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## **Summer Flight Academy Brings Students From Across the Globe**

Texas Southern University's Airway Science Department and the Black Pilots Association (BPA) /Les Morris Summer Flight Academy will team up again for their 6th summer flight academy. Sixteen (16) high school students from all over the country will be on the campus of Texas Southern and Ellington Air Force Base from July 11<sup>th</sup> until the academy's graduation date of July 25<sup>th</sup>.

The BPA Summer Flight Academy seeks to excite young people about flying and their potential as participants in the field of aviation. The flight instructors are all experienced professionals who volunteer their time and share a combined 165 years of experience in the aviation field with the young people in the BPA Summer Flight Academy.

"The Summer Flight Academy was founded thirty-six (36) years ago by Les Morris, a pioneer in the field of aviation, who has always believed in giving back," stated Fred Lewis, Assistant Director of the flight academy.

Lewis adds, "Everyone working with this program volunteers their time and effort to ensure that each student has an intense, informational and fun experience in this program. Each of us works year round to make sure that all the program supplies, instructors and curriculum are in place when the students arrive."

Each program recipient will receive 10 hours of flight time and 40 hours of ground instruction. The highly concentrated ground instruction and flight training the Academy offers, the requirement that students have at least a "B" average, be between the ages of 15-19, and be highly motivated towards flying is strictly enforced.

Learning to fly requires more than getting into an airplane and taking off. It also requires that students study the materials and pass the FAA Private Pilot Written Exam. Each day program participants attend class which is taught by experienced teachers using the latest audio visual equipment and computers. At the discretion and approval of the instructors and the supervisor, students who complete the course may be allowed to perform a solo flight of the aircraft.

According to Fred Lewis, "There are two major goals that we want our students to accomplish--to see if they can solo; and to pass the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) written exam. Invariably four students have passed the exam each year we have had this program."

When asked why he does what he does, Gen. John Bailey stated simply, "There was a time you walked through the airport and the faces you saw were pushing brooms. We want to change that. It's about the kids. We have to leave a legacy and prepare the next generation." He went on to say, "It's about giving back. We want to show them that there are over 100 different fields that they can go in to. This is a once in a lifetime experience for the students."

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