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East Haven, Connecticut Debuts Nation's First Middle School-Focused Aviation Career Exploration Program

East Haven Public Schools, Avelo Airlines and Boy Scouts of America partner to inspire a new generation of aerospace professionals

Inaugural five-month program took flight today with "Exploring Aviation Open House" for nearly 100 middle school students at Tweed-New Haven Airport

EAST HAVEN, Conn.; Dec. 13, 2022 – The Town of East Haven announced today a three-way partnership between East Haven Public Schools, Avelo Airlines and Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to inspire a new generation of aerospace professionals. The co-ed Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Program is the first middle school-focused curriculum of its kind in the country.

East Haven Public Schools and Avelo Airlines are collaborating with the BSA's Connecticut Yankee Council to provide essential curriculum development and program management. The inaugural five-month program debuted today with a two-hour "Exploring Aviation Open House" at Tweed-New Haven Airport (HVN). Following today's open house, up to 50 students from East Haven's Joseph Melillo Middle School (JMMS) and East Haven Academy will be accepted into the ACE Program.

East Haven Mayor Joseph A. Carfora said, "We welcome this business-educational partnership to our school system. It is important that we provide our students with real-world opportunities to learn and to grow. Avelo's aviation program gives our students the opportunity to gather real-life skills. The aviation industry requires aptitude in many areas: communication, analytical thinking, self-confidence, teamwork, time management and problem solving. So, not only will our students gain exposure to an exciting industry, but they will also be learning skills that are transferable to any vocation."

East Haven Public Schools Superintendent Erica Forti said, “In our district, we place value on relationships—relationships with our students, our families, our community partners, and our local businesses. That’s why we’re so grateful to Avelo, Avports and BSA, because what’s happening here today exemplifies the power in these partnerships and how together, we are creating the programming opportunities that will afford our students exposure to the many educational and career pathways available to them right here at home.”

The ACE curriculum will include a combination of after school classroom instruction, in-person and remote guest speakers, interactive learning experiences and local and out-of-state fieldtrips that include:

- Traveling to the Avelo Inflight Training Center in Orlando, FL where students will have the chance to fly multi-million-dollar state-of-the-art flight simulators.
- Taking a discovery flight at the controls of a single engine aircraft.
- Flying on Avelo Airlines Next-Generation Boeing 737 jetliners to Avelo destinations and bases for a behind the scenes observation of flight and ground operations.
- Touring local Connecticut aerospace manufacturing facilities, including the Sikorsky facility in Stratford, CT.
- Visiting Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) facilities.
- Meeting aerospace professionals and leaders, including pilots, astronauts, flight attendants, maintenance technicians, airport managers and representatives, as well as officials from government agencies, including the FAA, National Transportation Safety Bureau (NTSB), Department of Transportation (DOT) and Transportation Safety Administration (TSA).

Avelo Airlines Chairman and CEO Andrew Levy said, “The future has never been brighter for young people dreaming of a career in aviation. Airlines like ours will need an increasingly large, talented and diverse field of candidates to draw from in the years ahead. We are proud to partner with Mayor Carfora, East Haven Public Schools and BSA to develop this first-of-its-kind program. I’m confident this unique business-education partnership will create life-changing pathways for these students to achieve their aviation career dreams — many of whom I look forward to calling fellow Avelo Crewmembers in the future.”

To inspire young people to consider aerospace careers earlier in their education journey than conventional high school career orientation programs, students will be selected from the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Middle school-aged children are still young enough to adjust their academic and extracurricular choices to prepare them for an aerospace career.

The initial ACE class will conclude in May 2023 at the close of the JMMS and East Haven Academy spring term. At that time, students who have successfully completed the program will be invited to participate in a badging ceremony. If the East Haven inaugural program is successful, Avelo plans to replicate the ACE curriculum in other communities across the country it serves.

Connecticut Yankee Council BSA Director of Exploring Paul Lukas said, “The Connecticut Yankee Council is incredibly excited to be partnering with Avelo Airlines and East Haven Public Schools to make possible an Exploring Aviation program for the students of East Haven. Together we are opening new doors and opportunities for these students. We are expanding their awareness of aerospace industries, sciences, careers and technologies while enhancing their personal development. It’s an exciting hands-on learning opportunity that helps prepare these students for success in life.”

Tweed Airport Exploring Aviation Open House

Nearly 100 students from JMMS and East Haven Academy participated in today’s Exploring Aviation Open House at Tweed Airport. The middle school students had the opportunity to:

- Participate in a guided “behind the scenes” tour of Tweed Airport.
- Board an Avelo Airlines Next-Generation Boeing 737 jetliner.
- Meet with aviation professionals from Tweed, Avports, Avelo, the FAA and TSA.
- Get an up-close look at airport ground support and emergency response equipment.

According to East Haven Public Schools, more than 50% of their middle school students are believed to have never flown on a commercial airline flight. The ACE Program is intended to expose students and their parents to the broad range of aerospace career opportunities.

Aerospace is one of the fastest-growing U.S. job sectors, employing more than 1 million people. The aerospace sector is projected to add 75,000 new jobs by 2030 and there are approximately 50 distinct job categories for every pilot role. The aerospace sector expects to see an especially significant surge in space exploration-related jobs as the private space sector grows.

Since taking flight at HVN in November 2021, Avelo has flown more than 5,500 flights carrying nearly 700,000 Customers. Avelo currently operates six 737s at its HVN base which serve 14 nonstop destinations across seven states. Over the past 13 months, Avelo has invested more than \$100 million in its HVN-based operations and Connecticut presence. This includes the hiring of nearly 180 Avelo Crewmembers and the creation of more than 300 direct and indirect airport-related jobs. Avelo became America’s first new airline in nearly 15 years when it commenced scheduled service in April 2021. Today Avelo serves 34 destinations across the U.S.

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