



SOUTH CAROLINA
AVIATION
ASSOCIATION

Contact: Melanie Friscoe
P: (877) 359-7222
E: Melanie@beaconamc.net

SCAA Announces 2020 Scholarship Recipients

Charleston, S.C. – South Carolina Aviation Association (SCAA) has awarded five scholarships to South Carolinians pursuing careers in the aviation industry. Each individual received a \$1,000 award to aid them in their pursuits.

Kirk Bennett of Summerville, S.C., is a student at the Governor's School of Science and Mathematics who plans to attend Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. Kirk said, "I have loved flying in airplanes since I was three years old. When I had the chance to fly an airplane through the Young Eagles program, I knew this was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life." Amanda Aldea, Craft Flight Training Co-Owner, said, "At such a young age, Kirk's drive and focus on the goal of getting his pilot license and pursuing an engineering degree shows that he is exactly the kind of pilot we want to encourage and help to achieve his goals."

Ladson, S.C.'s, Juan Pina Gomez started flight training two years ago. He obtained his Private Pilot license in 2019 and his Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) rating in February 2020 and is currently working toward a Commercial rating. A May 2017 graduate of Trident Technical College in North Charleston, S.C., he plans to advance his education by acquiring a Bachelor's degree in Aviation Technology, and he aspires to become a major airline pilot. Barry Emerson, Co-Owner/ Head Flight Instructor of CRAFT Flight Training & Simulations where Juan has been a student since April 2019 said, "Juan's goals of becoming a commercial airline pilot is an ambitious goal, and he has faced several challenges throughout his training." Barry added, "Even given that, he is a consistent and dedicated student."

Joanna Meza is a student at Embry Aeronautical University, majoring in Aeronautics with a minor in Aviation Maintenance Operations. The Greenville, S.C., resident began her aviation

-more-

journey in the Aircraft Maintenance Program at Greenville Technical College. Joanna is employed full time with Anderson Regional Airport in Anderson, S.C., as an A&P Mechanic. She feels her A&P certificate and Associate Degree in Applied Science was a stepping stone. “Each certification I have obtained has been a significant milestone of my career,” Joanna said. Brett Garrison, Anderson Regional Airport Manager, says, “Joanna is a valuable member of our team, and we look forward to seeing her excel in her aviation career dream.”

Henry Nguyen of Greenville is a student in the Aerospace: Professional Pilot program at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) with goals for a career in aviation. Henry aims to earn his Private Pilot license, Instrument Rating certificate, Commercial Pilot certificate and multi-engine rating. He plans to become a flight instructor at MTSU and gain considerable experience teaching new flight students. Henry expects to explore two career paths: commercial airline pilot or owning his own flight school. Greenville Downtown Airport (GMU) Director Joe Frasher said, “Henry has been shadowing Sonny Massey and the other air traffic controllers at GMU,” in preparation for a career in aviation, adding, “He is an excellent candidate to receive scholarship assistance from SCAA.”

A full-time employee of Greenville-Spartanburg Airport District/Cerulean Aviation FBO as a line service technician, Greenville’s Walker Weathers is a student at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. Walker says, “In the next year, I plan to earn a CFI certificate and a Bachelor’s degree in Aeronautical Science. I would love to work for the flight school I train with so I can help future students, and my dream is to work for SpaceX while continuing flight instructing on the side.” Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport Senior Vice President/COO Kevin Howell said, “Walker is very intelligent, an aviation enthusiast, and is safety conscious. He provides great customer services and displays excellent judgment in his job performance.”

SCAA actively promotes and encourages aviation and airport development to meet air transportation needs and assist the state in achieving economic development goals. Its membership is comprised of airports and aviators across South Carolina, as well as aviation industry partners. For more information, please visit scaaonline.com.

###