



AMERICAN AIRLINES DONATES AIRPLANE TO OSU

News / Airlines



Oklahoma State's most recent donation landed at the Stillwater Regional Airport on Wednesday.

American Airlines donated an MD-80 passenger airplane to **OSU**, which will be used to further science, technology, engineering and math education.

OSU plans to start modifying the airplane and to open it up for students to see next week, said James Kidd, an OSU mechanical and aerospace engineering associate professor.

Until Sept. 12, the plane was as active as any other airplane in the airline's fleet. Once retired, the aircraft was flown to Tulsa where maintenance was done, and two Pistol Pete decals were added. The airplane was a part of a fleet of MD-80s American Airlines was set to stop using.

Last fall, the aerospace department made contact with the maintenance base in Tulsa and requested one of the airplanes. American Airlines also donated an airplane to the Tulsa Technology center about 5 years ago, Kidd said.

The ability to use the plane as a learning laboratory will benefit students within the mechanical and aerospace engineering fields. Students will eventually be able to have class inside of the plane,

Kidd said.

“It will also be a place for students to do their senior design projects,” Kidd said.

Before the plane was donated, the aerospace engineering department was equipped with research labs as well as a design and manufacturing laboratory for students. The addition of the aircraft will be another learning tool for students.

Shawn Parsons, an aerospace engineering senior and the OSU chapter of American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics president, said the airplane will provide an avenue of learning that aerospace students don’t often have.

“Currently, it’s really hard for (aerospace) classes to have hands on labs because normally we don’t have planes because they’re really expensive,” Parsons said. “So, it’s a great way for us to get hands on experience.”

The donation will not only benefit OSU students, but also middle school and high school students who will be able to participate in activities such as educational camps to learn more about how airplanes work.

“We’re going to challenge the capstone students to create STEM activities for younger students,” Kidd said.

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