

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Aviation enrollment soars

Enrollment in Canyon High School's aviation program is soaring, with enrollment almost doubled from the prior year.

There are now 76 students in the program, up from 40 last school year. The program, the only such high school aviation course in Orange County, was initiated and is taught by Steve Smith, a former commercial pilot.

After hours of instructional flight time and preparation, students Jake Nowicki and Zach Marshall successfully completed their individual FAA Private Pilot check rides, and now hold their official licenses.

Ryan Li accomplished an aviator milestone: He completed his first solo flight without an instructor beside him, taking off, flying and landing, all the while navigating, checking weather conditions and flying in accordance with air traffic instructions.



Three students, J.P. Wright, Andrew Belk and Keegan Johnson, spent an all-expenses-paid week in Oshkosh, Wisc. Oshkosh is known for its annual Experimental Aircraft



Association fly-in, when aviation enthusiasts from all over the world gather for a week-long celebration of all things flight, including air shows, aerobatics, vintage planes, forums, workshops and demonstrations. There, at the association's Air Academy, the Canyon High students learned hands-on skills and enjoyed flights in an airplane and a helicopter. The three scholarships were courtesy of the association's Orange County chapter.

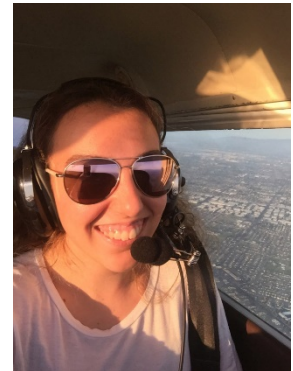
CHS student Jonathan Low volunteered at the association's Airventure in Oshkosh, as a member of the Aviation Explorers Post 445 program. Aviation Explorers is a career-based program for ages 14 and 21 that is based out of the Fullerton airport.

During his summer, aviation student Michael LaBroad worked at Sky Thrills!, an aeronautical company at the Fullerton airport specializing in providing thrill rides and teaching extreme aerobatic flying in specialized crafts.



Four Canyon Comanches began their aviation adventure. The Orange County Ninety-Nines, a local chapter of women pilots based out of John Wayne Airport, provided First Flight scholarships to Charles Redick and Asher Parra. The students were excited to begin their first flight lessons out of John Wayne Airport. In addition, Mia Kuyumjian and Jackson Hoeller also went up for their first flight lessons over the summer.

Students in the program spend the school year in one of three levels of aviation classes, learning about the industry and covering the content required for procuring a pilot's license. During the freshman year, aviation students receive a broad overview of the many career opportunities available in the industry, including design and engineering, aviation mechanics, navigation, airport operations, air traffic control, military, and pilot.



The second and third year of classes include learning maneuvers on the six classroom flight simulators and learning the content, taught to strict FAA standards, required for a pilot's license. There is no age restriction for ground school, and students may procure a pilot's license at 17, allowing them the flexibility to work in the industry as they pursue additional career or college goals. CHS courses may count as credits toward a college aviation program.

The Canyon aviation program is seeking individuals with the expertise to help lead a building project on campus. A Cessna 150, sans engine or prop, and a Wittman Tailwind kit were donated to the program. If you would like to help rebuild the plane, or donate to the efforts, contact Steve Smith at stsmith@orangeusd.org.

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