



VIRGINIA SPACE GRANT CONSORTIUM

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THE SKY IS THE LIMIT! High School Students Can Learn To Fly

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Do you have dreams of one day becoming a commercial airline pilot and traveling the world? The Virginia Space Grant Consortium (VSGC), in partnership with Averett University, Aviation Adventures, Blue Ridge Community College/Blue Ridge Aviation, and the Virginia Department of Aviation, is offering flight academies at no cost for high school students statewide.

Now in its second year, the Pathways Flight Academies immerse students in learning to fly as a first step to becoming a commercial pilot. Five, twelve-day residential academies will be offered during the summer of 2020 for selected students who have shown an interest in and passion for Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) and have career aspirations to become a commercial pilot. Students admitted to this intensive program will undertake ground school and flight training that can potentially culminate in their first solo flight at the end of the academy!

Funded by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Pathways Flight Academies is a rigorous program in which students immerse themselves in learning about weather, electronic navigation, flight systems and operations, and FAA regulations. The competitive application process is open to students statewide. Qualified applicants must be U.S. citizens, Virginia residents, and 16 years old by the start of the Academy session. They must also be able to pass an FAA flight physical exam upon acceptance into the program. Thirty students will be selected.

The demand for aviation jobs is extremely high. Sixty thousand new U.S. commercial pilots will be needed in the next 15 years as well as 10,000 new U.S. air traffic controllers and 480,000 new aviation maintenance technicians worldwide by 2026. "The support for Pathways Flight Academies is an indication of the State's understanding of the importance of Virginia's aviation sector and its critical workforce needs," notes VSGC Director, Mary Sandy.

VSGC is pleased to be partnering with three premier Virginia flight training schools for this program. Averett University, Aviation Adventures, and Blue Ridge Community College/Blue Ridge Aviation have outstanding facilities for aviation education and flight training, and operate FAA-Approved part 141 flight schools.



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“Averett University could not be more satisfied in having participated in hosting a first Virginia Space Grant Consortium Flight Academy and enthusiastically looks forward to 2020,” notes Charles Harris, Executive Vice President, Averett University. “This is a full commitment of the university and the expansion of the program speaks for itself. We are proud to play a leadership role along with VSGC in preparing young aviators from the Commonwealth for dynamic careers in the growth industry of aviation.”

Students from the first year of the program provided overwhelmingly positive evaluations of the program. “My experience at Pathways Flight Academies sealed my hopes of flying! With the achievement of a first solo flight, I have renewed and doubled my motivation and excitement to pursue my dreams of becoming a pilot!” noted a student that attended a Pathways Flight Academies session in 2019.

The application deadline is January 12, 2020. Learn more about the Pathways Flight Academies and the application process at <http://vsgc.odu.edu/pathwaysflightacademies>

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