

U.S. Navy Selects 20 Top Students for Summer Flight Academy

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – While some students will spend this summer doing odd jobs or hanging out with friends, 20 high-performing 11th and 12th graders from throughout the country will complete an intensive eight-week U.S. Navy Summer Flight Academy aviation program at either Delaware State University in Dover, Delaware, or Elizabeth City State University, in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Upon completion of the program, each student will earn a private pilot certification/license and five college credits.

The program was established in 2021 by the Commander, Naval Air Forces to increase diversity in the field of aviation. The Navy partners with select universities throughout the country to provide the flight training to the participating students. The cost of the program is approximately \$24,000 per student but is offered at zero cost to the student and with no obligations. The majority of this year's CNAF Selects are from minority demographic groups, with an equal male-female split for the program.

The Department of the Navy sponsors the Summer Flight Academy program for students participating in Navy and Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps. The program is a new STEM initiative that was selected for funding by the Naval STEM Coordination Office – located at the Office of Naval Research – which oversees investments in STEM education, outreach and workforce initiatives.

“The primary goal of the scholarship program is to expose exceptional minority students to a career path that currently lacks diversity,” says Cmdr. Chris “Frozone” Williams, a Navy

fighter pilot, instructor and director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. “These 20 students have what it takes to be leaders in the field of aviation, and the Navy is honored to play a part in their personal and professional journey.”

During the eight-week Summer Flight Academy, each student will receive a minimum of 32 hours of classroom aviation academics and 49 hours of flight training in either a Vulcanair V.10 single-engine aircraft or Piper Warrior (PA-28). As part of the certification process, students are required to complete 17 hours of solo flights.

2022 CNAF Summer Flight Academy Students

Scott Aflague – Guam (DSU)

Rishita Bagga – Richmond, Texas (DSU)

Samantha Boadu – Dumfries, Virginia (DSU)

La’Donte Buckhanan – Mandeville, Louisiana (DSU)

Isaac Carter – Grove City, Ohio (DSU)

Maya Charlton – Indian Trail, North Carolina (DSU)

Kennedy Childress – Fort Mill, South Carolina (DSU)

Ion Ciobanu – Manassas, Virginia (DSU)

Jadyn Dixon – Statesville, North Carolina (DSU)

Bonnie Frazer – Bayboro, North Carolina (DSU)

Zander Hamilton – Mukilteo, Washington (DSU)

Abby Harwick, Bayboro, North Carolina (DSU)

Blessings Kibet – Mobile, Alabama (ECSU)

Camden Korsmo – Corpus Christi, Texas (ECSU)

Alexander Le – St. Paul, Minnesota (DSU)

Tyler Smolensky – Highlands, New Jersey (DSU)

Kaitlyn Stake – Mt. Juliet, Tennessee (DSU)

Henry Stanley – Corpus Christi, Texas (DSU)

Xitali Vazquez – Phoenix, Arizona (ECSU)

Josh Ward – Stockton, California (ECSU)