



Planes, Perseverance, and Pride



Hello Aviation Alumni and Friends,

Well ... it's the middle of December and almost the start of another new year. Reflecting on the past year, it's hard not to think how all the challenges of the world were behind us. If the past year has taught us anything, resiliency would be high on the list. Just like what one of the greatest bands of the 1970's said, "Don't Stop thinking about tomorrow." Although the past could best be described as a mad roller coaster ride, every day brings a new experience and one day closer to the brighter future we all now is out there. Part of that bright future is the support of WMU's greatest group of alumni and friends! Thanks for continuing to be a part of our journey.

Our alumni feature this month is focused on aviation flight science alumni, and 2021 Excellence in Diversity Award winner, Joel Webley. A 2004 graduate of the College of Aviation, Webley has parlayed his time after graduation in the Air National Guard, and is now a first officer for FedEx Express. In addition, he is currently serving as the Chair for the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals.

For Webley's full story, scroll down and click the link. For additional stories on a couple of WMU faculty members, please make sure to visit the bottom of the page.

News, Events and Save the Dates!

- Because it is never too early to start planning – the 2022 Annual Aviation Golf Outing has been set. Get out your calendars and pencil in the date: Monday, June 6, 2022.
- Did you know your Football Broncos are playing in the Quick Lane Bowl, Monday, December 27 in Detroit? For more information, please visit the 2021 [Quick Lane Bowl site](#).
- Congratulations to the [Bronco Men's Hockey team](#). They are currently ranked #4 in the country!
- No Foolin! The College of Aviation will be hosting our annual Aviation Outlook Day on Friday, April 1. If you or your company would like to exhibit and connect with current aviation students, please sign-up by [clicking here](#).
- You asked for it, you got it! There are now College of Aviation Alumni items stocked in [Captain Dave's Aviation Emporium](#). New products will be coming in soon, so make sure to visit often. Show your College of Aviation pride by wearing the latest and greatest from our very own aviation spirit shop!

One Small Request

As we close out another very interesting year and contemplate a month regarded for its generosity, may I suggest a small gift to the WMU College of Aviation? There are a number of organizations, funds and opportunities that could benefit from any type of donation – large or small. To check out the list, please [click here](#), click on “Search all available funds,” type in “aviation,” and hit return.

Thanks for being great supporters! Please let us know how you are doing. Send updates to tom.thinnes@wmich.edu! Here's to the Happiest of Holidays for everyone, and the start to a New Year!

Go Broncos!

Tom

Tom Thinnes
Western Michigan University

College of Aviation
Recruitment, Marketing and Outreach

Joel Webley's Words of Aviation Wisdom



Read what Joel Webley says about "how the world works." The 2004 graduate of the WMU College of Aviation, who is now flying for FedEx Express and chairs the national board of directors of the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals (OBAP), should know what he's talking about. "My advice to students is to get engaged," he says. "Engagement means going beyond passive participation and, instead, make yourself actively present in ways that enhance your student experience.

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WMU will fund 1,350 student scholarships with historic donation



The University recently announced the first initiatives made possible by the historic Empowering Futures Gift—a \$550 million contribution to the WMU Foundation over 10 years—which will provide not only tuition-free education but also low-cost housing, a new innovative Living Learning Community and paid internships to foster career development for 1,350 incoming and current Broncos during the first year alone.

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Western alum helps power next frontier of military defense in Space Force



Researching and developing engines that could power intergalactic missions sounds like a job description ripped from the film script of "Men in Black." But there are no sleek black suits among the ranks of the United States Space Force—an elite group of military personnel known as guardians working to protect America's interests in space. Western Michigan University alumnus Lt. James Mostek was among the first service members recruited to the team. "Ever since I was a little kid, I've always been super interested in space and space technology," he says. "To be working on that kind of stuff now is really cool."

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- [Dominic Nicolai – Aviation Dynamo and WMU Faculty Member](#)
- [Wrenching Wings and Gearing for Professional Growth with Dr. Gail Rouscher](#)

Support for students.

We anticipate an unprecedeted number of scholarship applications in the coming months.

Make a gift to a fund that supports student scholarships all over campus.

**WMU Student
Scholarships Fund**



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