

TEXTRON AVIATION NAMES FIVE 2026 TOP HAWK RECIPIENTS AS PROGRAM ENTERS ITS SECOND DECADE OF WORKFORCE IMPACT

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Textron Aviation announced Brazos Valley Flight Services, Executive Air Taxi Corporation, Fairmont State University, Sterling Flight Training and Victors Aviation as its 2026 Top Hawk program recipients, continuing a legacy that has placed 55 factory-new [Cessna Skyhawks](#) in training environments since the program launched in 2015. Now entering its second decade, Top Hawk is one of the industry’s longest-running manufacturer-school partnerships. Designed to support aviation workforce development, the program loans custom-branded, factory-new Skyhawks to selected organizations for one year, giving students access to the world’s most popular training aircraft and helping schools modernize their fleets with advanced avionics and safety features.

Chris Crow, vice president, Piston & Utility Sales commented: “Top Hawk has grown into a powerful engine for pilot development. These organizations demonstrate strong student engagement, high training utilization and a commitment to growing the next generation of aviators. More than 1,000 students have already trained in Top Hawk aircraft over the past decade, and this year’s class will build on that impact.”

Program fuels national pilot pipeline

Top Hawk was created to help aviation schools meet rising pilot demand and to expand access to modern training aircraft. Industry forecasts have projected a need for more than 200,000 new pilots over the coming decade, strengthening demand for high-quality training equipment and

advanced cockpit technology.

Each Top Hawk aircraft is typically the most utilized plane in a school's fleet during its year of service. Early program recipients logged more than 1,300 flight hours in less than a year, demonstrating how heavily the aircraft are used in collegiate and commercial training missions.

Beyond training, schools often use their Top Hawk aircraft for community outreach, including discovery flights, airshow appearances and youth aviation days that expose thousands of young people to flight each year.

A decade of results

Since 2015, the Top Hawk program has delivered measurable benefits to participating universities, flight schools and training centers across the United States and abroad:

- 55 new Skyhawks placed with training organizations
- 1,000+ student pilots trained, with many advancing to roles as flight instructors, airline pilots and military aviators
- Recipients across nearly 30 states and the program's first international partner added in 2025
- Modernized fleets that introduce students to Garmin G1000 NXi avionics, ADSB and angle-of-attack safety technology
- Increased school visibility and enrollment through local media coverage, campus events and participation in national competitions

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