



NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Aviation Students Earn Their Wings Through Shades of Blue Training Course

FONTANA, CA – Taking their first steps toward a lucrative career in aviation, 16 A.B. Miller High School students received certificates of completion after finishing a 10-week training course designed to inspire careers as commercial airline pilots.

Shades of Blue, a free course held on Saturdays at Ontario International Airport, provides students with access to pilots, engineers, mechanics, air traffic controllers and other aerospace professionals, who guide them through the basics of aviation and pilot training. A completion ceremony was held Dec. 18 at the airport.

“Shades of Blue offers a unique opportunity for A.B. Miller students, getting to work with experienced pilots and industry professionals,” A.B. Miller Assistant Principal Tim Yelin said. “The students are making connections that will help them if they want to proceed on to commercial flight.”

Shades of Blue, with six chapters across the United States, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to mentoring and arranging internships for young people who desire to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers, and educate the future workforce in aviation and aerospace sciences.

Shades of Blue and its companion aerospace program, Barboza Space Center, which focuses on preparing students to become astronauts, are the latest additions to A.B. Miller’s career technical education (CTE) aviation pathway. The Saturday-only courses allow students to learn directly from aerospace professionals. Both courses are taught exclusively at Ontario International Airport.

Among the aerospace professionals who mentor students is Shades of Blue California Chapter President Tony Marshall, a highly-decorated former U.S. Air Force fighter pilot and retired United Airlines commercial pilot.

A.B. Miller’s aviation pathway, now in its third year, includes a pilot training class, an airline mechanics class, and a flight simulator lab with five large simulators, two of which are motion simulators and 14 small simulators. At the end of the two-year pathway, students will take the Federal Aviation Administration’s Private Pilot Certificate written exam.

A.B. Miller students who received certificates of completion were senior Eduardo Gonzalez; juniors Nathan Aguilar, Juan Bustos Romero and Phillip Garcia; sophomores Christian Avila, Henry Castillo, Frank Gutierrez, Ryan Palacio and Arturo Garcia; and freshmen Camila Alvarez, Daniela Gonzalez, Carlos Ruedas, Erick Sanchez, Joshua Vazquez, Luis Viramontes and Cruz Valenzuela.

Access to the Shades of Blue program is provided by a California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Grant, which is shared by Fontana Unified and Chaffey Joint Union High School District, in conjunction with Ontario International Airport.

PHOTO CAPTION:

FUSD_ABM_AVIATION: Sixteen A.B. Miller High School students received certificates of completion after finishing Shades of Blue, a 10-week training course designed to inspire careers as commercial airline pilots. The Saturday-only course was held at Ontario International Airport, where students received guidance from industry professionals, including pilots, engineers and mechanics.

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