American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Women in flight and the art of aviation

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Last year, American Airlines and its training partner CAE launched the American Airlines Cadet Academy (AACA), a unique program that trains aspiring pilots to gain the skills necessary for a successful, fulfilling career at the CAE Aviation Academy in Phoenix and beyond. This first-of-its-kind academy provides an opportunity for future pilots to become first officers at one of American's three wholly-owned regional carriers.

Alicia Hunt is one of the cadets accepted into the AACA. Alicia is also the inaugural recipient of the CAE **Women in Flight Scholarship** program – a scholarship aimed to inspire the next generation of women to become professional pilots. CAE's Women in Flight Scholarship is given to aspiring female pilots who demonstrate leadership, show exceptional passion for aviation and have the potential to become role models. Alicia will receive a full-tuition scholarship covering the entire cost of her training in the AACA program at CAE, including accommodations and travel.

The program was designed to generate interest in the pilot profession, while also encouraging women to consider aviation as a feasible, fulfilling career – regardless of their current profession. Organizers hope the scholarship helps promote the pilot profession among women and encourages diversity in aviation.

Before joining the AACA, Alicia opened a theater company after completing her master's degree at Boston University. It was through her passion for theater that she discovered an interest in flying. Her curiosity peaked when she was working on a one-woman show about the journey of a female fighter pilot, while also speaking to the underrepresentation of women in the profession.

"Through this play, I realized that we have become accustomed to seeing pilots portrayed as men on television," said Alicia. "Many people never consider that women may be just as interested in the field and can feel intimidated

at the thought of pursuing it."

Throughout the course of the production, Alicia received an overwhelming response from other women who recognized the same portrayal of pilots and felt that women faced a barrier into the field.

"The response to the show was amazing," said Alicia. "This is when I realized that I didn't want to talk about flying planes – I wanted to fly them."

After the show, Alicia started exploring what it would take to become a pilot. Ultimately, she found the AACA and the CAE Women in Flight Scholarship. As American's most notable initiative to grow and diversify the pilot population, the AACA and its training partners aim to make flying a more obtainable career option. As a result, one-third of the current cadets are female. That statistic sold Alicia on pursuing a career as a pilot with AACA.

"Through my work in theater, I uncovered a greater purpose that I am incredibly passionate about," said Alicia. "At the end of the day, I hope my efforts will inspire and empower other women to also pursue their dreams."

As part of the scholarship program, Alicia and other CAE Women in Flight Scholarship recipients from around the world will play a vital role in serving as advocates for other women in the profession and help them achieve their aviation dreams.

Meet Alicia Hunt, Women In Flight scholarship recipient

Alicia Hunt preparing for the journey ahead