

# THE SALUKI FLYER

OCTOBER 2024



## Able Flight lands at SIU

This summer, SIU Aviation teamed up with Able Flight, an aviation nonprofit for people with physical disabilities. Able Flight sent five students to SIU for pilot training in planes with adapted flight controls. The students were Ian Azeredo from New Jersey, Andrew Daigneau from Indiana, Natallia Mirashnichenka from New York, Jake Simmons from Pennsylvania, and Jordan Sprague from Indiana. Able Flight provided the two specially adapted Vashon Ranger Light Sport Aircraft used for flight training. The students stayed in university housing and were frequent visitors to the SIU Rec Center.

The Vashon Rangers were delivered from the factory in Washington over Easter weekend. SIU instructors received factory-provided transitional training in the

Ranger that same weekend. The adapted controls arrived in the middle of April. Once the planes were adapted, the instructors were trained on the new controls in preparation for the students' arrival on May 19th.

SIU Flight instructors provided the flight training for the students over an accelerated eight-week program. David Nelson and Miguel Marroquin were the primary flight instructors for the program. They were supported by fellow flight instructors, Zachary Martine and Bisola Saliu. Victoria Mathieu oversaw the program. Training started on May 20th. All five students were successful in obtaining their Sport Pilot Certificates. The first student completed their certificate on June 30th. The last student completed their certificate on July 13th.

*continued on page 3*



Photo courtesy of The Southern Illinoian

# Welcome to Fall Semester



## Greetings!

I'd like to extend a warm welcome back to the School of Aviation for the Fall 2024 semester. My name is Chien-tsung Lu. I am both honored and excited to take on the role of Director of the School of Aviation. I received my master's degree from the University of Central Missouri in 1999 and my Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 2003. Before joining SIU, I worked with the School of Aviation & Transportation Technology at Purdue University. From 2013 to 2016, I served as the Dean of Nanshan

Aeronautical College in Yantai, China. Following that, from 2016 to 2017, I held the position of Chairman at Qingdao Airlines and as a Board Director for Virgin Australia Airlines.

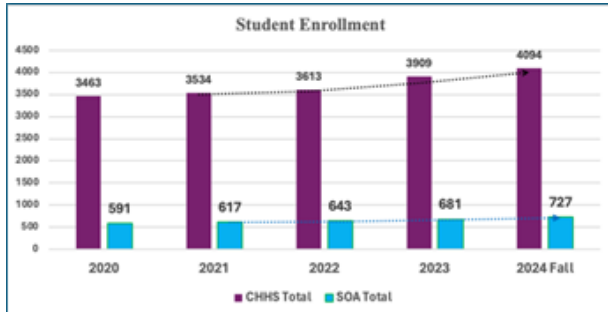
In FY 2024, our faculty, recruitment team, and student advisors have done an outstanding job. Student enrollment has reached a new milestone, growing from 590 (Fall 2020) to 724 (Fall 2024), which is currently the 2nd largest school within the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS). Remarkably, our first-year retention rate remained high at 92.6% for Spring 2024.

The Flying Salukis have continued to demonstrate outstanding success, securing their 12th consecutive National

Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) regional title and achieving 2nd place in the national flight competition. Moreover, six female Saluki aviators excelled in the 2024 Air Race Classic, finishing second in a competitive field of 22 intercollegiate teams. Our faculty remains strongly committed to advancing academic reputation by actively submitting grant proposals, publishing research papers, and presenting projects in conferences. We are in the process of applying for the FAA Air Traffic Collegiate Training Initiatives (AT-CTI) recognition and have recently launched a new minor in the dispatcher program. We sincerely appreciate the generosity of our alumni and donors, who collectively contributed \$366,000 during FY2024 to support our students and faculty. We are incredibly proud of the accomplishments of our alumni, and we look forward to continuing to foster a strong, supportive network. Boeing kindly donated \$50,000 to support student scholarships and faculty development for both FY2024 and FY2025. United Airlines continues supporting Aviation Career Day while Delta's Propel Career Path program significantly benefits flight students.

The School of Aviation at SIU has a rich history of excellence, and it is a privilege to be part of such a dedicated and passionate team. As SIU continues to advance in student success, research and innovation, branding and partnerships, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), and sustainability, the School of Aviation strives to achieve meaningful impact by leveraging its strong foundation and encouraging faculty and staff to embrace research, technology, and multidisciplinary collaboration. I am committed to fostering an environment where our students, faculty, and staff can thrive and I look forward to working closely with you, listening to your ideas, and building on our collective strengths to elevate the School of Aviation to new heights.

Dr. Chien-Tsung Lu  
Director of School of Aviation



## Friday is wear Maroon Day! Go Salukis!



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All five students, along with four students from Purdue University, were honored at a special ceremony at EAA AirVenture on July 23rd. The students were joined on stage by their flight instructors from both schools along with the sponsors who make the program possible. The students had their wings pinned by their sponsor and family members.

Able Flight had been solely operating out of Purdue University for 14 years prior to this year. This was the first year that Able Flight expanded operation to SIU, as well. Currently in the post-summer phase, Able Flight and SIU are talking about the future and the possibility of continuing the program.

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To apply for scholarships go to  
<https://siu.academicworks.com/>

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*Sid Hanson and friends march at the Chicago Pride Parade*

# NGPA Members Busy This Summer

This past summer, our NGPA chapter members were proudly involved in events tied to our national organization. Sid Hanson, chapter president, marched with the Windy City Flyers chapter at the Chicago Pride Parade in June. There, he met up with good friends from another NGPA student chapter. In July, many of our chapter members, as well as SIU alumni, were active in multiple NGPA events at EAA AirVenture. At the annual NGPA barbecue on Thursday night of the show, fourteen of our fellow Saluki's reconnected; for many of us the second year in a row. We hope to keep it a Saluki tradition!

Our chapter members and alumni continue to be present in the industry. There really is a sense of camaraderie that comes with being a Saluki, and that really shows. Fellow aviators know us, recognize us for our greatness, and remember us. We are fortunate for that. We also cherish our connections with fellow friends in the industry—no matter what college, company, or career path. The NGPA is truly a family.



*Saluki's reconnect at the annual NGPA barbecue at EAA AirVenture*

**Aviation Management and Flight  
Aviation Technologies  
Advisory Board Meetings  
have been scheduled for  
November 9th, 2024**

*Please RSVP to [rferguson@siu.edu](mailto:rferguson@siu.edu).*



# SIU boasts six female aviators for 2024 Air Race Classic



Three sets of SIU Carbondale School of Aviation certified flight instructors and students will take part in the 47th Air Race Classic. From left are Graci McDaniel, Grace Gray, Gabrielle Loeb, Heidi Hightower and Rainer FullerMoore. Not pictured is Maya Marena. (Photo by Russell Bailey)

Three SIU teams completed the 2024 Air Race Classic over the summer, flying from Carbondale to the terminus at Loveland, Colorado. The Air Race Classic is an all women's cross-country air race, with routes traditionally in lengths of over 2400 nm. Over 60 all-women teams, collegiate racers and non-collegiate racers, competed in the race held in June. Racers range in age from 17-90+, and any woman with an airworthy airplane is invited to join. Most of the non-collegiate pilots fly for leisure on the side of their normal jobs, ranging from teachers to doctors to airline pilots. The Air Race Classic is an

excellent opportunity for women in aviation to test their aviation abilities, form friendships and connections, and represent themselves or the flight school they came from.

This year's route began at our home airport, KMDH. From Carbondale, the teams stopped in La Porte, IN, Cadillac, MI, Newark, OH, Moline, IL, Owatonna, MN, Moberly, MO, Bartlesville, OK, and Dodge City, KS, before they reached the end of the race in Loveland, CO. The race this year faced the Salukis with many challenges from maintenance to weather, making the race quite difficult. In order to succeed in the Air Race, pilots must use everything they've learned from their training, mainly weather and performance concepts, and some form of luck on their side. The three Saluki teams made memories that will last a lifetime, lifelong connections with other women, and tested their knowledge from SIU flight courses to real-world flying experiences. Heidi Hightower and Rainer FullerMoore led Team #38, Gabi Loeb and Grace Gray led Team #40, and Graci McDaniel and Maya Marena led Team #41 representing SIU. The Salukis have been racing since 2015, sending at least one team each year. Last year, Graci McDaniel and Meadow Boden received 2nd place overall, and this year Team #38 and Team #41 were able to bring home top 10 finishes in the collegiate division.

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## United Internship Experience

By Hubert Dybinski

The start of the school year marked the end of my 12-week internship with United Airlines. I had an amazing summer as the UAL Airport Operations Intern with the Station Operations Center (SOC) at O'Hare International Airport. 500+ daily flights, boarding around 57,000 people a day at a single hub is no easy task, and I had the opportunity to get involved with the workings of the many different business groups, departments, and individuals that work together to make the operation run. The curiosity of what goes on behind the scenes proved that I will never be tired of learning and understanding how the aviation industry works. This internship is filled with opportunities to connect with not only current-day professionals but also other interns who share my ambitions and would like to pursue a career

with the airlines. I look forward to spending my final two semesters at SIU while using all the insights and skills I learned at United to have a successful career in aviation while motivating others to do the same.



# Association for Women in Aviation Maintenance



The Association for Women in Aviation Maintenance (AWAM) at Southern Illinois University is a dedicated group of aviation enthusiasts, with a particular focus on aircraft maintenance. Our mission is to promote the field of aviation maintenance to more young women and to engage with a broader community, showcasing the exciting opportunities within this aspect of aviation.

One of our key annual events is Girls in Aviation Day,

held every September in collaboration with Women in Aviation (WAI). During this event, AWAM plays a significant role in facilitating hands-on activities designed to spark interest in aviation among young girls. Girls ages 8-18 get the chance to create foam airplane gliders, learning about the principles of flight in a fun and interactive way. We also guide them in building bottle rockets, which always bring excitement and curiosity. These activities are not only enjoyable but also serve as an introduction to the science and mechanics behind aviation, inspiring the next generation of female aviators and technicians.

This past March, our chapter achieved a significant milestone at the Women in Aviation Conference in Orlando, Florida. For the first time, all 12 of our members attended the conference, marking a record-breaking turnout for AWAM. This accomplishment is a testament to the tremendous hard work and dedication of our members, both in the classroom and through their community involvement.

Additionally, we are proud to announce that our chapter's president, Taylor Fabian, and vice president, Melissa Pfaff, were awarded scholarships through AWAM and WAI organizations which were recognized at the conference. Their achievements reflect the strong leadership and commitment within our chapter, and we look forward to continuing to promote diversity and excellence in aviation maintenance.

As we look to the future, AWAM remains committed to inspiring more young women to explore the field of aviation maintenance and to making a positive impact within our community. Led by officers Taylor Fabian, Melissa Pfaff, Sami Liller, and Hannah Sales. We are excited about the opportunities ahead and invite all aviation enthusiasts to join us in our mission.

## Important Dates for End of Semester

### Veteran's Day

Monday, November 11, 2024

### Thanksgiving Break

Saturday, Nov. 23 through Sunday, Dec. 1

### Final Examinations

Monday, Dec. 9 through Friday, Dec. 13

### Commencement

Saturday, December 14, 2024




### Winter Intersession

Monday, Dec. 16 through Sunday, Jan. 12, 2025

### Spring Semester Begins

Monday, January 13, 2025

# Taco Tuesday



*brought to you by AHP*

11:00 - 1:00 p.m. Every Tuesday



# DawgZooka – Making Shirts Fly for 21 years!



DawgZooka is SIU Aviation's T-Shooting 'robot' or ROV, Remotely Operated Vehicle. It began as class project in 2003 in the Electronics Systems Technologies program at the request of our late Dean and Chancellor, Paul Sarvela, to have something to highlight our technical colleges at SIU events.

The Electronic Systems Technologies (EST) program acquired a couple of decommissioned bomb-disposal robots that were once used by SIU's Office of Public Safety. One of these became the chassis for DawgZooka. Funding through Jimmy John's Subs was used for much of the vast majority of other equipment needed – It was hoped that it would be allowed to shoot submarine sandwiches to fans at the basketball games.

Over the course of the semester, professor Martin Hebel and 8 students designed, acquired parts and constructed what would become DawgZooka. Some major features in the design included replacing the drive motors to double its speed to a near-walking speed; implementing an RC control system and motor drives used in many robotics competitions; using paintball technology of a high-pressure CO2 source and an electronic valve for firing; and a microcontroller-based control system to use the RC signals to control firing, adjust the barrel elevation and for the light-show on it.

Upon completion and testing, DawgZooka was presented to SIU Athletics and fired test shots in the Basketball Arena (Banterra Center). Athletics quickly approved its use to shoot T-shirt as sub-sandwiches were deemed to liability prone sadly.

From 2003 to around 2013, DawgZooka shoots were a regular attraction at SIU home basketball games. Beyond its use at the games, DawgZooka made regular appearances at the SIU tent at state fairs, local and state events, and once to the Sweet-Sixteen playoffs in St. Louis.

Over the years multiple upgrades have been performed, including changing from CO2 tanks to 3000 PSI air tanks for the propellant to prevent occasional "freezing" of the firing valve; two tractor batteries were replaced with 10 Lithium batteries improving the driving time from 20 minutes to several hours; a switch from analog to digital RC control systems making driving control much more stable; multiple appearance changes.

As of 2017, DawgZooka has been under the care and handling by SIU Aviation students, shooting during the 2022-23 basketball season, at several football games, at the 2017 eclipse and other local events.

The SIU RSO, Aviation Electronics Association, is currently responsible for DawgZooka and has several upgrades planned for this school year. The firing platform will be upgraded to four independently controlled barrels for firing to limit the time required for reloads between shots; the control system will be upgraded to a better microcontroller; major rewiring will be performed and new light-show effects will be added.

Please help our students in the Aviation Electronics Association meet their goals of upgrading DawgZooka, purchasing shirts, acquiring and exploring drones, taking aviation-related field trips and exploring avionics through our fundraising site at: <https://gofund.me/6953a793>



# Airport Operations Internship

By Sarah Michalak

Words cannot explain how incredible my summer as an Airport Operations Intern at ORD with United Airlines was. The open culture of learning and growth within the company gave me the freedom to explore any and all aspects of the operation and propelled my career forward in ways I never imagined possible.



Within the Customer Service department, I had many remarkable opportunities to become engaged with the airline operation, and work alongside a multitude of amazing people. My education at SIU had prepared me to work hard and play hard- which United emphasized. When I wasn't with the intern team touring the SFO maintenance base or out at the Arlington Heights NOC

researching Irregular Operations (IRROPS), I was back at ORD responding to real passenger needs. The work environment and culture at United inspired me to create projects I was proud of and challenged me to learn new industry-relevant skills. Some of my proudest projects included creating a 50-page IRROPS playbook for all levels of Customer Service management, aggregating Net Promoter Score (NPS) data into monthly deep dive reports and improvement recommendations for ORD management, and creating the framework for a program to assist passengers with disabilities during the boarding process. One project took the lead as the most difficult project I've taken on yet: teaching myself how to code in JavaScript and HTML to create a brand-new branching scenario online software for use during extreme weather events.

United truly pushed me to learn every day. From the start of the internship, each day was like trying to "drink from a firehose" in regard to the sheer amount of information presented, which was an incredible learning opportunity to take on. The team at ORD is one that I am proud to have been a part of, and each and every person I had the privilege of working alongside made the experience truly special. It would be an honor to return to the airlines upon graduation and continue to work to improve the experience for the heart of any airline- the passengers we serve.

*Flying Salukis host*



**REGION 8**

October 21-26

in Carbondale, IL

*We welcome all teams!*

From October 23 to 26, SIU will be hosting the Region VIII National Intercollegiate Flying Association SAFECON. SIU last hosted "flight team regionals" in fall 2019. Over 50 total competitors from at least 3 schools: Purdue, Lewis, and SIU will compete in nine different events.

**4 flight events:** Power-off landings, Short field landings, Navigation, Message drop

**5 ground events:** Simulated Comprehensive Aircraft, Navigation (SCAN), Manual e6-b computer, Aircraft recognition, Aircraft preflight, Ground trainer "Sim"

One of the Chief Judges will be Andrew Ross SIU Year' NIFA Region VIII representative. **If you would like to sponsor part of the competition or volunteer as a judge please contact Bryan Harrison at [bryanth@siu.edu](mailto:bryanth@siu.edu).**

# News around Aviation

## New NTT Faculty



**Peter Merlin** originally joined the School of Aviation as a Program Assistant in the Flight Operations section. Peter recently became an Assistant Lecturer in Aviation Management.

Peter has a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical Studies/Management. His past employment in California

included positions in history, communications, and education at NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center.



**James "Jamie" Bates** comes to SIU Aviation after a 15 year career at The Boeing Company, during which he served in multiple leadership roles including a stint as the Program Manager of T-38C Avionics Upgrade Program. In addition to his time on T-38, Jamie was a member of the Boeing Defense F-15

Leadership Team, where he oversaw special projects to the advancement of the F-15 platform domestically and abroad. Jamie is a graduate of the SIU Aviation Management Program and holds a Master's Degree from Washington University in St. Louis.



**Michael Felton** joined the School of Aviation Technologies as an Assistant Instructor.

Michael Felton has a Bachelor of Science in Aviation Technologies. Prior to becoming an Assistant Instructor, he was stationed in Las Vegas as a Special Operations Forces / Personnel Recovery Integrated Instrument

and Flight Control Systems Specialist for the USAF.

*Please welcome these new faculty members to the School of Aviation.*

## Congratulations to Retirees



**Michael Burgener**



**Dr. Jose Ruiz**

Congratulations to our recent retirees - Dr. Jose Ruiz and Michael Burgener. Both Ruiz and Burgener served as interim Director roles before their retirement. Dr. Ruiz has been teaching in the Aviation Management program for 30 years. Michael Burgener has been teaching in the Aviation Technologies program for over 20 years. Enjoy your retirement!

## Welcome New Employees



**Leah Patterson**



**Chris Milazzo**

Many of you may already know Chris Milazzo, who has been an academic advisor for the Aviation Technologies program for the last year. Chris has decided to take on a new role as the Office Manager for Avtech. This will be a much different role than he is used to.

Leah Patterson joins us from the CHHS Dean's office. She will be assisting Jeff Hayes in the Executive Transportation Office.

*Welcome to School of Aviation!*



# American Airlines Career Day 2024



*School of Aviation student volunteers wait for the arrival.*



*SIU Alumni pilot the plane and show their support for SIU.*



*The plane taxis on arrival.*



*American Airlines staff volunteer for the day, many are SIU alum.*



*Chicago area high school students, volunteers, faculty and staff take the usual group photo.*

American Airlines Career Day was held on April 25, 2024. American Airlines loaded a 737-Max 8 plane with 160 Chicago area high school students. The students flew down to visit the School of Aviation and was treated to tours of campus, lunch, presentations by American Airlines employees, and Introductory flights in SIU planes with our flight instructors. To finish the day, they had pizza before boarding the plane for home. The weather was great for the day. Fun was had by all. Thank you to all the School of Aviation students, faculty and staff that volunteered.

# United Airlines Career Day 2023

United Airlines Career Day 2023 was held on October 14, 2023. A collaborative effort of SIU Aviation and United Airlines began in 1994.

Over 150 students from Chicago flew-in for the event with local students joining for free campus tours, aviation tours, lunch and t-shirts.



**The next United Airlines Day is October 19th, 2024!**





Women In Aviation International  
SIU Saluki Aviators Chapter

**GIRLS IN AVIATION DAY**

Saturday, September 21st | Check-in 8am & Event 8:30am-12:30pm

Fun filled morning including an introduction to aviation, a flight simulator experience & much more!

This event is limited to 100 participants  
Scan to Register




Questions?  
Email us at [salukiaviators@siu.edu](mailto:salukiaviators@siu.edu)

Glenn Poshard Transportation Education Center  
545 N Airport Rd Murphysboro, IL 62966

# AAAE Update

We've had an amazing start to 2024 here at AAAE-SIU Chapter and are thrilled to share some highlights from our summer and our first tour of the semester!

March saw us through a tour of EVV and Tri-State Aero in Indiana, where students were able to tour the airport, as well as the FBO and its new projects. Students were able to tour the construction site of the FBO's brand-new building and its hangars, as well as their current maintenance projects. We then enjoyed a classic Indiana-style BBQ lunch in a hangar surrounded by private jets!

Last April, Carbondale was at the heart of a spectacular solar eclipse, and AAAE SIU took full advantage of this rare event. We hosted an MDH pancake breakfast to fundraise for the upcoming AAAE conference and also assisted with marshaling planes and providing FBO/ATC instructions at MWA. We also fielded numerous questions from visitors who came from all over to witness the eclipse.

Later in April, our members explored St. Louis-Lambert International Airport. Highlights included a visit to the ARFF (Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting) station, the Airport Ops operations control, and the unused terminal (now repurposed as an event venue.) A standout moment was standing on the runway for some unforgettable photo ops, followed by a drive-by viewing of the Boeing production facility.

To finish off the semester, ten of our members attended the AAAE Conference in Nashville, where they engaged in networking, attended student-focused sessions, and toured the exposition hall to explore the latest products and services in aviation. This opportunity, funded in part by our phenomenal partnership with The Boeing Company, allowed our students to actively engage in the airport field in a picturesque town.

AAAE SIU then took off again this semester with another tour during the first week of school! We started the semester by taking a tour of MidAmerica-St.Louis airport, where students got to see the joint-use facilities' terminal, tower staffed by Air Force controllers, ARFF, and even one of the fire engines test its water cannon!

These are some of our highlights over the past few months- and we're just getting started.

These are just a few of the exciting activities we've been involved in recently. Stay tuned for future event announcements on our Instagram (@aaae\_siu).

Blue skies and buttery landings to all!

## Southwest Airlines Internship

By Luke Trout

During my internship at Southwest Airlines, I discovered a *Family* filled with Southwest Hospitality and a *Warrior Spirit*. I had the privilege of interning in the Flight Operations Safety Department, where I contributed to various Safety initiatives and worked closely with the Human Factors and Engineering Team. Southwest's commitment to putting *People* first allowed me to present a new avionics system to our Leaders in the Flight Operations Department. A significant part of my role involved spending time in flight simulators, where we tested the new system with multiple flight crews, sometimes for hours at a stretch. After each session, we debriefed the crews and used their feedback to refine the project. This hands-on experience, along with the opportunity to work alongside *Cohearts* who embody a *Fun-LUVing Attitude*, gave me a deeper appreciation for the *Servant's Heart* that defines Southwest Airlines.





Join us  
June 23, 2025

Proceeds benefit SIU Aviation



Pictures from the 2024 Golf Scramble

Boulder Ridge  
Country Club  
Lake in the Hills, IL



Thank you to all of our supporters.

# Golf Scramble a Huge Success!

On Monday, June 24th, 2019 the 15th SIU Aviation Golf Scramble was held at the Boulder Ridge Country Club in Lake-in-the-Hills, Illinois.

The scramble has been organized by Dr. David NewMyer since it's beginning. Last year the golf tournament was renamed the SIU Aviation Dave NewMyer Golf Scramble in honor of Dr. NewMyer's tireless years of work to make the golf scramble a huge success. This year was no different. The golf scramble grossed just over \$149,000 and raised around \$73,478. Proceeds from the golf scramble go towards scholarships for Aviation students. In total 161 people joined us at the outing (golfers + lunch/dinner participants).

For the past 15 years, alumni, faculty and current students join together for a day of fun, food and more. The day includes golf, dinner, a Live auction and a Silent Auction.

Mark your calendar's for the 16th SIU Aviation Dave NewMyer Golf Scramble to be held June 23, 2025 at Boulder Ridge Country Club.



The SIU Aviation Career Fair and AMS Scholarship Banquet will be held on November 8, 2024. Juniors & Seniors are HIGHLY encouraged to visit the career fair to discuss career opportunities beyond SIU. The banquet will take place that evening at the Hangar One Event Center, sponsored by Piper, all are encouraged to attend. Tickets may be purchased by an officer of AMS, at the TEC Reception desk, or online on AMS' website





SIU Aviation students celebrate receiving scholarships as part of a grant program funded by The Boeing Company. From left are Doug Carr, Faith Ortega, SIU Aviation students Sami Liller, Melissa Pfaff, Fawne Maguire and Grace Gray, Harry Barrett Jr. and Dristin Rose. (Photo by Russell Bailey)

by Pete Rosenbery

CARBONDALE, Ill. — Fifteen students in Southern Illinois University Carbondale’s nationally recognized School of Aviation recently received scholarships from Boeing to enhance their education.

student organizations, many of which serve students with backgrounds typically underrepresented in the aviation industry,” Romero said. “The Boeing grant aims to help women, students who are racial or ethnic minorities and students with financial needs experience the aviation industry while they are students here.”

## SIU Aviation students receive scholarships from The Boeing Company

This is the second consecutive year Boeing has provided \$50,000 to the School of Aviation for scholarships and to fund activities of aviation-related registered student organizations and outreach events, such as the fourth annual diversity luncheon on April 12 at the Glenn Poshard Transportation Education Center. Five students each in aviation technologies, aviation flight and aviation management received \$2,000 scholarships and the remaining \$20,000 is split between registered student organization (RSO) activities and diversity outreach programs.

### A benefit for students

Matthew J. Romero, an associate professor of aviation management, said the funds received from Boeing is a “windfall for our students.” The scholarships are an obvious benefit, but there are also less-noticed tangible benefits for students who are able to participate in field trips.

“The School of Aviation is home to 11 registered

“The experiences our students gain while in the field are invaluable to their experiences as Salukis, and Boeing directly contributes to their experiences,” Romero said.

Scholarship recipients, listed by hometown, are:  
**ILLINOIS**

**Carbondale:** Sami Liller, aviation technologies.

**Carterville:** Barry Eastman, freshman, aviation flight.

**Chicago:** Barakat Adeniji, junior, aviation management.

**Creal Springs:** Anthony Forgatch, junior, aviation flight.

**Frankfort:** Justin Mcgee, sophomore, aviation flight.

**Sheridan:** Melissa Pfaff, junior, aviation technologies.

**South Elgin:** Addison McCormick, sophomore, aviation technologies.

**Wheeling:** Sharon Celestine, senior, aviation management.

# SIU Flying Salukis finish second in nation; recent SIU grad earns top pilot honors

Original story by Pete Rosenbery, adapted to space  
(Photo by Russell Bailey)



CARBONDALE, Ill. — Southern Illinois University Carbondale’s Flying Salukis might be young, but youth didn’t stop the team from continuing its legacy of victory in collegiate aviation last week.

Paced by top pilot and recent graduate Dayne Snodgrass, the Flying Salukis finished second at the National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) championships May 18 at Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport in Janesville. The finish marks the 15th straight year that the nine-time national champions have finished in the top five nationally and 12th time in 13 years SIU has been in the top three overall.

With five team members scoring among the top 21 competitors, Coach Nathan J. Lincoln, a senior lecturer in aviation management and flight in the School of Aviation, was pleased with the team’s performance. In the May 13-18 competition with 31 teams, the University of North Dakota won the title, followed by SIU Carbondale just 17 points behind in flight events and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Prescott.

## ‘Awesome performance’

With just two graduating seniors on the team, Lincoln said the team’s performance was “awesome.”

“We have a very young team, so having the ability to place second out of 31 teams was an amazing accomplishment,” he said. “Everyone should hold their head high knowing they represented SIU so well.”

Snodgrass, from Byron, Illinois, who graduated with a degree in aviation management on May 11, was the

top scoring contestant with 155.5 points. He won the short-field landing competition along with the traditional navigation event where he was the pilot and Samuel Cogan was the safety observer.

“Dayne’s performance this year was outstanding,” Lincoln said. “Winning two events and placing so well in others is extremely difficult at the national level. His dedication over the last few years has shown with this amazing accomplishment.”

Snodgrass, who has earned a minor in air traffic control and associate degree in aviation flight, also works as a certified flight instructor at SIU. He said he “couldn’t have asked for a much better performance.”

“Being able to keep the mental focus to place in the top three in each flying event is extremely difficult to accomplish,” Snodgrass said. “It is not easy to prepare for eight total events and then actually place and perform well in most of them.”

Results are available on the NIFA website.

## Flying Salukis who scored points were:

Grant Gillespie, senior, aviation technologies and aviation flight, Fort Worth, Texas, 66.5 points, ninth place.

Mateo Torres, senior, aviation technologies, Park Ridge, Illinois, 5 points, 13th place.

Benjamin Campbell, junior, aviation management and flight, Richmond, Illinois, 42 points, tied for 21st.

Liam Harrison, sophomore, aviation management and flight, Libertyville, Illinois, 14 points, tied for 79th.

Jeremy Murray, sophomore, aviation management and flight, Lockport, Illinois, 5 points, tied for 120th.

## Other Flying Salukis who competed are:

Vassilios Georges, senior, aviation flight, Chesterfield, Missouri.

Kyra Hilsabeck, sophomore, aviation management and flight, Edelstein, Illinois.

Jake Mack, senior, aviation technologies, Lake Zurich, Illinois,

Thomas Nguyen, junior, aviation management and flight, Broomfield, Colorado.

Luke Trout, senior, aviation flight, Holland, Indiana.

## Additional Flying Salukis are:

Adriana Alvarez, sophomore, aviation management and flight,

Michael Chebuske, sophomore, aviation flight, Louis, Missouri.

James Cone, sophomore, aviation flight, Byron, Illinois.

Alana Stahl, sophomore, aviation management and flight, Sandwich, Illinois.



# Follow SIU Aviation on Social Media



**Do you have something you want posted on Social Media?**

Contact our Recruitment Specialist, Robert Clukey at [robert.clukey@siu.edu](mailto:robert.clukey@siu.edu)