



# Welcome to AeroStar News!

## Pomp and Circumstance Revisited



Dear AeroStar Family and Friends,

The 2020-2021 school year has been a year like none other. In this special issue of AeroStar News, we will celebrate the heroic efforts of AeroStar students who continued to learn despite the social, emotional, and academic challenges they faced in transitioning from in-person classroom learning to online. Not only did our students achieve lift-off from the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks in part to the AeroVerse E-Learning Academy, they maintained a high altitude of determination and success throughout the year. We are proud of them!

Ironically, as the school year is ending, schools are now returning to in-person learning. If Covid cases continue to fall during the summer months, students will return to a more “normal,” traditional classroom in August and September.

But what about our graduates? How will the past year impact their future educational and career plans? Without a doubt, they will not see a return to normal for some time to come. And when it comes to paying for education, that may not be a bad thing.

### The High Cost of Post-Secondary Education

In 2020, student loan debt totaled a record \$1.6 trillion ([Forbes](#)), increasing more than 100% in 10 years ([CNBC](#)). Some 43.2 million student borrowers are in debt by an average of \$39,351 each ([educationdata.org](#)).

African American students have been hit the hardest. Educationdata.org presents the following dismal statistics (see [here](#) and [here](#)):

- Black college students are the most likely to use federal loans, with 49.4% borrowing.
- 30% of Black college graduates with student loans default in the first 12 years of repayment.
- Four years after graduation, 48% of Black students owe an average of 12.5% more than they borrowed.
- Black student borrowers are the most likely to struggle financially due to student loan debt, with 29% making monthly payments of \$350 or more.
- Black college graduates owe an average of \$25,000 more in student loan debt than

White college graduates.

Clearly, African Americans suffer the most, but regardless of a student's race – or gender for that matter – this economic state of affairs is not sustainable. How did we get here? Four-year colleges and universities have a monopoly on post-secondary education, and from middle school to high school, students are aggressively guided into this single educational pathway.

### **Exciting Options in Aviation Training**

For students seeking careers in aviation, however, there are more cost and time efficient training pathways. According to Boeing's Pilot and Technician Outlook: 2020-2039:

"Amid challenges posed by COVID-19, the training industry has begun to adopt increasingly innovative solutions. Many providers have transitioned their offerings to online and virtual formats where possible, allowing students to continue their learning safely. Immersive technologies, adaptive learning and flexible distance learning methods are also being explored to enable optimum learning and knowledge retention. Investments in technology that are being made today will likely lead to a long-term fundamental shift in how training is conducted." ([Source](#))

At AeroStar, we help students pursue a variety of training pathways, including two-year colleges, trade schools, flight schools, and the military. For example, in this issue you'll read about our work with the Gary Area Career Center where, thanks to a generous grant from The Boeing Company, students enjoy a direct training path to well-paying aviation jobs.

Our students are well equipped to succeed in these rigorous programs, and they matriculate without taking on enormous debt loads. Once they've landed the job of their dreams, they can continue to learn at a four-year university if they so desire. As a bonus, many companies in the industry offer tuition reimbursement. Win win!

### **June, A Month to Celebrate**

June will a busy month for AeroStar! The Tuskegee Airmen Young Eagles Rally on Saturday, June 12th, kicks off our BAE Week (Black Aviation Excellence) events, including Bessie Coleman's 100th year anniversary celebration, our College Take-Off event, and Juneteenth. Stay tuned!

Giving Wings to Dreams!

#### **Tammera L. Holmes**

President & CEO, AeroStar Consulting Corporation  
Founder & CEO, AeroStar Avion Institute NFP

#wingstodreams

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## **Congratulations, AeroStar Graduates!**

AeroStar graduates are well prepared to pursue their dreams! They worked hard to achieve this significant life milestone, and we honor and salute their success. Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

### **MILITARY**

**NaChiya Turner** – US Army, Air Traffic Control  
**Giodanni Victor** – US Navy, Helicopter Unit  
**Byron Whaley** – USAF Reserves, Aircraft Hydraulics

### **COLLEGE**

**Briya McIntyre** – Bachelor in Aviation Management and Bachelor in Marketing, University of Dubuque Iowa

**Eseroghene Omene** – Computer Science, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Jaylen Bush** – Bachelor in Unmanned Aerial System, Lewis University, Part 107 Drone Licensed

**Mya Coley** – Bachelor in Aviation Management, Lewis University, Instrument Pilot Rating

**Mercedes Oliver** – Bachelor in Aviation Maintenance Technology, Lewis University

## HIGH SCHOOL

**Zanaiya O'Neil Greene** – Northern Illinois University (Undeclared)

**Angel Cardenas** – Aviation Flight, Lewis University

**Sarai Stuart** – Aeronautical Science with a concentration in Flight, Florida Memorial University

## 8TH GRADE

**Roderick Mack**

**Christian Copeland**

**Derek Preston Crenshaw**



Briya McIntyre received her BS in Aviation Management and Business Administration (double major) with a minor in Marketing from the University of Iowa-Dubuque.

## AeroStar Alum Wins Internship



**Mya Coley**

- Intern, Exelon Corporation
- Lead Instructor, AeroStar

Congratulations to AeroStar alum, Mya Coley, who will join the Exelon Corporation as an intern in the company's coveted internship program. Recently featured on the MyFAA website, Mya is currently a senior at Lewis University and will graduate in May 2022 with a bachelor's degree in Aviation Administration. The aspiring corporate pilot has already received her private pilot's license, instrument rating, and remote pilot license. Mya is active in Women in Aviation International, the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals, and the Chicago Area Business Aviation Association. In addition to her studies at Lewis, Mya is

- Senior, Lewis University

AeroStar's lead instructor, teaching aerospace concepts to K-12 students.

## AeroStar Alum Serves His Country



AeroStar Alum Byron Whaley is currently serving in the United States Air Force Reserve (Texas) with an assignment in Aircraft Hydraulics. Byron was in AeroStar's very first class funded by The Boeing Company. Because of Boeing's investment in AeroStar, we were able to launch our community aviation program.

*(center) Byron studies an airplane with Tuskegee Next cadets at the Illinois Aviation Academy, DuPage Airport.*



## AeroStar Alum Achieves Career Lift Off



Amari Smith, AeroStar After School Matters alum and current AeroAmbassador, has begun his aviation career with a position in Operations at Midway Airport.

## Students Fly High At Gary Area Career Center





Students Shani Bridgeman (L) and Samya Fluker (R) on flight simulators with Instructor Vanzell Jenkins.

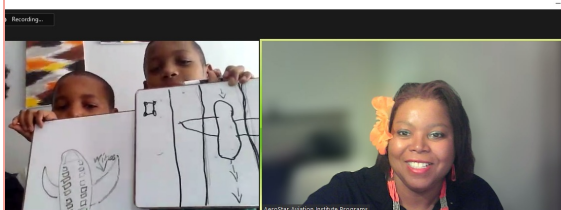


The Gary Area Career Center is the oldest career and technical education facility in Northwest Indiana. Thanks to a generous grant from The Boeing Company, AeroStar offers STEM and aviation training as an in-school program for youth in grades 9-12. In addition, we help pipeline youth K-8 at the John Will Anderson Boys & Girls Club of Greater Northwest Indiana into GACC programs.

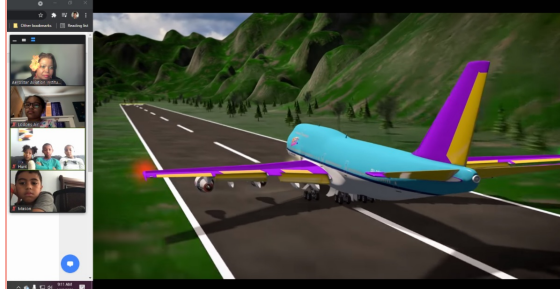
*"The Aviation program at the Gary Area Career Center has taken flight. Students are interested and engaged in lessons that have them looking forward to continuing their careers in Aviation from all aspects. Through our great partnership with Aerostar, more students from diverse backgrounds are learning components in the field of aviation to accelerate their knowledge towards reaching their career endeavors." – Shelly Martin, Director of CTE Curriculum, Instruction and Career Pathways, Gary Career Center-District 3*

For more information on the AeroStar/GACC partnership, visit [here](#).

## Aviation Basics with Instructor Erica Okogun



*The final lesson of the Spring term covered airport basics. Armond (L) and Antonio (R) proudly show their airplane drawings to Instructor Erica Okogun.*



*Students learned the process of runway clearance and take-off. In a later video, they also learned about*

the four forces of flight and how a plane lands.

During the Spring term (February 13-April 17), Instructor Erica Okogun taught students Intro to Aviation, History of Aviation, Aircraft Anatomy, Flight Theory, and Airport Basics. By the final class, students were able to identify some parts of the airplane and the four forces of flight. Some students made several advanced projects.

*"The students had so much fun! They wanted more classes and are excited to join the next up-and-coming classes. Seeing their joy, energy, and retention was a delight. Family members were excited to help with their students' projects. Some were happy to see a piece of paper fly with a few manipulations. Other family members signed up to volunteer for the AeroStar Avion Institute." – Instructor Erica Okogun*

### Career Day at Sarah E. Goode STEM School

Career days provide an excellent hands-on opportunity to expose students to the many careers available in the aviation industry. A child is never too young to learn about aviation!



## Field Trips: AeroStar Students Explore the World of Aviation Onsite

### AeroStar Instructors and Ambassadors (Alums) Invited By American Airlines to Tour Facilities

On April 14th, licensed and student pilots in college and AeroStar instructors were invited by American Airlines to attend a career exploration and professional development event at O'Hare Airport. Hosted by American Airlines and guided by Chief Pilot Timothy Raynor, students viewed Boeing's 787, 777, and 737 planes at Terminal 3.

*"Hi Mrs. Holmes. I wanted to let you know that I had a really great time Wednesday. It really changed my perspective on many things. I would love to get more involved with AeroStar! I love everything your organization does. Please keep me in mind for any volunteer opportunities you guys have. I appreciate the opportunity!" – Ashantee, AeroStar Mentee*



Aviation Career Day  
at Priester Aviation

O'Hare International  
Airport Tour





AeroStar students attended Aviation Career Day at Priester Aviation, Chicago Executive Airport in Wheeling, Illinois. Laurreal Shannon (l) and Briya McIntyre (r).



AeroStar students toured O'Hare International Airport. (l-r) Briya McIntyre, Darielle Kennedy, Tammera Holmes, Jai Bartley.

## AR, VR to Enhance Learning for AeroStar Students



AeroStar is collaborating with ARSOME Technology Group, LLC, to design enhanced content that provides memorable experiences for students. AeroStar's proprietary five-module curriculum will be enhanced with ARSOME's Augmented Reality (AR) or Virtual Reality (VR) technology. Each module will be designed for three

student levels: elementary, middle, and high school.

As students interact with “real” world objects in VR and immerse themselves in AR worlds, we expect that engagement, comprehension, and retention will be heightened, and that at least 70% of students will complete the modules. Best practices to ensure student safety will be implemented.

Not only will AR/VR-enhanced modules provide a “wow” factor for learning, the technology will increase knowledge retention, build technical skills, bolster STEM confidence, and enable measurement of learning outcomes.



## AeroStar Instructors Attend Professional Development Retreat





AeroStar held an online retreat for instructors on April 23, 2021. We debriefed the Fall and Spring terms, and discussed best practices in instructor performance, areas of improvement, and goals for the Summer session. While most instructors felt they had the resources and tools they need to be successful, our goal is to get to 100%.

## AeroStar in the News!

AeroStar CEO Tamera L. Holmes appeared on the Perri Small Show (WVON) with Praise Wright and Byron Whaley.



## AeroStar Celebrates Bessie Coleman

**AeroStar Avion Institute**  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
**the DuSable.**  
MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY  
A Smithsonian Affiliate

PROGRAM PARTNER  
**BOEING**

ation Aéronautique  
Internationale  
FRANCE  
Signature du Titulaire  
Bessie Coleman  
18310

**BESSIE COLEMAN  
100**  
"The People Could Fly"

**JUN  
15  
2021**

**5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**  
740 E. 56TH PLACE  
CHICAGO, IL 60637

**AeroStar**  
AVION INSTITUTE  
[www.avioninstitute.org](http://www.avioninstitute.org)

100 years after Bessie Coleman received her private pilots license in France, because no flight school in America would take a colored girl, African-American female's make up less than 1/2 of 1% (0.5%) of airline pilots flying today. African Americans overall make up less that 5% of the Aviation industry. This is

not due to lack of interest or skill, but can be directly attributed to discriminatory practices that have eliminated access and created barriers to entry for millions of black and brown people over generations. AeroStar's Aerospace Talent Pipeline Project in partnership with The Boeing Company, United Airlines, Milhouse Charities, and many more, is changing the narrative.

Please join us at The DuSable Museum of African-American history to celebrate Queen Bess and the future of a more diverse and inclusive aviation industry. Get your tickets [here](#).

## Register Now for Online Programs at the AeroVerse E-Learning Academy (Click [here](#) for details.)

### Coming This Summer... (Click [here](#) for course descriptions.)

1. Intro to Aerospace Engineering
2. Intro to Helicopters
3. Intro to Rocketry
4. Private Pilot Ground School



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### Specialty Courses \*\*\*Prices May Vary\*\*\* (click [here](#) for details)

Are you serious about pursuing an aviation career? Take your training to the next level with our Specialty Courses Program. You'll be on track to pursue the career of your dreams!

1. Intro to Drones, Session 2 (click [HERE](#) to register today!)
2. Drone Licensing (click [HERE](#) to be waitlisted)



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**Get Ready for Our K-12 Summer  
2021 Programs!**

**Registration opens in June.  
Click below to join a waitlist.**

AeroSparks K-4: [waitlist](#)



Grades 5-8: [waitlist](#)

Grades 9-12: [waitlist](#)

## Scholarships Available!

### CABAA 2021 Scholarships: Apply now!



Due June 1, 2021

- Ken Johnson Memorial Scholarship
- CABAA/Maintenance Committee Financial Scholarship
- CABAA Financial Scholarship
- FlightSafety/CAE Maintenance Professional Training Award
- FlightSafety Principles of Troubleshooting Training Award
- FlightSafety and CAE SIC Professional Pilot Training Award

VISIT [WWW.CABAA.COM/APPLICATIONS](http://WWW.CABAA.COM/APPLICATIONS) TO LEARN MORE!



1. AeroStar Aviation STEM Scholarship: click [HERE](#).
2. Chicago Area Business Aviation Association Scholarships (CABAA): click [HERE](#).
3. Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals Scholarships (OBAP): click [HERE](#).
4. Women in Aviation Scholarships: click [HERE](#).
5. United Credit Union Scholarship: click [HERE](#).

## Donate Today!

One person *can* make a difference. Your generosity will help the AeroStar Avion Institute train and prepare students—K-12, college, and beyond—to pursue the aviation and aerospace careers of their dreams!

### **Please donate!**

We're fired up about our mission to train and employ youth in this exciting industry, and we need your help more than ever before. To give, click [HERE](#). Your donation is tax deductible, and 100% of your gift goes toward training the next generation of aviation and aerospace professionals.

***Invest in the passion ... the mission ... [DONATE NOW!](#)***

Give Wings to Dreams!

## Book Teaches Kids to Fly Through Fear



What if you were afraid to fly? Authors Kenyatta Scott and Tamera L. Holmes join forces to show girls and boys how to face their fears!



## Tamera L. 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!

#thevioletbookseries  
#wingstodreams

## ON THE RADAR

In a unique partnership blending aviation, education, and diversity, the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and Alaska Airlines have created an aircraft that makes a powerful statement of diversity in the skies. "Alaska Airlines' special aircraft is a symbol of their commitment to education and advancing racial equity at Alaska Airlines, and the company hopes it inspires others as well," (Source: [HERE](#))

Dr. Martin Luther King's quote, "Do what is right," is emblazoned on the side of the aircraft. During his 1964 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, he also said, "We have learned to **fly the air like birds** and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together as brothers." This partnership between UNCF and Alaska Airlines moves us one step closer to Dr. King's dream. (Photo source: [HERE](#).)





*From Alaska Airlines:*

*"We are on a journey to make Alaska Airlines a place where everyone belongs and has opportunity. We also believe education is the key to equity and representation, with the power to transform the lives of young people—opening doors to careers in aviation and beyond. In partnership with UNCF, this special aircraft is a symbol of our commitment to education and advancing racial equity at Alaska Airlines, and we hope it inspires others as well." ([Source](#))*

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