



Welcome to AeroStar News!



Dear AeroStars,

If there is a rainbow following the storms of 2020, it is that we, as a nation, are finally beginning to reckon with what it means to be an equal, just, and fair society.

I'm reading a report put out by Citigroup that makes the case against systemic racism in stark economic terms. According to the [report](#), racism has cost the U.S. \$16 trillion.

Unfortunately, systemic racism has plagued the aviation industry since its earliest beginnings. According to U.S. Department of Labor statistics (2019), of all airline pilots and flight engineers:

- 93.7% were white.
- 3.4% were Asian.
- 2.6% were black or African American.
- 2.2% were Hispanic or Latino.

Only 7.9% of pilots and 4.3% of flight engineers were women (FAA's Aeronautical Center 2019). African American women were estimated to make up less than 1% of the workforce (Bloomberg 10-10-2019).

The time to diversify the workforce is *now*. The survival of aviation depends on it! According to Boeing's Pilot and Technician Outlook study (2020–2039), over the next 20 years, North America will need 208,000 new pilots, 192,000 new maintenance technicians, and 169,000 cabin crew members to staff the commercial aviation, business aviation, and civil helicopter industries.

Build Back Better!

AeroStar is uniquely positioned to lead in creating a more diverse workforce.

We are training the fastest growing pool of STEM talent — K–12, college, and beyond — to take their rightful place in the industry. Working with strategic partners across the United States, our School-to-Work Pipeline initiative provides training, mentoring, job placement, performance tracking, and ongoing support.

AeroStar on C-Span!

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has established the Youth Access to American Jobs in Aviation Task Force — and I am excited to announce that I have been appointed to serve! This opportunity aligns perfectly with AeroStar's mission to build a dynamic training and career pipeline connecting underserved communities to the aviation workplace.

On October 16, I will participate in the first public hearing convened by the Task Force. The hearing will be aired on C-Span. Check local listings for times and channels.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

In this issue of AeroStar News, we're celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month. Read all about the heroes and sheroes of aviation and aerospace!

AeroVerse E-Learning – Our Waitlist Is Open!

There's still time to register for classes on AeroVerse, our new e-learning platform.

Study everything from flight to aircraft mechanics and more in the comfort of your own home and at your own pace. We also have LIVE sessions, so you'll be able to ask questions and get feedback from your favorite instructors. And you know, we have some of the best instructors in the industry!

Click [HERE](#) and have a look around.

We're Giving Wings to Dreams!

Tammera L. Holmes
Founder & CEO
AeroStar Avion Institute NFP

P.S: I invite you to read my official statement on Black Lives Matter [HERE](#). You may quote this statement with full attribution to Tammera L. Holmes, Founder/CEO, AeroStar Avion Institute NFP, www.avioninstitute.org.

Visit The AeroVerse

AeroStar Training: Your Ticket to Fly!

Registration for Fall Programs is Now Open

Register Now

Programs
AeroSparks Online: K - 4th Grade (5 Saturdays, choose 1 or register for all 5)
Online Aviation Program: 5th - 8th Grade (10 week Saturday program)
Online Aviation Program: 9th - 12th Grade (10 week after-school program + 1 week intensive in December)

We Offer:

- Live Instruction
- Virtual Field Trips
- Guest Speakers
- Interactive Activities
- Industry Experts
- Mentorship
- & More!

ENROLL TODAY!

Financial Assistance Available

For more info
www.aalaverve.com

K-4 Students:

Node 1: Introduction to Aviation and Aerospace

- Session 1: Introduction to Aviation and Aerospace
- Session 2: History of Aviation
- Session 3: Aircraft Anatomy
- Session 4: Theory of Flight
- Session 5: Airport Basics

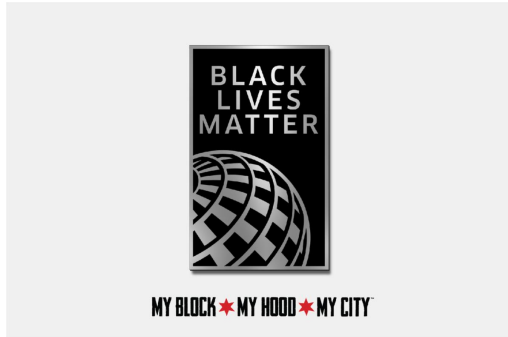
5th-8th Grade | Middle School Students:

Node 1: Introduction to Aviation and Aerospace

Node 2: Intermediate Aviation Exploration

9th-12th Grade | High School Students:

United Airlines Introduces Black Lives Matter Pin for Employees, Customers



Our industry partner, United Airlines, has introduced a Black Lives Matter pin for customers and employees (optional). Proceeds will go to My Block, My Hood, My City, a nonprofit organization that exposes African American teens in Chicago to new experiences and possibilities beyond their own communities. Preorder [HERE!](#)

New Book Teaches Kids to Fly Through Fear

What if you were afraid to fly? Author Kenyatta Scott and AeroStar CEO Tammara L. Holmes join up to show girls and boys how to face their fears!



Tammara Holmes Teaches Violet How to Fly Through Fear!

Follow along as ***Violet Takes Flight*** for the first time! Daddy teaches her and her brother Derek the true meaning of "doing it afraid." Follow along as Pilot Holmes makes her literary debut as Violet's flight teacher!

30% of all book sales support AeroStar Avion Institute, NFP, a female, minority owned NFP that teaches underrepresented youth in underserved neighborhoods about aviation STEM careers.

Buy your copy of ***Violet Takes Flight*** [HERE](#) today!

National Hispanic Heritage Month *Be Proud of Your Past, Embrace the Future* September 15–October 15, 2020

This month we reflect on the proud heritage of Latinos in aviation! Join with us as we celebrate the heroes and heroines who have made a difference at AeroStar and throughout the aviation industry!

Sophia Valez, Strategic Planner for AeroStar's Future



Sophia Valez
Nonprofit Program Manager
Community Programs Accelerator
The University of Chicago

When asked to reflect on the future of AeroStar, the answer is simple: AeroStar is the future. The organization is propelling the aviation industry forward by providing educational and experiential learning opportunities for black and brown youth and young women. Even further, AeroStar is celebrated among the aviation community for its growing talent pipeline, which is allowing current and future generations of AeroStars to assume their roles as leaders within the industry.

This is why I moved to Chicago—to work with organizations like AeroStar that are doing groundbreaking work and seeking equity and justice during a time when change is a must. Currently, I am a graduate student at the University of Chicago, pursuing a Master's degree in Social Service Administration. I came to be a part of the AeroStar team through my role as a Nonprofit Project Manager at the University's Community Programs Accelerator. I have had the privilege of working alongside AeroStar to plan for the future and implement the organization's strategic goals.

Upon meeting AeroStar's executive visionary, Mrs. Tammera Holmes, I was captivated by the organization's mission. I knew I was in the right place at the right time to witness history in the making.

AeroStar's mission, to break down barriers in higher education and increase access to college for youth of color, aligns with my own experience of being a Mexican-American from a low-income background and being the first in my family to graduate from college.

I am excited to have been chosen to work with AeroStar because their vision, "giving wings to dreams and helping kids take flight," is personal to me. The organization is transforming the lives of kids here in Chicago, across the United States, and even within my own family. I have passed down this knowledge to my younger brother, who is now inspired to explore aviation as a career pathway himself! Truly, AeroStar is making a positive impact on the lives of many.

Through my time with AeroStar, I have learned so much about the aviation industry and the many exciting careers that make up the field. It is an honor to be connected to an organization that celebrates the brilliance and beauty within communities of color. I am proud to have been welcomed into the AeroStar family to help create opportunities for young people to thrive here in Chicago and beyond!

Diego Perez, Licensed to Fly!



Diego Perez, AeroStar Ambassador, Licensed Pilot

Originally from Jalisco, Mexico, I immigrated to Chicago when I was five years old. By the time I reached high school, I didn't know what I wanted to do. My mom wanted me to go into medicine, but I didn't think I could do that. I couldn't handle the sight of blood.

When I was a kid, my mom used to choose a lot of things for me, but I told her you have to let me choose what I want to be in life. So she gave me the freedom of choosing a high school. At first I wanted to go to ChiArts because I like dance and music, but she talked me out of it. She wanted me to have a more stable job.

As an immigrant, I guess traveling is in my blood. One day, I looked up in the sky and saw a plane. Then and there I decided to become a pilot. After all, pilots get paid to travel! I spoke to my elementary school counselor about it, and she recommended Air Force Academy High School. I became a freshman there in 2013.

My freshman boot class teacher strongly recommended that I join AeroStar. I applied to enter the program through After School Matters during my freshman year and stuck with it all four years of high school. I worked hard. I didn't miss one semester. Even when I played soccer and volleyball, I made sure I stuck with the program.

Thanks to AeroStar, I fulfilled my dream of becoming a pilot! I did my pilot's training with Tuskegee Next. It is an eight-week program, and at the end of the eight weeks, I was flying by myself. I received my private pilot's license when I was 17 years old! That was a big joke at the DMV because I had gotten my pilot's license before my driver's license.

The hardest part about learning how to fly was understanding the people in the control tower and ground control. English is my second language, and when they were talking superfast through static, it was hard to catch everything they said. But I stuck with it.

My favorite thing about flying was being up there, cruising. When I flew by myself, I said, "Diego, you can't be scared because it's up to you." I think best under pressure.

I want to continue to fly. I used to want to fly professionally, but that has changed. Currently, I help run my parents' produce business, but if I had the money to go through the training, I would do it for sure. I could fly across the world and get paid for it. Until then, I'll be flying recreationally.

Lessons Learned

Immigrants like me work extra hard because of that experience of crossing over. AeroStar further helped me discipline myself. I became more mature in my decision making. I learned to work with others in a team, and most important of all, I learned how to lead. I went from doing little stuff to getting out of my comfort zone. Today, I use the lessons I learned at AeroStar in running my parents' business.

Like I always tell my sister, "Business first, fun later." There were times during high school when my friends would want to go eat, go to the park, etc., but I had to do AeroStar. I'd tell them I'll go another day. I like to pass the things I learned down to my younger siblings. My sister and I have bonded more. I tell her I want to teach her. I want to give her advice that I wish I had gotten.

You can make the impossible possible if you put your mind to it. To this day, I can't believe I did all that at AeroStar! If I can get all that done, I can do anything!

On the Radar

Hispanic Firsts in Aviation History



Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Olga Custodio, first Latina military pilot (from San Juan, Puerto Rico).



Major Marisol A. Chalas, first Latina National Guard Black Hawk pilot (from the Dominican Republic).



Felix Rigau Carrera, first Hispanic fighter pilot in the United States Marines during World War 1 (from Sabana Grande, Puerto Rico).



In 1910, Peruvian aviator and engineer Jorge Chavez became the first person to fly across the Alps. He was 23 years old.

Read all about these amazing pilots [HERE](#) (Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum)!

Credits

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