



University OUTREACH
College of Continuing Education
College of Liberal Studies

Media Contact: Ken Carson
Director, OU Department of Aviation
405-325-7017
kencarson@ou.edu

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OU DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH AMERICAN EAGLE

NORMAN, Okla. – The University of Oklahoma Department of Aviation and American Eagle Airlines, Inc. signed an agreement last week giving aviation students an opportunity to launch their regional or major airline careers with American Eagle.

“We are excited and so appreciative of American Eagle for supporting OU’s aviation program,” said Richard Little, Ed.D., senior associate vice president for the OU College of Continuing Education. “It is a great opportunity for our students to step up and become involved with a premiere organization.”

Under this pipeline agreement, American Eagle will hire qualified OU graduates who meet requirements set forth by the company. Interested students could be selected to participate in the program as early as their sophomore year in the aviation program. Participants will be required to have an instrument rating, maintain a 3.0 GPA and be enrolled in either the professional pilot or aviation management – flying concentration.

Upon graduation, students who successfully complete the program will become American Eagle employees and serve as certified flight instructors based at OU. In that capacity, the new employees will accrue the necessary flight time required to become first officers, also known as co-pilots, in addition to receiving the privileges and benefits of full-time American Eagle employees and a \$10,000 signing bonus.

“This is really a game changer for our industry and for students wanting to be pilots,” said Ken Carson, director of the OU Department of Aviation. “OU’s aviation program has a long relationship of

supplying quality pilot graduates to American Eagle Airlines, and we are pleased that our program will continue to train some of the finest pilots in the nation.”

This agreement comes at the start of an anticipated pilot shortage expected to increase over the next ten years.

“Looking at the demands in the industry, with this agreement we’ve really tried to step in and create a career path for those who want to be pilots,” said Capt. Nick Alford, American Eagle chief of pilot recruitment.

Alford also noted how important it is for airlines to connect with America’s youth to interest children in becoming pilots. One way American Eagle did this locally was to have pilots visit the Sooner Flight Academy, a series of children’s day camps run by the OU Department of Aviation, in summer 2013.

American Eagle Airlines is one of the largest regional carriers in the world, serving American Airlines with a fleet of more than 240 jets. The airline operates more than 1,300 daily flights to more than 170 cities throughout the United States, Canada, the Bahamas, Mexico and the Caribbean.

The OU Department of Aviation offers four undergraduate bachelor of science degrees in the College of Continuing Education: air traffic management, aviation management, aviation management non-flying and professional pilot.

For more information about the OU Department of Aviation, visit aviation.ou.edu.

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Cutline: (Left to Right) Capt. Trevor Johnson, American Eagle flight safety chief and 2002 OU graduate; Richard Little, Ed.D., senior associate vice president for the OU College of Continuing Education; Capt. Nick Alford, American Eagle chief of pilot recruitment; and Ken Carson, director of the OU Department of Aviation, hold a signed pipeline agreement between the OU Department of Aviation and American Eagle Airlines, Inc., giving aviation graduates the opportunity to launch their careers with American Eagle. Photo by Hugh Scott.