

Winter 2012/13

# RED TAIL REPORT

THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN, INC. YOUTH-PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER



## HEART OF CAROLINA CHAPTER'S YOUTH ACADEMY

With only 10 or a dozen active members, North Carolina's Heart of Carolina Chapter is turning out to be a small but potent force amid Tuskegee Airmen youth programs. Under the leadership of Chapter President LeRoy Walker and his Youth Programs Committee Chair Don Dixon, HOCC has established a "Youth Aviation Academy" that has already achieved notable regional television coverage on Raleigh-Durham/Fayetteville's WRAL-TV. To see that brief program, click on this link: [www.wral.com/wral-tv/video/12043481/#/](http://www.wral.com/wral-tv/video/12043481/#/)

For those of you who have existing youth

programs, be sure to do this, for it's an interesting lesson in the power of PR. WRAL--a major television station in the mid-Atlantic region--didn't just stumble upon HOCC's Youth Aviation Academy, they responded to persistent efforts by

President Walker to catch their attention by sending them photos, information and press releases. You can do this too, and it just might result in greatly heightened awareness, greater participation, even increased donations.

HOCC's Youth Aviation Academy is



*Ted Brooks, HOCC Historian, talks about the history of the Tuskegee Airmen*

Introduction to the basics of flight  
 Airplane modeling  
 Flying a flight simulator  
 Aviation field trips

The January class of 17 kids was led by seven HOCC members--more than half of all the chapter's active members--and was also attended by five parents interested enough to stay for the entire program rather than just wandering off to the nearest mall. Twenty-three kids and 12 parents and grandparents attended the February session on aviation careers. The format was

roundtable, during which six aviation professionals from the area made themselves available to lead discussions and answer questions. The guests included a retired airline pilot, two flight attendants, an FAA air traffic controller and a commercial pilot/certified flight instructor. Four of the pros were female and two were male, assuring that the students plainly saw that gender boundaries have largely fallen.

***Don Dixon, Youth Programs Chairperson, opens the Youth Academy by explaining its purpose to his young audience,***

built around the concept of finding cooperating organizations to provide classroom space. Chapter member Welton Jones was intimately familiar with his own neighborhood community center and approached them about housing HOCC's very first Youth Aviation Academy. Sanderford Road Community Center, in Raleigh, North Carolina, agreed to host a six-session curriculum for "Cadet Flight" students aged eight to 12. The program began in January and is running on the first Saturday of every month through June 2013. (The Youth Aviation Academy will hold future sessions with a more advanced curriculum for "First Flight" students of middle school ages.)

The six two-hour Cadet Flight classes are covering...

Introduction to the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen  
 Introduction to careers in the aviation industry



# CONTINUING THE LEGACY: A SOUTHWEST AIRLINES TRADITION

Last November, Southwest Airlines--TAI's most faithful corporate sponsor--hosted its fifth annual "Continuing the Legacy in Aviation" event. Continuing the Legacy is a highly personal and revealing two-day, hands-on tour of Southwest's Dallas, Texas training and maintenance facilities, hosted for TAI chapter youngsters between the ages of 11 and 18 as well as kids from several other successful aviation, science and technology programs. Tours of the Love Field FAA control tower and the Frontiers of Flight Museum are on the schedule as well.

On the basis of essays they submit to Southwest. The winners had each written two 250-word pieces--one on how the accomplishments of aviators past and present have formed today's aviation industry, the second an explanation of each applicant's personal fascination with aviation. Thirty students won spots in the program, which included free round-trip air transportation to Dallas Love Field and overnight accommodations for each winner and a parent or guardian. For many, this was their first opportunity to travel in an airliner, and for all it was an event they'll remember forever.

(We'll let you know the definite dates as soon as we get them.)

If your chapter has a youth program, be sure to let your students know about this competition in time for them to meet the entry deadline. (If your program's schedule parallels the school year, don't wait until classes begin in the fall; get the word out during the summer by e-mail. If you don't have a formal youth program, consider developing a way to spread information about Continuing the Legacy to middle and high schools in your area. It could be an excellent means of gaining awareness of your chapter and could even lead to the beginning of a youth program.

Here's what four TAI young people had to say about the event.

## **Darab Sullivan-Davachi, Beacon, New York:**

I first heard about Southwest Airlines' Continuing the Legacy in Aviation program two years ago, when my older brother got a place in the program, and he and my mom were flown by Southwest to Dallas. When they got back, they raved about Southwest Airlines and the five-star hotel where they stayed. That was enough to make me decide to enter last September.

Boy, was I excited! Several weeks after I sent in my essays, I got an acceptance e-mail from the Continuing the Legacy in Aviation office.

I flew with my mom, and with Dominick Peluso (one of



Invitations to participate in the all-expenses-paid affair are awarded after a writing competition, and those selected are chosen on the

This year's Continuing the Legacy in Aviation program, the sixth, will be open to applicants sometime in August, with essays due by mid-September.

my Red Tail Flying Program classmates, who'd also won a spot) and his mom to Dallas from Newark, via Houston. We



landed at Dallas Love Field, and as soon as we left the gate, Southwest's Continuing the Legacy program director Karen Price-Ward was waiting for us. We met a few of the other parents, then left for the five-minute ride across the airfield to Southwest's headquarters, where our 12-hour day was about to start. We went to one of their briefing rooms, where we got our official name tags. They had lunch for us, and I got to meet an Air Force general. They then had us go through



the flight simulator and briefed us on its operation, but what

impressed me the most was the company itself.

We walked through their training headquarters, where the hallways were filled with pictures of employees--family photos, photos of parties, pictures from all of their workers and executives who had military backgrounds, including shots of stealth bombers, C-17s, C-5s and C-130s. I saw fighter pilots' flight suits, pictures of aircraft carriers and pictures of the employees' children. I find it great that Southwest is such a family-friendly airline and how they take such good care of their employees whether they are on the ramp refueling airplanes or in an office planning the movement of hundreds of aircraft all over the country.

Next, they took us to their emergency control center, where we learned how Southwest Airlines maintains safety and stays prepared. Southwest has people ready for anything, and it can quickly put together a 737 full of specialists to fly anywhere in case something bad does happen. We went to their parts warehouse, where they work 24/7 to ensure that everything is inventoried and ready to be installed on an airplane. In the maintenance facility, I saw how they can get planes in and out of checks and servicing as quickly as possible.

One man I met, Chauncey Spencer, saw that I was wearing a Lee A. Archer Red Tail Youth Flying program shirt, and boy, did he give me a run for my money. He knew literally

everything about the Tuskegee Airmen. (His father, a famous African-American pilot, had been one of the men responsible for the founding of the original Tuskegee Experience.) I met a security guard who knew everyone who worked there by name, and she



talked to us about how she had been working at Southwest Airlines for over 10 years and was about to retire.

We had an amazing time at Southwest, participating in simulations and touring their facilities, but the best part was the company's spirit and the people I met. They weren't just anonymous people in suits, and in fact most of them wore jeans and casual shirts. The people who work there say that they





have really been treated well and are all part of the Southwest family. The attention to detail and safety precautions were amazing, and it makes me comfortable knowing that when I fly with Southwest, I'm in good hands, from pilots accustomed to flying fighters and C-5s to the people working in a dark room all day to ensure that thousands of flights go smoothly. The two-day trip, while tiring and fast-paced, is well worth it to anyone wishing to learn about the behind-the-scenes airline activities that most people hardly know exist. I loved the trip, and I hope many other young people can take advantage of this truly unique experience.

**Destinee McClellan,  
Hayward, California:**

The Southwest Airlines Continuing the Legacy camp was just an awesome experience for me. It taught me an enormous amount of information about the field of aviation, such as the function of the different parts of an airplane. For example, jet engines: They move the airplane forward with a great force that is produced by tremendous thrust, which causes the plane to fly very fast. It was honestly a blessing

for me to attend this camp, because the instructors were very welcoming and attentive, and I got to meet so many new friends, too!

The Frontiers of Flight Museum was breathtaking! It had so many cool gadgets and models, it was really a sight to see. It was my favorite part of the camp. I liked the museum because it had so many replicas and pictures of different aircraft. The museum also had mannequins that both showed and told us (in considerable detail) about the daily fashion of the flight



attendants of Southwest Airlines. I also enjoyed going into the conference room called the emergency control center, where they discuss emergency situations that might occur aboard an airplane. If there ever is an emergency, the trained employees all go to that room and come up with a plan on how to fix that particular emergency safely.

I think that every TAI young person should compete to get into the next Continuing the Legacy program, because this camp really gets you involved in aviation. It teaches you everything you need to know, the instructors are really

patient, and they answer all the questions you ask them in full detail. Another benefit of this camp is that it is very interesting; it's almost impossible to get bored. So if you want to enter the field of aviation, you should compete to take part in this camp. Don't miss out on it!

**Dominick Peluso, Suffern,  
New York:**

Last fall, I got the opportunity of a lifetime. I was chosen as a finalist in the Continuing the Legacy essay contest. It was one of the most amazing experiences. I learned so many new and interesting facts about aviation and its pioneers. I was able to bring my mother along with me to Southwest headquarters, in Dallas, and I was also able to travel with a fellow Red Tail student, Darab Sullivan, and his mother.

Once I was notified that I was a finalist, I couldn't wait until the day we would be flying to Dallas. I could barely sleep the night before, just waiting for my clock to reach three a.m. When it did, I was the first one up and quickly started packing





aviation other than being a pilot, and along with continuing the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, this program was put into place to broaden the students' minds to include other areas in aviation.

The Southwest Continuing the Legacy trip was filled with exciting tours and presentations. We were able to meet five of the original Tuskegee Airmen. We had the honor of meeting MSgt. Joseph Montgomery, Capt. Claude R. Platte, F/O Robert T. McDaniel, Sgt. Homer Hogues and Lt. Calvin J. Spann. It was amazing to actually meet, up close, people who have changed history, and to ask them questions about their experiences. One of the Tuskegee Airmen who attended the event happened to be the uncle of one of the Southwest employees who helped plan the event. F/O McDaniel also gave an inspiring speech about his years as a pilot and how he finally got to the cockpit of an

the car. When we reached the airport, I just wanted to check in, go through security and board our Southwest 737. All I could think of was getting to Dallas.

When we arrived, we were met by a wonderful woman named Karen Price-Ward, the Southwest employee who arranged the whole event. From there, we went to the Southwest training facility. We were able to meet many other Southwest employees who were extremely helpful throughout the two-day event. Each of the employees spoke and told the group about their jobs. We met Hope Stevens, who works in the IT department, and we met F/O Tyrone Ward, Capt. Larry Jackson and Capt. Lou Freeman, who are pilots for Southwest.

Throughout the rest of our trip, we met many other employees who held other

positions: Liji Thomas who is the Manager of Diversity and Inclusion; and Gordon Guillory and Robert Williams, who work in the maintenance facility. At first, I wondered why we were meeting all these employees who worked in different areas of the company. Then I realized that there are many jobs in



airliner. He said that he was amazed that he was able to get his pilot's license before he got his driver's license. He also told us about the struggles that he went through while trying to become a pilot.

I was able to learn so many things while on this trip and was able to experience so many interesting things that helped better prepare me for a career in aviation. Along with meeting the wonderful Southwest employees and the original Tuskegee Airmen, we were able to tour the maintenance facility, visit the Headquarters Emergency Command Center and eat dinner in the Frontiers of Flight Museum. The trip was amazing, and I could not be more thankful for being chosen as a finalist. Thank you, Southwest Airlines!

**Omar Samad, Richmond, California:**

I had the great privilege of traveling to Southwest Airlines headquarters thanks to my passion for aviation and love of flying. My dream career is to become an airline pilot, and there was no better way to examine the reality of that dream than to visit an airline's headquarters. I never in my life thought that I would be invited to see the inner workings of such a great airline as Southwest. What I learned from the experience will not only motivate me even more but give me a clear understanding of whether becoming an airline pilot is for me or not.

I am proud to say that I am sticking with my dream of flying. Learning about how to control an airplane from takeoff to landing in a huge full-motion simulator, then talking with real airline pilots from Southwest who have dedicated their lives to flying individuals like me and you was an experience that I will never forget. Above all, I learned that Southwest not only has a great safety record but has managed to stay profitable despite our crazy fluctuating economy and fuel prices.

The most memorable part of the entire trip was indeed the simulator, it's as close to real-life commercial flying as you can get. I believe that other TAI students should attend next year's event because it can give a broader perspective of what the outside competitive world has to offer. If you have the opportunity, take it!

**Latoya Erskine, Denver, Colorado:**

I felt honored to represent Denver, Colorado at the Fifth Continuing the Legacy in Aviation get-together. It's a phenomenal program, where students like me are able to explore the many avenues of aviation with the aid of

Southwest. One of the many aspects I enjoyed was that it was an opportunity to learn. It wasn't just us students being told what goes on inside an airplane or how flying works, but it involved us being able to ask questions and acquire answers that further expanded our curiosity. The more I learned the more I wanted to immerse myself in aviation.

We also were able to speak of our passions and what made aviation an interest in our lives, mine being that flying gives me a sense of freedom. It's beautiful up in the air, and I was able to learn more of what it takes to become a pilot, how they receive aid from air traffic control, and that there is a plethora of safety regulations. My favorite part was getting to meet four of the original Tuskegee Airmen. Anyone can read an article or textbook about them, but I got the real thing: I got to hear their stories up close and personal, and I'll cherish that forever. Overall, TAI young people should definitely compete to attend next year. They'll get to meet many of the right people, and have all these doors open to them so that if they choose, they can pursue their careers in aviation.



## A REAL SCHOOL BUS

From *The Week* Magazine: “A retired teacher from Florida has used her retirement money to



turn a bus into a mobile classroom for underprivileged students. Estella Pyfrom, 76, spent around \$900,000 decking out a bus with computers and desks, and now drives it through Palm Beach County, Florida offering local kids a place to do homework and learn about technology. Pyfrom, a daughter of migrant



farmworkers who became a licensed teacher with a master's degree, sees the bus as an opportunity to help others rise up from poverty. 'We will make a difference,' she said, 'one child at a time.'

## HOW TO ELIMINATE TEST ANXIETY

Former magazine editor Annie Murphy Paul writes a blog, “The Brilliant Report: a Monthly Newsletter Bringing You the Latest Intelligence on Learning.” ([www.anniemurphypaul.com/blog/](http://www.anniemurphypaul.com/blog/)) Here's some wisdom from her February 2013 posting that's applicable to our youth-program participants in their school life: test anxiety--the nervousness they feel when confronted by an exam--and what to do about it, according to a variety of smart psychologists.

**UNLOAD ON PAPER** When students are nervous, their capacity to think clearly is reduced because their “working memory” is overloaded: too much room in that part of their brain taken up by fears, too little left for facts and ideas. University of Chicago psychologists have found that test scores increase if students first spend 10 minutes simply writing down their frank thoughts and feelings about an upcoming test, in effect offloading their fears and freeing room for more useful cognition. They tried it on a class of Chicago ninth graders just before a final exam, and their scores improved “significantly” over the level of work they'd been doing.

**AFFIRM YOUR VALUES** “Apprehension over tests can be especially common among minority and female students,” Paul writes, “because...evaluation poses the possibility that a poor performance will confirm negative assumptions.” Meaning everybody knows girls can't do math and African-Americans aren't college material. That gives girls, blacks and Latinos a double dose of test anxiety, since they're afraid that a test will confirm the negative stereotype. So before the test, sit down and spend 10 or 15 minutes writing about something you value--music, athletic prowess, reading a book a month, whatever--and why it matters to you. In a California test, this technique was shown to shrink the test-taking gap between black and white students by 40 percent.

**RELAX!** Particularly for younger, grade-school students, breathing and muscle-relaxation exercises before tests--almost yoga-like floormat procedures--“significantly improved” a third-grade class's test performance in a recent study.



# ANOTHER AEROSPACE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH-PROGRAM GRADUATES

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is planning to launch the first higher-education program that will lead to a bachelor's degree in commercial space operations. At a time when space tourism is already here and is set to greatly expand at the hands of Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic, and when PayPal billionaire and Tesla Automobiles founder Elon Musk and his company SpaceX are heading throttle-up into the business of providing private launch platforms for the kind of work that NASA used to do, commercial space operations will inevitably become a substantial industry before long. Indeed, NASA itself already has its own commercial cargo and crew-development programs.

So it's no surprise that the world's finest aeronautical college (often called "the aerospace Harvard") is at the forefront of establishing the business as an academic specialty. Graduates of the program, slated to begin this fall at the Embry-Riddle campus in Daytona, Florida, will get a BS in

Lance Erickson, "our advisors from the commercial space industry said they couldn't wait to hire our graduates."



*Elon Musk and his Falcon 9 rocket*

Those graduates will be fully trained to fill slots in management, training, policy, safety, project planning, human factors, regulation, flight planning and operations areas. Let's ensure that there will be TAI youth-program graduates among them, by letting our young people know right now about this new opportunity.



*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University*

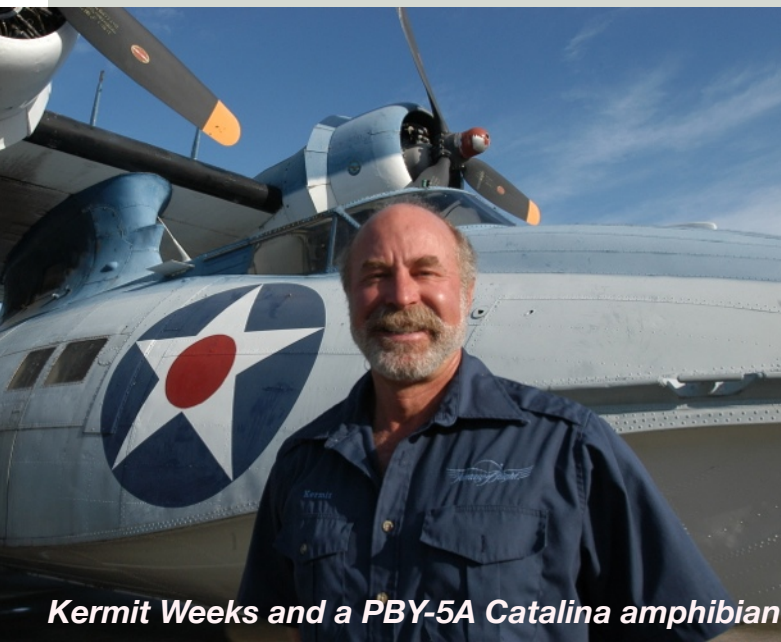
commercial space operations after studying space policy, operations, regulation and certification, space-flight safety and space-program training, management and planning. "When we were planning this degree," said program coordinator



*Virgin Galactic's SpaceShipOne*

# FANTASY OF FLIGHT TUSKEGEE AIRMEN ESSAY CONTEST

Worth a try, though it may be too late for any but the fastest-moving of our young members to participate--entry deadline is Friday, February 22, 2013--but historic-aircraft collector Kermit Weeks



*Kermit Weeks and a PBY-5A Catalina amphibian*

is sponsoring a Tuskegee Airmen essay contest for sixth through 12th graders in honor of Black History Month.

“Using the principles of LEAD (Leadership, Excellence, Advocacy, Determination) describe how the Tuskegee Airmen achieved success, or choose a goal for yourself and show how you could use the principles of LEAD to achieve that goal,” the contest rules read. Winners will get \$500, and \$300 for second-place essays, in each of two categories--sixth through eighth grade (350-word essays) and ninth through 12th grade (500-word essays).

Go to [www.fantasyofflight.com](http://www.fantasyofflight.com) and look on the opening page of the website for a link to complete contest rules and an entry blank.

Weeks is, of course, the wealthy owner of one of the largest private collections of historic aircraft in the world, virtually all of which are publicly accessible at his Fantasy of Flight museum/theme park in Polk City, in Central Florida near Lakeland. Weeks calls it “the world's largest aviation

attraction,” and he's probably right. All of his airplanes are either airworthy or are currently being restored to flight status, and many of them are flown regularly.

If you can't make it to Polk City, do a YouTube search for “Kermie Cam” for some of the most fascinating self-filmed aviation videos on the 'Net.

## AVIATOR'S CODE OF CONDUCT FOR KIDS

Some time ago, the Feds came up with “the Aviators Model Code of Conduct,” a seven-page, single-spaced Sermon on the FAA Mount that covers every aspect of a pilot's aviation life. The responsibilities of pilots, the rights of passengers and people on the ground, training and proficiency, security, environmental issues, proper use of technology, how to promote aviation, brush your teeth twice a day...

Okay, we're kidding about the last one, but the other categories are all for real, and the hundreds of suggested rules and procedures, developed by a permanent panel of CFIs, ATPs and academics, are all written with safety, good judgment, ethical behavior and professionalism in mind.

Now the creators of that Code of Conduct have condensed and simplified the sermon, creating “Teaching the Aviators Model Code of Conduct to Kids.” It's written for use in a classroom setting rather than self-study, and it's couched in language meaningful to children. Resources helpful in teaching the youth-oriented Code of Conduct are available free of charge at [www.secureav.com/teaching.html](http://www.secureav.com/teaching.html).

Interestingly, the youth Code is not directed simply at pilots but as a series of life lessons of use to all young people pursuing excellence, personal responsibility and honesty. They're worded in aviation terms, but the values of safe and successful pilots are the very same rules that young people can learn to become good, moral and successful adults.

# HISTORY-MAKING AIR FORCE ACADEMY GRADUATE DIES

Charles Vernon Bush was one of the first three African-Americans accepted by the Air Force Academy, in 1959. He distinguished himself at the Academy by becoming a squadron commander as well as a member of its championship rugby team. Bush died last November 5 at the age of 72, at his home in Lolo, Montana. Despite the honor of his acceptance by the Air Force Academy, Chuck Bush was never able to forget that the same Academy asked him and his two black classmates to not attend a formal Army/Air Force dance at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Vietnam, where he was responsible for the deployment and direction of six intelligence teams involved in a number of crucial operations including the attack on Tan Son Nhut Air Base during the 1968 Tet Offensive and the defense of besieged Marines at the Battle of Khe Sanh. He resigned his commission in 1970 and left the Air Force as a captain, convinced that he had been passed over for promotion because of his race.

and the school where the pages were trained was run by the DC public school system.



Bush, who had become fluent in Vietnamese as well as Russian, went on to become an Air Force intelligence officer in

It is rarely remembered that Chuck Bush had already made Civil Rights history five years before his Air Force Academy acceptance. In 1954, the famous Supreme Court decision in the case of Brown versus the Board of Education ended segregation in public schools. The world remembers the first black students entering Little Rock, Arkansas High School that September, under the protection of the Army National Guard, but 14-year-old Charles Vernon Bush had already broken that public-school color barrier: in July 1954, two months earlier, he became the first black Supreme Court page,

## A WEBSITE TO CHECK OUT

<http://avi.nn.k12.va.us> is an extensive look into the Aviation Academy of the Newport News, Virginia school system, at Denbigh High School. It's a four-year program for the



system's most highly motivated high school students, to prepare them for careers in engineering technology with an emphasis on aviation. The program is currently located in the former terminal of the Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport (though it may soon be moving to the Denbigh Professional Center) with regular academic classes held at Denbigh High.

With a full STEM curriculum plus classes in world geography, English and earth science, the Aviation Academy also prepares students for the FAA Private Pilot Written. It's a three-year regimen open to all "rising ninth-grade students" who have completed a math-and science-heavy course load.

Within this extensive website are curriculum and course suggestions--"challenging subject material to enhance students' reading, writing, science and math skills"-- from which many of our TAI youth programs could profit. Check it out.

## ALCO ROBINSON: YOUTH-PROGRAM SHINING STAR

Alco Robinson has taken the opportunities afforded by TAI's youth programs and run with them. A senior at Canyon Springs High School, in Moreno Valley, California, she was initially turned on to flying by a family friend, Capt. Larry Jackson of Southwest Airlines--who happens to be President of the Archer-Ragsdale Arizona Chapter and is a TAI youth-program pioneer. Jackson got Robinson to attend the ACE (Aviation Career Education) Academy at Phoenix in 2011, and she graduated as one of the top students in her class. "She is smart, she likes flying, and most of all, she has the desire to become a pilot," Jackson told a Moreno Valley newspaper last November.

Robinson was the only woman attending the ACE Academy. "Flying is a male-dominated field," she later griped.

But as Larry Jackson pointed out, "There are three times as many women pilots as there are black pilots."

Robinson went on to win a spot at the 2011 Southwest Airlines "Continuing the Legacy in Aviation" two-day event and then sealed her TAI commitment by acting as mistress of ceremonies at the Tuskegee Airmen Youth Luncheon at the August 2012 TAI national convention in Las Vegas, where she sang the Star-Spangled Banner to an audience of 800-plus (and, no, she didn't lip-synch...).

Robinson is taking flying lessons, when she can fit them in between her advanced studies, numerous extracurricular activities and a part-time job. She intends to become a lawyer,



and for now, flying is just fun. But she admits to keeping in the back of her mind the career possibilities that aviation offers.

"To be a pilot, you must have dedication, confidence, perseverance and determination," she said in that Moreno Valley newspaper interview. "It takes a different level of expertise than just driving. To be a pilot, you have to want it. You won't succeed if you quit when it gets tough."

You go, girl!