

## Why the EAA's Young Eagles® program is relevant to your STEM curriculum

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Advancement of today's society relies upon **STEM** (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

Orlando's *EAA Chapter 74* captivates young minds by providing a free airplane ride, known as a Young Eagles® flight. This real life STEM experience provides a solid foundation, fueling both imagination and excitement. The experience also transfers the participants' passion into other STEM focus areas, both in the classroom and in their careers. Yes, careers, because it is not unusual to have as many as ten career changes during one's lifetime as one continues the life-long learning process and discovers new sources of inspiration and satisfaction.

EAA Chapter 74 inspires young people toward careers in STEM fields by providing them opportunities to experience aviation excitement first-hand.

The *Orlando Youth Aviation Center* (an organizational sibling of EAA Chapter 74) sponsors an **Introduction to Aviation** program. Students attend classes for eight (8) Saturday mornings at Orlando Executive Airport. All of the STEM related activities integrate with aviation.

- They learn about the principles of flight, navigation and communication, visit the air traffic control tower, study weather, and how weather affects aviation.
- They participate in hands-on activities building rubber band-powered models and flying them in a competition. They also build an aircraft wing rib and learn to do riveting.
- Students meet with a flight instructor and plan a flight trip to three (3) local airports.
- In the program's final week, pilots arrive in their planes, meet with students, preflight the aircraft, and then with the students fly the trip they planned the previous week.
- Participants also have opportunities to fly the aircraft and/or operate the radios.

Volunteers comprise the leadership and membership of both OYAC and EAA Chapter 74. These volunteers plan the curriculum, organize the classes and serve as instructors. FAA certified pilots donate their time and the use of their aircraft to fly the students.

The same is true for the Young Eagles® flight: Pilots share their passion for aviation by volunteering to fly students on a twenty to thirty minute flight around the local area. The goal of the Young Eagle flight is to introduce students to the field of aviation both as a hobby and/or as a career.

There are many career opportunities available to students in the aviation industry, but students are not always aware of the opportunities due to the fences now surrounding airports. The Young Eagles program enables the students to get through the fence and into a real aircraft, meet and discuss ideas with a real pilot, and experience a real flight.

It is estimated that the aviation industry will need more than 466,000 pilots and 596,000 maintenance personnel over the next 20 years. If this country is to maintain its role as an aviation leader, we need to introduce students to the many careers in aviation at an early age. This is the objective of the **Young Eagles® flight**, along with OYAC's **Introduction to Aviation** program.

**If the student takes the Young Eagles® flight before attaining the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the student receives a free EAA student membership, free access to Sporty's Learn to Fly Course (\$199.99 value), reimbursement of the exam fee after passing the FAA written exam (\$150 value), free first flight lesson at a flight school of your choice (\$120 value), and access to flight training and college scholarships through EAA, including the EAA Air Academy. Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/lrlhuth> for more information.**