest, most reliable regional carrier in the business," added Morgan. ***"We are Piedmont proud of the work we're doing to be a great business partner to American Airlines."***

Most of Piedmont's projected expansion will come in American's Charlotte and Philadelphia hubs, and Piedmont has been tapped to take on new routes out of Chicago starting in December.

Other significant announcements to position Piedmont for growth include:

In August, Piedmont announced plans to add 15 Embraer 145 jets to its fleet. The aircraft would be transferred from Envoy Air, another American regional wholly owned carrier.

Piedmont received the first and second aircraft in October. Also in August, Piedmont offered employment relief to pilots of Express Jet Airlines under a contractual provision to identify and offer relief to pilots at distressed airlines.

Piedmont reached an agreement with the IBT for a new contract with dispatchers in July, raised wages for crew schedulers and signed a deal with aircraft parts clerks in August. Piedmont also inked a new four-year contract with flight attendants in February and has hired nearly 200 flight attendants so far in 2022.

In April, Piedmont revised its Pilot Cadet Contract to offer more flexibility to pilots building time toward the hours needed to work for a commercial airline. In May, Piedmont expanded into a new crew base to add flexibility and supportability to the network of flying it does for American. Pilots who have 950 hours of Part 121 time will qualify for the $100,000 bonus and pilots with 500 to 949 hours of qualifying time are eligible for $75,000 under the program.

Pilots who wish to take advantage of the new bonus should apply online before the end of December at AirlineApps.com or reach out to a recruiter at FlyPiedmont@aa.com for details.





COCKPIT 2 COCKPIT

First Year Flight Plan

A Military Aviator's Survival Guide as an Airline Pilot

Written by: Marc Himelhoch

The bad news is, I can't fit everything you need to know about your probation year (first year) as an airline pilot into this article. The good news is, I've written a book about it that does provide a ton of great information on the subject. The book is titled, First Year Flight Plan (FYFP) and it was released on Veterans Day 2022 (11/11/22). FYFP is the follow-on to my Amazon Best- Seller book Cockpit to Cockpit (C2C) and it picks up right where C2C left off. (Can you tell I like acronyms?)

If you followed the advice offered in C2C, you're a decent stick and a decent person who should have, or soon will have, received a conditional job offer (CJO – more acronyms!) from a major airline (assuming you have competitive credentials). You may be tempted to think that once you have the CJO at your forever airline securely in hand, you can throttle back, but have you considered what's ahead of you during the next year?

First, you have a Part 121 airline training program that involves a ton of new acronyms, an unfamiliar publications system, learning a new complex aircraft that may be the first multi-engine heavy you've ever flown (depending on your flying background), learning Part 121 airline operations procedures, passing an FAA oral-systems evaluation, and line-oriented evaluation in the simulator that could result in a pink slip in your FAA records if you don't pass it. And that's just the beginning!

There are many concepts that are unfamiliar to a military pilot who is just starting their probation year as an airline pilot. Of course, there is always the bro network (non-gender specific) but, did the bro network give you all the gouge you needed to get hired? More than likely, you had to use a few services like logbook and interview preparation tools or great books like Cockpit to Cockpit (shameless self-promotion … sorry) to get the job.

You probably had a flight plan for every military sortie you flew, and you did the necessary mission planning ahead of time to increase the chances of success for each sortie. Deviating from the flight plan was okay as real-world circumstances such as weather, mechanical issues, and enemy actions dictated; but without a valid flight plan to start from, you were almost guaranteed to fail. Think of FYFP as the flight plan for your first year (and beyond) to set yourself up for success as an airline pilot – hence the title First Year Flight Plan.

Leaving your comfort zone as a military aviator and branching into a second flying career as an airline pilot can be exciting, but also intimidating. Everything is different, including how you get paid, bidding schedules, training, commuting, crash pads, seniority, insurance, medical benefits, 401Ks, profit sharing, non-revenue travel, and much more. It doesn't have to be all that intimidating if you do a little research ahead of time to help you know what to expect. The good news is, you can relax because I've done all the heavy lifting for you. FYFP is the airline gouge you need to help you show up prepared and confident on day one of airline indoctrination training.



Let me be upfront about what the book is, and more importantly what it is not. FYFP is designed to help you complete your transition from military to airline pilot. You've already made it successfully through the hardest part of transition – getting hired. Now I want to help you complete your transition by preparing you for the great unknown of the Part 121 airline pilot world. The goal is to give you the answers to all the questions you don't yet know to ask. This book is your go-to resource to bridge the gap between receiving a job offer and starting training. I want you to learn from my experience – having completed two back-to-back airline training programs, one airline Initial Operating Experience or IOE program, a year of probation, and an off-probation check ride, plus six additional years of experience as a line pilot.

Having been an airline pilot for just over seven years now (and still loving it), I can analyze my first-year experience and compile a list of all the things I wish someone had told me before I started. I've done my best to pass that knowledge on to you. However, each airline is unique. A first-year experience as a commuter at Delta Air Lines flying the B-717 domiciled in New York City may be a very different experience from an FO living in domicile in Miami flying the B-737 during her first year at American Airlines. Therefore, I have also conducted extensive research and interviews with pilots at other major airlines to help provide perspective from a wide swath of airlines and different situations (e.g., in-domicile, commuter, guard/reserve pilot, narrow-body, wide-body, etc.).

FYFP is not a detailed guide to how things are done at your airline. I couldn't possibly cover all the finer details of each airline's bidding process, pay and benefits, contract work rules, etc. Think of it as more of a FL400 view of information that is common to all airlines. We will

occasionally descend to a lower altitude to go more in depth on certain subjects (like how to maximize your paycheck by exploiting certain contract provisions at your airline) and certain airline rules and processes.

We all worked very hard as military pilots with long hours, countless temporary duty assignments, permanent changes of station, deployments, mountains of queep (additional duties unrelated to flying), inspections, exercises … You get the point. In general, most of us were happy to do it and would gladly do it again because we were sacrificing for something greater than ourselves. We did it for our country and for our brothers and sisters in arms. However, the big thing we sacrificed was overall quality of life.

Welcome to the fabulous world of being an airline pilot. One of the themes you will see repeated throughout FYFP is this; being an airline pilot is all about quality of life, and quality of life as an airline pilot is all about seniority! You'll be making some huge quality-of-life (QOL) decisions during the first few days of your airline training which is called indoctrination, or indoc for short. During indoc, you will be choosing your "equipment" and "domicile," or what type of aircraft you will fly and where you'll be based once you're out of training. Your initial QOL will be directly tied to your initial assignment beyond training. Most airlines require a six-month seat-lock on your initial assignment. In future vacancy bids, you'll be free to bid any assignment your seniority can hold. However, choose wisely because at most airlines there is usually a two-year seat-lock on subsequent assignments. It's truly a choose-your-own-adventure book, and you're the author. FYFP gives an in-depth analysis on this and other QOL decisions based on personal experience and interviews with pilots at other major airlines.

FYFP was written to provide you with all the information you need to not only survive, but also thrive in your first year as an airline pilot! Knowledge is power, and this book will provide you with plenty of both. The book is available to order now at a substantially discounted price as a way of saying Thank You for Your Service to this great nation! Order your copy now by clicking this link: FYFP. If you're still in the airline application process (or have not started yet) and want to check out our other military-to-airline transition resources, check out our homepage at www.cockpit2cockpit.com.



About the Author

LT COL Marc Himelhoch, USAF (Ret), is a Southwest Airlines pilot with over 5,000 hours of flight time. He graduated with honors from ERAU in Daytona Beach, Florida, earning a masters degree in aeronautical science. Read More...



To Expedite or Not to Expedite

How quickly should we move through flight training?

Written By: John McDermott

Many student pilots are blessed with the opportunity to dictate the pace of their flight training without needing to worry about finances, holding a job, or school schedules. To many, an important question presents itself: should I pursue an expedited training plan to receive all my ratings quickly, or is it worth it to take it slower?

As with many things in aviation, there are multiple ways to consider this question. Ultimately, the best solution comes down to your life circumstances and what you value in your flight training.

For many, getting as many hours, certificates, and ratings as quickly as possible is paramount. Many flight schools offer expedited training programs for just this purpose; offering training in as little as a few weeks or a month or two for each license. With such a program, the student spends a substantial amount of time in the air and the classroom to gain their experience in as little time as possible. Thus, the pilot is sooner eligible for work as an instructor or a first officer. This allows the pilot to build real-world flight experience sooner and make the best case for better and better positions. Some might go from zero hours to a fully certified instructor in under a year in order to advance their careers quickly.

Some, however, believe that simply training to pass the tests isn't an effective way of creating a well-rounded pilot, instead opting for a more thorough training method that, while slower than an expedited course in terms of the calendar months dedicated to training, allows a pilot to enter the workforce with more experience and well-rounded knowledge. To accomplish this, one might spend more time in ground training sessions and walk through maneuvers in the aircraft more slowly. Thus, one can leave training with a greater breadth of knowledge and practical experience than if one moved through quickly.

Of course, there are extremes to each side. To say that prolonging training gives more experience doesn't mean that a quick training method offers none at all, but new pilots should be weary of programs that completely deprive all of it. On the other hand, many training programs needlessly prolong training and, sometimes purposefully, hold pilots back from accomplishing their certificates on a reasonable timeline. Thus, it's important to be aware of how your flight school proceeds with training and what they prioritize in training.

Both paths through training certainly have their benefits and drawbacks, and there's really no "correct" path to take. Again, which path you take may depend on circumstances outside of flight training. Whichever path you want to take, with all other variables being negligible, depend on what you value in your training and career.

Be careful of the promises that flight schools make, no matter which way you go. For example, do research to ensure that the timelines that the schools promise are genuine and possible. Meanwhile, consider whether there are any claims or signs that your training will be drawn out excessively in order to pull extra money from you. As long as you know you're going into a good situation and flight school, you'll be able to make the most of your flight training journey.



About the Author

John McDermott's passion for aviation began in a Michigan bookstore when he found a story about a chance encounter between enemy pilots during World War II. Soon, after watching countless hours of fighter jets and traffic from his home near O'Hare International Airport, he was hooked forever.. Read More...



Holiday Check-In

Confronting the temptations of the season

Written By: Eric Ray

As fall gives way to the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it's often easy to give up on your fitness plan or goals and just succumb to all the goodness that tempts us through December and into January. I'm often asked if it is okay to put a pause on one's fitness plan or forgo the diet during the holidays, because there will be a New Year's resolution (under the guise of getting a free month with no accountability). I do think there may be a better way to look at dieting, fitness planning or following through with your journey during this wonderful time of the year.

Be grateful

Have you heard the quote, “No man is an island?” How about, “No one is self-sufficient.” Put more simply, if you’re on a journey (fitness, nutrition or other), you need support to stay on track. Instead of running full speed ahead, be grateful for those around you. I mention this because we can often become consumed with what’s happening to “just me.” Being appreciative of those around you will do wonders for your mental health and your relationships. It’s important to have a solid support network on your journey, so why not take the time to share where your journey has taken you this year. A time of reflection and gratefulness will also help you refocus your plan.

Give thanks

Though you can argue that being grateful and giving thanks are the same concept, the distinction of thankfulness is being conscious of the benefits received. Giving thanks for your health, nutrition, friends, and family creates a positive emotional experience. It’s been studied that being thankful also helps to improve your health and helps you to better deal with adversity. If you’ve been on this fitness journey over any period of time, you know that sometimes you want to revert to where you were before. If you have made a positive change in your life, be thankful for how far you’ve come and where you’re going.

Eat cake

During a recent interview, I was asked if it’s okay to eat cake or to give in to “those sugar cravings” during the holidays. My answer is that yes, of course, but within limits. It’s okay to indulge a bit during this time of year. Sharing a good meal, a favorite desert or even imbibing your favorite cocktail is a good thing. Just don’t eat the whole cake or overindulge! Overdoing it could set you back, so stay focused on the long-term effects of your journey and have that glass of eggnog.

Being grateful, giving thanks and sharing your journey with those around you, will keep you honest, on track, and help to keep your mental health in check. If you can stay reasonably focused during the holiday season, you won’t need to create a New Year’s resolution, you’ll be able to simply tweak your current goals.

As always, if you have questions or ideas for future topics, please email me at Ericray4470@gmail.com and I will do my best to answer you here and include your idea in a future Fitness article.



About the Author

Eric Ray is a certified personal trainer and nutrition coach. He is the co-creator of the Hii360 Coaching Method and current president of Hii360 Coaching. Read More...



From Good Idea to Good Habit

Written By: Reini Thijssen

Do you want to set new goals for the new year? Research shows that most new year's resolutions do not make it into a steady habit. Motivation often disappears, willpower runs out, and sometimes we lack discipline. The secret lies in habit forming. An example is brushing your teeth before bed; most of us do it every day without even thinking about it. Even if you skip it once, you always pick it up again. This principle can be applied to everything; drinking enough water, exercising, eating healthy, and even thinking positively. What do you want to change?

Habits Explained in the Brain

Habits are actions one takes daily without thinking about them. The best part is that once something becomes a habit, time and energy are left to spend on other things. The ultimate goal is to create habits that can help take you one step further towards the end goal. Sometimes habits exist subconsciously; one could have unknowingly adopted them, or they arise due to past experiences. Another option is that they may come from our reptilian brain. The reptilian brain, also known as the primal brain, is the oldest part of the brain and controls our innate and automatic self-preserving behavior patterns, which is an important survival mechanism. Since this structure operates on autopilot, it sometimes causes us to do things without realizing it. However, our brain is malleable so we can influence its patterns. The brain can make new connections between brain cells on its own, which is called neuroplasticity. It turns out that new connections are already made when repeating a behavior five times.

How Long Does It Take?

There are a lot of different theories and myths about how long it takes to form a new habit. One popular myth is that developing a new habit would take 21 days. Unfortunately, according to this study from 2009 (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ejsp.674), 21 days is not enough time for the neuropathways to form the habit-friendly patterns in the brain for the new aspired behavior. The study showed that it takes an average of 66 days to form a habit. In addition, the more significant the change, the longer it takes. So, the smaller the change, the faster it goes.

Forming a new habit can be challenging. Before something can become a habit, it takes time, energy, and patience to consciously learn this behavior for this period. To that, add the fact that our brain prefers to take the path of least resistance (i.e., least amount of energy) and that as humans, we are programmed to avoid pain. Together, all this makes it harder to maintain new behaviors. However, perseverance will eventually pay off. Once the brain is used to the new behavior and new neurological pathways have been created, the new behavior is turned into a habit.

How To Start a New Habit

1. Just start. There is no better time to start than today. Start, even if it is the middle of the week, day, or month.

2. Start small and pick a habit you want to implement, for example, drinking a glass of water every morning or hitting 10.000 steps a day. Research shows that the brain adapts more easily to small changes than to bigger ones.

3. Think about how to fit the new habit into your current life to make it realistic and achievable. For example, choose a fixed time (morning, breakfast/dinner, at night) or a specific day.

4. State the intention of the new habit positively and as concretely as possible. For example, "I want to feel more fit in three weeks, I want to eat two to three cups of vegetables a day, or I will drink a glass of water with every meal."

5. Research your reasons for developing this habit. Why do you want to create this habit? What will it get you? What does it look like when you master this habit?

6. Track your progress, at least for the first two months. For example, if the goal is to increase daily exercise, keep track of how much exercise you get. Use a chart, agenda, or piece of paper where you can cross off the day. In addition, tracking provides better insight into the difficult moments. Finally, tracking your behavior creates the feeling of reward, increasing the chances of sticking with it.

7. Be kind to yourself. Do not strive for perfection but for consistency. Do not punish yourself when things go wrong and realize that you are in a challenging process. Be patient and give yourself time to learn it. Commit that if you forget the new habit one day, you will try it the next day again.

8. Repeat your behavior until it becomes more automatic. Once it becomes automatic, your new behavior has become a habit!

Final Note

Do not get discouraged if your new habit does not come naturally. The amount of time it takes to form a new habit can vary enormously from person to person. Are you looking for guidance or an accountability person who can help you along the way? Emerald Mental Health can support you along the path toward new behaviors and habits. Contact Emerald Mental Health for a free 15-minute consultation. During the consultation, we can discuss your goals and work towards achieving your new habits!

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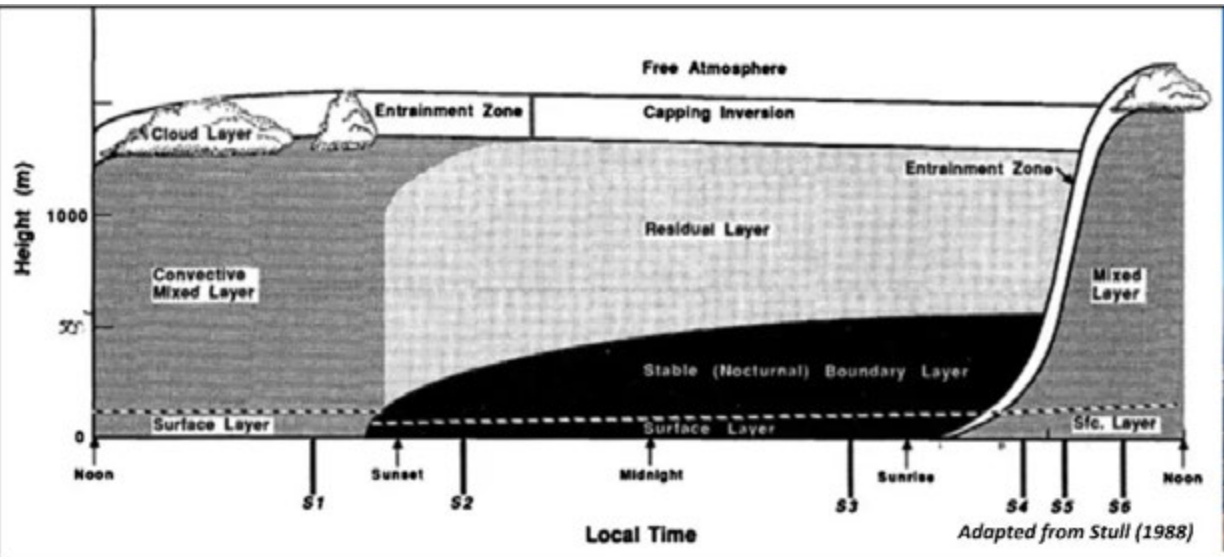
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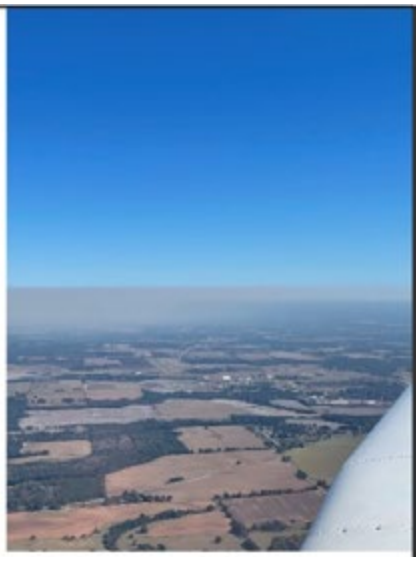
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About the Author

Reini Thijssen is a Mental Health Counselor and avid traveler. She moved to the United States from the Netherlands in 2019 to pursue a career in counseling. She is a writer for Aero Crew News and specializes in helping aerospace professionals. Read More...





Understanding the Characteristics of the Planetary Boundary Layer (PBL)

Written By: Ajay Raghavendra

Aircraft operate in the Planetary Boundary Layer (PBL) during the critical phases of flight, e.g., takeoff, climb-out, low altitude cruise flight, approach, and landing. The PBL is the lowest layer of the atmosphere. The thickness of the PBL varies from the surface up to 300ft to 7000ft AGL. The layer of air above the PBL is termed “free atmosphere.” Understanding the characteristics of the PBL can help pilots mitigate numerous meteorological hazards and other threats, such as wake turbulence.

The stability of the PBL played an important role in the crash of a Learjet 45 in Mexico City. The Learjet was following a Boeing 767 on approach into Mexico City. Loss of control ensued when the Learjet was caught in the wake turbulence and crashed. The stability of the PBL impacts the cloud bases and tops, mixed-phase precipitation (e.g., hail and freezing rain), temperature inversions, turbulence, visibility (e.g., fog), wind gusts, and shear, among others.

The PBL illustrated with this article's photo was taken 27 September 2022 near Dothan, Ala. It shows the surface, a mixed layer represented by a dense layer of dust, and the free atmosphere above.

While there are few meteorological products that provide a metric for aviators to evaluate the stability of the boundary layer, a brief study of the PBL and analyzing the thermodynamic profile (i.e., temperature and moisture) can help pilots and dispatchers make informed decisions. While the Aviation Digital Data Service (ADDS) website (www.aviationweather.gov) provides temperature and winds at different altitudes, the "Winds/Temp" products are not suitable for PBL analysis. However, graphical depictions from radiosonde observations and model-derived forecasts (e.g., Skew-T Log P diagrams) are available online. Thanks to "click-drag-select," model-derived soundings features that are available through websites such as Tropical Tidbits (www.tropicaltidbits.com), pilots can visualize the PBL characteristics and overall atmospheric stability.

While analyzing the PBL can be technical and may require a greater understanding of meteorology, Websites such as COMET MetED (www.meted.ucar.edu) provide free online courses to improve your technical knowledge. The more you know, the better pilot you are.



About the Author

Ajay Raghavendra earned his Ph.D. in Atmospheric Science from the University at Albany (SUNY), N.Y. in September 2020) He is a graduate with honors of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a B.S. in Meteorology and in Computational Mathematics (May 2016). Read More...



Airmen Certificates and Recency

Written By: Sergio Sovero

It is crucial for pilots to understand the significance and validity of their airmen certificates. These documents serve a key role in flight operations, ensuring compliance with federal regulatory requirements. While in certain countries pilot licenses expire, FAA pilot certificates do not. Rather, they are subject to currency or recency of experience requirements, which vary if the pilot is carrying passengers onboard. It is the airmen's responsibility to verify currency requirements, dependent upon the operation to be conducted.

Pilot recency requirements depend upon whether the aircraft will be operating under VFR or IFR. Flights filed under an IFR flight plan require pilots not only to hold an instrument rating, but to comply with the IFR currency requirements. In certain cases, an instrument proficiency check (IPC) may be required to regain currency if sufficient time has lapsed. The tasks to be demonstrated during an IPC are outlined in the Instrument Rating ACS. While certain task groups may be accomplished in an FAA-approved flight training device, others may not.

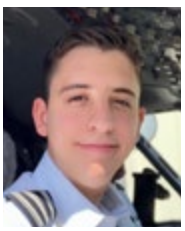
All airmen are subject to a biannual flight review unless such requirement is waived through acquiring a new rating, certification, or undergoing an FAA-approved recurrent program. Flight reviews can be conducted by any certificated flight instructor, proficiency check airman, FAA safety inspector, or authorized examiner. The FAA has established minimum requirements for flight reviews, consisting of at least one hour of flight training and one hour of ground training. It is important to consider these as simply minimum requirements.

In order to exercise the privileges of a pilot certificate, a valid medical certificate must be held. Medical certificates are issued by FAA-authorized medical examiners and are subject to the operation being conducted. Pilots able to exercise ATP privileges are required to hold first-class medical certificates, while private pilots are only required to obtain third-class medical certificates. The validity of a medical varies based on age and certificate class. When a medical certificate lapses, the privileges of the airman may be degraded to a lower medical class. The medical certificate itself does not expire.

Pilots are legally required to always carry their FAA-issued pilot certificate, medical, and a government-issued photo ID. Logbooks, however, are not required to be in your possession. If operating internationally, additional documentation may be required, such as an FCC Radiotelephone Operators Permit. Keep in mind that all pilots are subject to FAA inspections, as well as inspections from foreign aviation authorities when operating abroad. Failure to comply or provide requested documentation may result in enforcement, certificate action, or fines.

Maintaining the FAA informed with your most current permanent and mailing addresses is a federal requirement. Pilots who change their address must notify the FAA within 30 days. The fastest and most convenient method to accomplish this is through the FAA airman services official online portal (https://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/airmen_services). This portal also allows pilots to request a replacement for a lost certificate, copy of FAA records, among other services. As always, it is imperative to be truthful and accurate when completing any FAA application, whether applying for a medical certificate or a new rating. Any application submitted is considered a permanent record and may be retrieved at any time.

Pilot certificates governed under 14 CFR Part 61 have various requirements under their ruling. It is the pilot's responsibility to stay up to date with the latest requirements, verify currency prior to each flight, and ensure all documents are in your possession. Be aware that at any time you may be requested to produce documents by an FAA authority. Being proactive will save you a headache, or even worse, potential certificate action.



About the Author

Sergio Sovero is a First Officer for a US major airline, Gold Seal CFI, AGI, IGI and currently pursuing his MBA in Aviation. Read More...



Christmas (as only) in the Philippines

The traditions that make the long Filipino Christmas season so rich and anticipated

Written By: Lia Ocampo

Christmas is my favorite time of the year. I love giving gifts and receiving them. (Let's not underestimate that aspect.) In addition to Christmas gifts, the festive surroundings, the joyful Christmas songs, and my observation that people are kinder is why, in general, I love Christmas.

I've been living in the U.S. for more than ten years now. And aside from missing my family and friends, I do miss one thing in the Philippines – Christmas, or Pasko in Tagalog.

These traditions are the reasons:

1. The Christmas season kicks off on September 1. I am not kidding. Malls start to put up Christmas decorations in September. You will hear your favorite Christmas songs on the radio. Filipinos like to start celebrating early and have a countdown to big celebrations. We love anything that will allow us to celebrate special occasions with the opportunity to spend more time with our loved ones. The 100 Days before Christmas Countdown starts on September 16. It serves as a reminder that it's time to create our shopping lists and plan our Christmas parties. We observe the "ber" months in the Philippines – September to December. I love counting the "ber" months as well. It also means a Christmas bonus is coming.

2. Simbang Gabi (Tagalog), Misa De Gallo (in Spanish), or Dawn Mass is a uniquely Filipino Christmas tradition. There is a series of nine dawn masses that begin on December 14 and end at midnight on December 24. This tradition dates to the early days of Christianity when the Christmas season was also the harvest season. Filipinos went to church in the evening to hold thanksgiving novenas. Later, the night masses evolved to become dawn masses to allow the farmers to participate before going to their work. Most churches start the dawn mass at 4:00 AM. The sacrifice of waking up early in



Puto Bumbong, purple rice cake steamed in bamboo tubes is a famous delicacy sold after the Dawn Mass

the morning is a gesture of faith and gratitude for many Filipinos. Some believe their wishes will be granted if they complete the nine masses. (There's no harm in merely hoping your wishes will come true, right?) After the mass, I would anticipate eating bibingka (rice cake with salted egg), puto bumbong (purple rice cakes steamed in bamboo tubes) and drinking salabat (ginger tea). All of these (my) favorites are commonly sold in the vicinity of the churches.



Small lantern displayed in the window of my former office at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office, U.S. Embassy

3. Christmas parties are a much-awaited part of Christmas celebrations for Filipinos.

As noted earlier, we Filipinos start scheduling and planning our Christmas parties early and log them into our calendars so we don't miss anyone's party. We bring our favorite dishes or contribute money to the organizers. Christmas is the season of gift giving. It means we spend more during this time of year but in a good way. The Filipino version of exchanging gifts is called "Monito, Monita." It's like Secret Santa, usually done among friends, classmates, or officemates, and the revelations occur at the Christmas party. During my years at the U.S. Embassy, I remember the excitement of arriving to work in the morning and finding a gift on my desk from my Secret Santa. That was always fun!



Lechon, roast pig in the stick, cooked over hot coals is a popular dish in every Filipino feast

4. Noche Buena is another most-awaited Filipino Christmas tradition. The family, and sometimes relatives and friends, gather on Christmas Eve to eat the food on the table. This is the Filipino version of Thanksgiving dinner, which consists of traditional foods from family recipes. Two of my favorite Noche Buena foods are Hamon (savory and sweet ham), usually enjoyed with rice or bread, and Queso De Bola (wax-coated ball of cheese), believed to bring fortune to the family. Lechon, a roasted pig with crispy skin and tender meat, is one of the most popular dishes in every Filipino feast. Sometimes, it is served with a thick sauce but it can be enjoyed without it. My favorite part is the irresistible crispy skin. I have a sweet tooth, so if I see fruit salad and leche flan on the table, it goes on my plate. Food is an essential aspect of Filipino culture, and traditional food makes Christmas in the Philippines more fun. Filipinos love to eat. I love eating (but not cooking), so I go for anything delicious.

5. Christmas caroling is a common tradition for kids. They go house to house serenading homeowners with Christmas songs, sometimes with fabricated musical instruments. They expect a token of appreciation for the music they bring though it's not obligatory to always give money. Food or any gifts are welcome. Children do take advantage of the Christmas season to raise money to buy something they want. In the Filipino culture, there's nothing wrong with that; it's fun. Caroling is also done by adults or organizations who wish to fundraise. If you have a spare to share, why not live the spirit of Christmas? As the cliché goes, it's better to give than to receive. And speaking of Christmas carols, I miss my favorite Christmas songs I heard every day on the radio while driving to work. The songs of the local icon, Jose Mari Chan, are popular and you'll hear them starting on September 1. Two of my favorite songs are Christmas in our Hearts and Count your Blessings.



Lanterns with different colors sparkle at night.



White lantern of a modern design made of capiz shells, displayed at a Filipino store in Tampa, Florida.

6. A Parol is a unique Christmas decoration introduced by the Spaniards. It means lantern in Spanish, a representation of the biblical bright star that embodies light during times of darkness. A parol was originally star-shaped and made of bamboo with Japanese or crepe paper and coconut oil used to light it. The making of parol has evolved and now, you see different styles exquisitely constructed and displayed. During my elementary days, parol making was part of home economics. A parol-making contest is a popular fundraising activity during the Christmas season. Almost every house, street, mall, and hotel in the Philippines has a parol boasting creative designs and colorful lights that sparkle throughout the day and night. It looks festive which is the best part. Parol symbolizes Christmas in the Philippines and displays Filipino ingenuity. It is a beautiful tradition that Filipinos bring wherever they go.

The Philippines is a nation of faith and festivities, known to have the longest Christmas celebration in the world. Filipinos are fun-loving people and as a Filipino American, I am proud of these Christmas traditions.

Merry Christmas to all of you. Maligayang Pasko sa inyong lahat.



About the Author

Lia Ocampo is a passionate flight attendant and author. Her flying experiences give her the opportunity to meet amazing people and create wonderful memories. Read More...



Track One

Double-Dip Wings

Written By: Victor Soler

Everyone who has ever met me knows that I "Fly for Food." I am the quintessential foodie, always looking for a tasty local treat. As soon as I landed in El Paso, Texas, I asked the van driver, "If you were here for just one night, where would you eat?" Obviously, he mentioned some local Mexican restaurants which were tempting but then, he made a bold statement to me, "The best wings in the state are right here in El Paso." Challenge accepted Mr. van driver. "Please point me to these so-called delicious nuggets that you claim are the BEST."





He aimed me toward Track One, a historic mom-and-pop restaurant established in 1972. This restaurant is located near more than four crew hotels. With its unique ambiance owed to the fact that it is built out of three railroad cars, it offers amazing hospitality and delicious eats. Don't be in a rush if you plan to eat-in because it is very small and popular. If you are in a rush, consider placing an order to-go. The wait time for seating can average 30-45 minutes during peak hours. When I arrived, I was greeted with a smile and was seated at the small but quaint full-service bar. The bartender informed me that all the food was top notch but they are best known for their wings. Pilot. Wings. It's a natural.

I ordered the Double-Dip Wings, and boy am I happy I did. The wings were large compared with most chain wing places and they were well cooked. When I took the first bite, I fell in love with them immediately. I think that by most, they would probably be considered fried hard or extra crispy in texture. But it is the wing sauce that sets them apart from most Buffalo-style wings. It is a combination of pure honey and hot sauce that can be described as a medium-hot sweet heat.

I only ordered ten to start but then realized my error. I had no leftovers for the next day. I placed another order to go. There was no disappointment, for even reheated, they were just as good, maybe better, than the ones I ate fresh at the bar.

I had the privilege to meet one of the owners, Mrs. Lolly. On my way out, I let her know that their wings had lived up to the hype of "best wings" in El Paso. She thanked me for coming and giving them a try. Then she expressed how grateful she is to all the aircrews who have visited the restaurant. They love serving crew here, so if you find yourself in El Paso, head over to Track One. If you do, let me know what you think of their Double-Dip Wings.

Located at 1330 Robert E Lee Road, El Paso, Texas 79925

https://trackoneelpaso.com



About the Author

Victor Soler is a retired Army UH-60 helicopter pilot with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Occupational Safety and Health. Currently, Victor is a 767/757 first officer. Read More...



RTAG Nation

Serving those who have served

Written By: RTAG with Craig Pieper

Rotary to Airline Group, or RTAG, began as a campaign to address the national pilot shortage with both professional and experienced rotary-wing aviators. This movement has since evolved, now endeavoring to place veterans in the airline industry, regardless of their experience. Our airline partners recognize the value of our veterans, not only placing them behind the controls, but hiring them across the industry.

Since the beginning, RTAG has made education and mentorship a priority. RTAG's convention information sessions are moderated by industry experts, with topics ranging from financial planning, résumé prep, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits, airline recruiter briefings, spouse education. and more.

RTAG has developed several scholarships to aid transitioning veterans. If you're interested in changing the life of a veteran forever, consider joining their family of sponsors.

RTAG consults with aviation industry leaders on how to reach this massive pool of talent. The organization has developed innovative hiring and training solutions for many airlines and companies. Some of these offer significant tax breaks to its partners, as well as the satisfaction of giving back to those who've risked everything for our nation. Please contact RTAG to learn how they can customize and accelerate your veteran-hiring process while saving you vast sums of money.

The Veteran Aviation Charity

RTAG is the largest charity of its kind in the world, helping all veterans, regardless of experience, to jumpstart their post-military careers in the world of aviation. They also help their corporate partners tap into the largest community of skilled aviation professionals in the United States, giving them direct access to pilots, maintainers, technicians, dispatchers and more.



Russ Moore, VP of Flight Operations at American Airlines, Erik Sabiston, President and Co-Founder of RTAG, cutting the opening ribbon. Photo credit Hero Hut.

RTAG Fort Worth, Texas

This year, the RTAG annual convention was held in Fort Worth, Texas at the convention center which has plenty of space and room for the convention to grow! With 5,124 people in attendance, along with 121 vendors, 14 helicopter companies, and even SpaceX, the two-day event was a huge success! The ribbon cutting and opening ceremony were performed by American Airlines' Russ Moore, VP of Flight Operations, co-founder of RTAG, Erik Sabiston and the Texas Christian University Army ROTC Color Guard.

During the two-day event, well **over 150 CJO's** were delivered with **American Airlines providing 62 alone**. Still today, the founders are receiving reports of new ones being delivered as a result of RTAG's efforts.

On the Saturday night of the convention, RTAG hosted a 1980s party where over 800 people attended and **nine scholarships totaling $100,000 were awarded**. **RTAG's Board of**

Directors, all of whom are unpaid volunteers, matched each of the $5,000 scholarships from funds from RTAG's foundation which resulted in **no one receiving less than $10,000**. American Airlines partnered with RTAG for the **largest scholarship of $20,000** which went to a Navy Seal who attended via FaceTime because he was literally being deployed the following morning. There are still four aviation-maintenance scholarships yet to be awarded.



Ty Neifeh receiving his $10,000 scholarship presented by RTAG's Board of Directors. Photo credit Hero Hut.



American Airlines' Christina Flores MD of Global Talent Acquisition, presenting Aaron Griffin (via FaceTime) his $20,000 scholarship award. Photo credit Hero Hut.

Following are the 2022 scholarship winners:

Tom Streit, $5,000, presented by Envoy and $5,000 matched by RTAG.

Ryan Forto, $5,000, presented by Envoy and $5,000 matched by RTAG.

Nick Lahr, $5,000, presented by United and $5,000 matched by RTAG.

Andrea Bowers, $10,000, presented by RTAG's Board of Directors.

Daniel Borisov, $10,000, presented by RTAG's Board of Directors.

Ty Neifeh, $10,000 presented by RTAG's Board of Directors.

Andreas Lorenz, $10,000 presented by RTAG's Board of Directors.

Tad Stuart, Chris Bedzis Memorial Scholarship of $10,000, presented by RTAG's Board of Directors.

Aaron Griffin, $20,000, presented by American Airlines and RTAG's Board of Directors.



RAA booth: Paul Ochel, CFP, Megan Ramsey. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Kalitta Air booth: Holly Rhodes, Chris Hunter, Tyler Viarnes, Corey Kalitta, Brandon Shell. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Omni Air International booth: Don Bedwell, First Officer, Mike Shores, First Officer, Stefanie Cormany-Hoard, Human Resources. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Endeavor booth: Eric Wagner, Justin Thompson, Adam Kusie. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Premier booth: Miriam Volk, Tonya Jennings. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



AirWisconsin Airlines booth: Lauren DuVall, Tonya Thai, John Matuszak. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Hawaiian Airlines booth: Janice Bergan, Erick Skinner, North American Line Maintenance Manager, Josh Boswell, Ryan Bahnsen. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Air Transport International booth: Sarah Klemm, Tom Gladden. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Breeze booth: Danny Soller, Brian McKillip, Torrey Hansen, Michael Pond, Venkat Cherukuri, Charlie Alvarez, Ana Avila, Tom Bailey, Jan Coleman, John Moseley, Dina Siclovan, Jeff Henry. Photo credit Craig Pieper.

How to Apply for a Scholarship

1. **Obtain an aviation medical certificate (1st class required).**

2. **Obtain a copy of your DD 214 (discharged veterans) or ORB/ERB (current servicemembers).**
    a. **Please ensure social security numbers are removed or blacked out on all supporting documents.**

3. **Write a professional one-page résumé.**

4. **Provide an explanation of financial need.**

5. **Provide a detailed explanation of volunteer service outside of the military with at least one reference.**

6. **Submit an essay (minimum of 300 words, maximum of 500 words) with details addressing the following questions:**
    a. **How you become interested in aviation?**
    b. **What was your job while in the military?**
    c. **Why do you want to be a commercial pilot?**
    d. **How do you plan to use the scholarship to fund your flight training?**

7. **Submit your completed application with supporting documents through the following link: http://Rtag.org/scholarships**

RTAG also provides a great video recap of previous years on their YouTube channel. Check it out at [https://www.youtube.com/rtagnation.](https://www.youtube.com/rtagnation)

The next convention will be held back in Fort Worth, Texas in October 2023.



Aero Crew Solutions booth: Marcin Kolodziecjxyk, Jess Pizur, Hunter Faircloth, Scott Rehn



JS Firm booth: Corrin Wisniewski, Abbey Hutter. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Aero Crew team dressed up for 1980s Night! Hunter Faircloth, Jess Pizur, Marcin Kolodziecjxyk, Craig Pieper, Kristin Brooks, and at the top, is Scott Rehn.



Jet It booth: Kari Jones, Emily Germany, Sydney Gammill, VonRonstead Wright, Jr., Jay Gilbert. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Jetlinx booth: Kati Bryer, Ari Sarmento. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Allegiant booth: Caroline Cohen, Mye Cohen, Hannia De Alba, Dan McDonough. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



VATH Publishing booth: Andrew Ross, Jolanda Witvliet. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



ALPA booth: Kandy Bernskoetter (FedEx), John Tabet (Spirit), Taylor Hitson (Endeavor). Photo credit Craig Pieper



Alpine Air Express booth: Amanda Conner, Brittney Steier. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Envoy booth: Kasie Cox, Eva-Ana Ontiveros, Justin Angelo Mariano, Erik Patrinostro, Ali Pollard. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Prosoft Binders booth: Patricia McLelland. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Trident Home Loans booth: Aaron Boston, Mena Caballero, Spence Wartman. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Republic Airways booth: Shane Martin, JB Davis, Kelli Goode, Jaxon Trinum, Joe Gibson. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Flying Eyes Optics booth: Brady Powers, Maddi Ochoa. Photo credit Craig Pieper



BeeZee Graphics booth: Bob Weaver, Kim Weaver. Photo credit Craig Pieper



GoJet booth: Liz Dray, Myrna Rodriguez, Kate Leach, Anthony Arzillo, Calicia Battle, Ryan Crum. Photo credit Craig Pieper



L3 Flight Academy booth: Shawn Campbell, Grace Yoo, Matt Vlasak. Photo credit Craig Pieper.

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ERAU booth: Matias Rodriguez, Brandi Kunkle, Hannah Backus. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Bell Air booth: Jonathan Tack, Marla Dickey. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Jet Edge booth: Logan Wilson, Stevi Knighton, Alec Armstrong. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Avelo booth: Justin Leach, Kristin Brooks, Hal Hinton. Photo credit Craig Pieper



Mesa Airlines booth: Kali Faris, Michael Whitman, Nick Bhardwaj, Mike Boss, Diego Gonzalez, Preshious Banks. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



CommuteAir booth: Andrew “Dru” Nicholson (Senior Talent Acquisition Specialist and Madison Goodman (Talent Acquisition Specialist), then we have Janet Van Dyke (First Officer) and finally Nicholas Leonard (First Officer). Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Connect Air: Eric Sirkin, Leah Webb. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



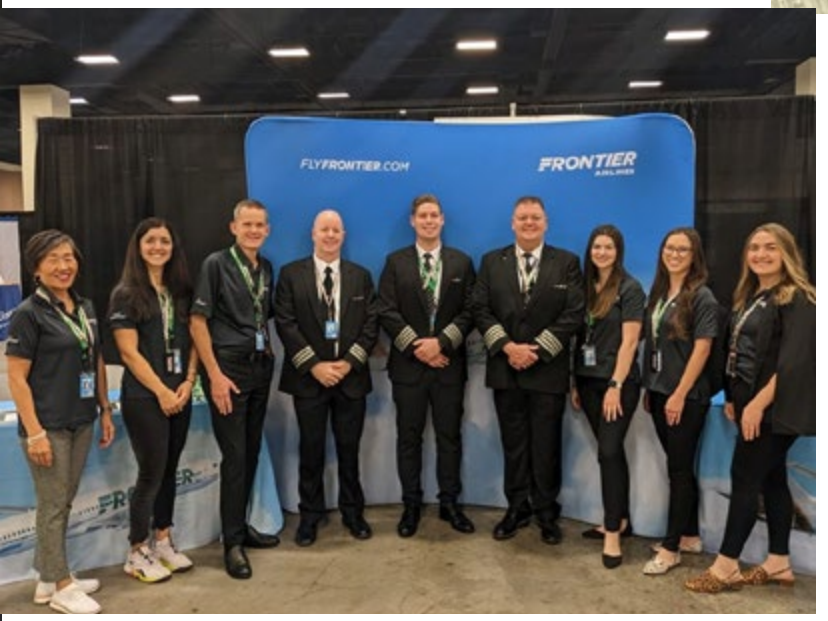
Infinity Flight booth: Gregory John, Joe McCarthy, Hillary Banas, TJ Crennan. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Southwest Airlines booth: Sean Strittmatter, Maddie Little, Mike Bautista, Patrick Williams, Dominique Byrd, Justin Peele, Robin Velasco



JSX booth: Natalie Meier, John Hardy, James Kearns. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Frontier Airlines booth: Manager of Pilot Recruitment, Chong Christensen, Caitlin Miller, Sr. Specialist – Recruitment Marketing, Steve Schuller, VP – HR, William (Bill) Murray, Frontier First Officer – DEN, Justin Grant, Base Chief Pilot – PHL, John Watkins, Frontier Captain – LAS, Kennedi Laubert, Associate Flight Ops Recruiter, Koiula Lau, Flight Ops Recruiter, Mallory Roberts, Flight Ops Recruiter

The order of the names may not reflect the order of the people pictured; however, we want to recognize all who came to the event to support RTAG and the companies they represent. Our apologies for not being able to always match faces with names.



APA booth: John Fierro, Tami McBride, Wesley Groff, Jorge Sanchez. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



FlyExclusive booth: Megan Veneman, Scott Steffensmeier, Heather Bailey, Mark Baggette, Derek Bradley, Jason Crane, Robert Simerly, John Keller. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



Amberjack booth; Brett Oldfather. Photo credit Craig Pieper.



United Airlines booth: Front Row: Move Mullens, Lynette Darenell, Liz Bogdan, Yvonne Leggon, Kaitlyn Ayrton, Celia Shields, Nixon, Justin Kanon. Top Row: Jeff Ohman, Arianna Stackhouse, Sammy Luci, Jill Eanes, Michael Morgen, Susan White, Randall Rochon, John Faragallah, Sandy Strickland, Ken “KP” Kirkpatrick



PSA booth: Suzie Mitchell, Sarah Thomas, Alex Petrikas, Lauren Konopka. Photo credit Craig Pieper.

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Aero Crew Solutions is a group of professionals committed to providing you outstanding service to solve your employment needs. We do this by hosting job fairs throughout the United States. We also provide various career services that include career consulting, application review, interview prep and résumé services.

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