



AEROSTAR
AVION INSTITUTE

PROPEL

Aviation Awards Gala

HONORING A LEGACY

THE FOUNDER'S RECEPTION:
SCHOLARSHIP AND
REMEMBRANCE OF

TAMMERA L. HOLMES

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SEPTEMBER 6, 2025

VIP EARLY ACCESS AT 6:00 PM
GENERAL ADMISSION AT 6:30 PM

IN SPONSORSHIP WITH



WELCOME LETTER



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to the inaugural Propel Gala. Tonight, we gather in celebration, in remembrance, and in purpose. We come together to honor the extraordinary life and vision of our founder, Dr. Tamera L. Holmes, and to carry her legacy forward.

Dr. Holmes dedicated her life to opening the skies to all students — especially Black, Brown, and female youth who too often had the talent but not the access. Because of her tireless work, countless students now see themselves in places they once thought impossible — in cockpits, classrooms, hangars, and boardrooms.

Tonight, we honor her with remembrance and tribute. We launch the Dr. Tamera L. Holmes Scholarship Fund, ensuring her vision continues to take flight through the dreams of future aviators, engineers, and leaders. And we invite you to join us in this mission — because every gift, every act of support, helps propel a student closer to their destiny.

On behalf of the AeroStar Avion Institute, our students, and the Holmes family, thank you for being here. Your presence and generosity make this evening possible. Together, we will ensure that Dr. Holmes' light never dims and that her powerful vision of equity and opportunity in aviation continues to soar for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Kristy Farrakhan

Executive Director & Co-founder

AeroStar Avion Institute

EVENT PROGRAM

Event Emcee Carlette Seifullah

6:00 – 6:30 PM | Legacy Circle Toast & Welcome for VIP Guests

Sip, mingle, and enjoy exclusive moments—live music, raffle previews, and a special tribute toast.

6:30 PM | Doors Open for General Admission

Grab a drink, place your bids, and join the fun—it's time to mix, mingle, and make memories.



7:45 PM | Main Program Begins

Welcome & Opening - Sherelle Withers, AAI Vice President

Continuing the Mission - Selena Berry, Program Manager

Community Award Presentation - Kimmy Butler, AAI Treasurer

United Airlines Scholarship presentation & Remarks

Anel Ruiz, United Airlines Managing Director, People Impact

Invocation & Moment of Reflection -

Mr. Ken Rapiere, President of the Tuskegee Airmen DoDo chapter

Student Reflection - Praise Wright, Former AeroStar Student

Dr. Tammera L. Holmes Family Award Presentation -

Kristina Wynne, AAI BOD Secretary

Spoken Word Performance -

Sis. Yavonka Muhammad

Tribute Videos

Words from the Director - Kristy Farrakhan (Executive Director/ Co-Founder)

Raffle & Auction Announcement & Closing Remarks

10:00 PM | Event Concludes



About Dr. Tamera L. Holmes

Dr. Tamera L. Holmes was a trailblazer, visionary, teacher, and tireless advocate for equity in aviation. From her earliest flight experiences, she understood both the joy of soaring and the barriers that kept so many others grounded.

As a Black woman navigating a field where faces like hers were too few, Dr. Holmes committed her life to changing that reality. After more than a decade working in airport planning and development, she turned her focus to entrepreneurship.

In 2008, she launched AeroStar Consulting Corporation, becoming one of the few women of color to own an aviation company. From that consulting work, the AeroStar Avion Institute was formed — a nonprofit dedicated to exposing and empowering underrepresented youth, especially Black, Brown, and female students, to pursue careers in aviation and aerospace.

Through AeroStar, her work reminded us all that representation matters — and that when young people see themselves in the skies, they begin to dream without limits.

Dr. Holmes' legacy is not only measured in the number of students she trained or programs she built, but in the countless lives she touched, the ceilings she shattered, and the community she empowered. She reminded us that aviation is not just about airplanes — it is about opening minds, changing lives, and giving wings to dreams.

Though she is no longer with us, her vision continues to soar through every student who takes flight and every supporter who believes in the future she worked so hard to build.



AEROSTAR
AVION INSTITUTE

1200+
YOUTH
IMPACTED

68% FEMALE
80% BLACK & LATINO
REPRESENTATION

AAI 2025 IMPACT



92%
REPORTED INCREASED
INTEREST IN AVIATION
CAREERS.



15
STUDENT PILOTS

THANK YOU

Thank You to All Our Inaugural Scholarship Supporters

The **Dr. Tammera L. Holmes Scholarship Fund** was established to advance her life's work: ensuring that **Black, Brown, and female students** are not only introduced to aviation but also fully supported in pursuing it as a career. Dr. Holmes believed that equity in aviation is essential to the industry's future. She dreamed of a world where these students could see themselves in every corner of aviation — from cockpits to control towers, from classrooms to boardrooms.

Because of your generosity, that vision continues to take flight. Every gift — large or small — invests in a future where the aviation field reflects the diversity, brilliance, and determination of the students Dr. Holmes championed.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all who contributed.

A special thanks to our top contributors whose extraordinary generosity helped launch this fund:

- **United Airlines**
- **Faculty of the SIU School of Aviation**
- **Darryl Smith**

Thank You

Dr. Tammera L. Holmes Inaugural Scholarship Fund Awardees



FLIGHT AWARD: SYED ALI

At just 16, Syed Ali has soloed an aircraft, passed his Private Pilot Written Exam, and earned his FAA Part 107 drone certification through AeroStar's Aviation Flight Talent Pipeline. With over 50 flight hours, he aspires to study Aeronautical Engineering, become a Certified Flight Instructor, and eventually launch his own aircraft company.

AWARD: \$9,000



MAINTENANCE AWARD: GIANNIA O'NEAL-SCHULTZ

Giannia O'Neal-Schultz, now studying aircraft maintenance at Western Michigan University, has turned her love for hands-on work into a path in aviation. A participant in AeroStar's Flight Talent Pipeline, she has shown resilience and dedication despite challenges and represents the promise of the next generation of aviation leaders.

AWARD: \$5,000



THE GUIDING LIGHT AWARD: GABRIELLE FULLILOVE

Gabrielle Fullilove, a Spelman College mathematics graduate, is an inspiring instructor and aviator dedicated to education and mentorship. She taught AeroStar's Aviation Exploration program and is completing her Private Pilot License with over 50 flight hours.

AWARD: \$4,000

DONATE NOW



**THE PROPEL GALA IS MORE THAN A CELEBRATION—
IT'S A CALL TO ACTION.**

Together, we aim to raise \$100,000 to:

- Award scholarships to underserved students
- Launch new training cohorts in flight, maintenance, and drones
- Provide stipends, travel, and uniforms

Your gift fuels the Dr. Tamera L. Holmes Scholarship Fund and empowers youth to see themselves where they've never seen anyone like them before. Be the lift they need.



Auction Items

Kentucky Bourbon Trail



LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Enjoy a 3-night getaway for four along the Bourbon Trail with tours and tastings at three top distilleries. Explore Lexington's charm with visits to Keeneland Race Course, horse-drawn carriage rides, or nearby horse farms and golf courses. The trip includes a delicious dinner at Tony's Steakhouse. Comfortably accommodates up to 4 guests

SkyScape Grand Canyon



SOUTH RIM GRAND CANYON, AZ

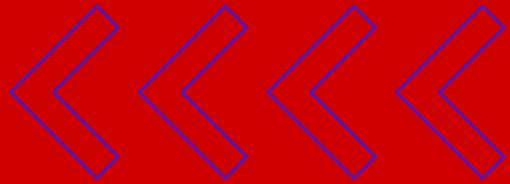
Enjoy a 3-night glamping escape near the Grand Canyon in a cozy Sky Dome for five. Explore hiking trails, horseback rides, and Colorado River adventures by day, then unwind with stargazing, live music, and fireside s'mores by night. Accommodates a group of 5

Viva Mexico: The Ultimate Resort Escape



Puerto Vallarta, Cabo San Lucas, Ixtapa, or Mazatlán, MX

Experience an unforgettable 7-night getaway for two! Spend a full week escaping the everyday with relaxation, adventure, and memories you'll treasure forever. Explore local markets, savor authentic cuisine, or try adventures like snorkeling, paddleboarding, or sailing. Accommodates 2 people



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