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SCAA Announces 2023 Scholarship Recipients

Charleston, S.C. – The South Carolina Aviation Association (SCAA) has awarded five scholarships to South Carolinians pursuing careers in the aviation industry.

Caden Eversole, of Catawba, S.C., recently graduated from Legion Collegiate Academy and will attend Clemson University in the fall. He is currently employed by Pilatus Business Aircraft as a customer service representative. He plans to continue working with Pilatus during college and plans to train with the Clemson Flight Club. Caden said, “My goal is to incorporate my aviation experience and qualifications to enhance my success in the aviation industry.” After college graduation, he hopes to continue his aviation aspirations as a flight instructor, commercial pilot and Airline Transport Pilot.

Austin Koch, of Chapin, S.C., graduated from Spring Hill High School and plans to attend Midlands Technical College in the fall to focus on Electronics Engineering Technology. Austin started working on flight training this year and has enjoyed it so much that he wants to make a career out of it. His flight instructor, Joe Bell, with S&S Aviation said, “I look forward to every session. Seldom does a student arrive with assignments completed to the point of explaining, in detail, how the session is going to proceed and a listing of topics to be covered.” After completing his associate degree, Austin plans on getting a bachelor’s degree, to make him eligible for a career in military aviation and a more enticing candidate for airlines.

Thomas Kepley, of Columbia, S.C., is a student at Clemson University studying Mechanical Engineering and Mathematical Science. Tommy is a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) and is giving lessons to students at the Clemson Flying Club. In addition, he joined the SC Civil Air Patrol and since joining has logged over 45 hours of flying time. “Tommy continues to live a life of aviation and is only 21 years of age. He is very passionate about a career in aviation and wants to “pay-it-forward” to help others find that same passion,” said Chris Eversmann, PE, AAE, Airport Manager at the Jim Hamilton - L.B. Owens

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Airport.

Ian Rogers, of Chapin, S.C., recently graduated from Chapin High School. He is headed to the University of South Carolina in the fall to major in Aerospace Engineering/Capstone Class Engineering Design and Development. Ian's professor, Dr. Martin Cwiakala recommended him for the scholarship and mentioned that Ian was a part of the District 5 Science Fair, the South Carolina Region II Science Fair, and the Junior Academy of Science (SCJAS). "Ian's team won 2nd Place Team Senior Division for Region II," said Cwiakala. Ian is excited about exploring space as an Aerospace Engineering student next year!

Joseph Gentry, of Columbia S.C., is a rising junior at Clemson University majoring in Mechanical Engineering and minoring in Aerospace Studies. Upon graduation, Joseph plans to enter the Air Force, as a developmental engineer and then work on the industry side of aviation. "While in high school, Joe attended mechanical engineering courses, and volunteered his time with the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation, assisting in the restoration of "Skunky" our beloved B-25C at CUB. Ranked near the top of his class, he was invited to attend Clemson University," said Joseph Barkevich with WK Dickson.

SCAA's scholarship program is open to South Carolina residents who attend, or will attend, an educational institution or flight school inside or outside the state. The application period for the next program cycle will open in Spring 2024.

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 S.C. airports, aviation industry partners and aviators across the state. For more information, please visit scaaonline.com.

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