



AIM Participates in 2011 Maintenance Skills Competition

By David Jones, AIM Director of Education

The 4th Annual Maintenance Skills Competition was held at the Las Vegas Convention Center on February 23rd and 24th this year. There were 26 teams competing. The competitors represented every major facet of aviation including military, airlines, general aviation, and AMT schools. International competitors this year included Australia, China and Mexico. For the third year, Aviation Institute of Maintenance fielded four teams, with members representing a majority of our 10 locations.

The AMTSociety Maintenance Skills Competition gives teams of licensed AMTs, AMEs, students and Armed Forces personnel an opportunity to test their combined abilities against their peers. The competition provides an opportunity to showcase the knowledge, skill and integrity that each aviation technician possesses.

With increasing visibility, and acknowledging the always present competitive spirit in the aviation shop, teams are being selected by companies and schools from the best of their best. To secure a position on a team in this competition, the technician has been identified as a super performer in their shop. Events designed to test their knowledge, skills and ability to perform under pressure are used to sort the good from the great.

When the dust cleared, AIM Team Atlanta took the second place award in the AMT School Division. This was somewhat disappointing for the Atlanta crew since they had taken home first place in the previous two years. Unseating a two time winner is more reflective of how stiff the competition is getting to be, and less a statement about the teams overall performance. The AIM teams did well, even if they didn't bring home the gold this year. Their performance was high quality, but not quick enough for a timed competition. All of the students came back winners in that they chalked up an experience that very few even get invited to. There was ample opportunity for networking and for the students to see where in the industry they might want to go after graduation.

There is already talk going on at the AIM campuses about how they want to field a sharper honed team next year. It looks like the competition for students aspiring to attend next year's competition will be pretty stiff. Organizers report that event descriptions should be available earlier next year, to give teams more time to prepare. That's good news for the AIM schools, but also means that competing schools have more time too! For more information about of Atlanta's winning team read "History Behind the AIM-Atlanta Skills Team."



In the Spotlight

LOCAL SCHOOL RECEIVES NATIONAL DISTINCTION AWARD

12/7/10 – Earlier this fall, the ACCSC (Accrediting Commission for Career Schools and Colleges) held their Professional Development Conference in Philadelphia. At that time, the Chesapeake campus of the Aviation Institute of Maintenance was awarded as a 2009-2010 School of Distinction.

This award recognizes ACCSC accredited schools that demonstrate a commitment to their accreditation as well as providing to their students, graduates and employers quality educational programs. The event was attended by the Campus Executive Director, who accepted the award on behalf of the school. “This highly regarded recognition from our accrediting agency is extremely important to us.” states Regional Director, Greg Daniel, “It means to us that we are doing the right thing for our students and that’s the most important part.”

Recent Graduate Let Former Classmates Know What It’s Like “Out in the Field”

By Tim Garner

9/17/10-The following is a letter from a recent graduate. Anna Brown graduated in May, received her A&P License, and got hired by Falcon Airways last week. She has her pilot license. She lived in Williamsburg and drove 64 miles one way to school every day, very committed. She finished school with a 3.88 GPA and was well known and liked by everyone.

Hello everybody,

Well I completed my first week at Falcon Aviation Academy. I've been real busy since day one, my shift starts from 7 AM and ends at 3:30 PM. As soon as I get home I passed out from exhaustion.

The first-day there, my first job was to complete a 100 hour on a first-generation diamond diesel. When I look at the engine it looked like a car engine, the mechanic turned to me and said yes it is an engine for Mercedes sedan. So far my impression from mechanics and my own impression is that they really don't like diesels, they are a little ahead of their time. The first-generation diesel engine was horrible, you have to replace the clutch every 300 hours and the engines time till overhaul is somewhere around a little over 1000 hours. The second generation diamond diesel engine is a little bit better but the mechanic still do not like working with them, it makes them feel more like a car mechanic than an airplane mechanic. So I spent the rest of my afternoon doing a 100 hour inspection on the right engine of the Diamond Twin Star.

The next day I did a coolant system pressure check on both engines and check the caps for pressure. The idea is the more shims you add to the coolant system your PSI range should raise. On the left engine the more shims I added the pressure went down. The mechanics scratch their heads for a long time but figured out our luck was just enough to fail to new caps.

The rest of the week went much better. I go from plane to plane learning how to fix diamonds. Soon I will begin my training to learn how to fly all the aircraft the Academy owns. So I worked on removing tires, brake linings, and inspection of wheel axles and landing gear. It's nice now going from home to work only takes me 5 to 6 minutes instead of an hour and a half. I live right next to Interstate 85 I can see it from my kitchen window at least a few miles off. I miss Virginia a little, but having a lot of fun here and getting a lot of experience. Well I promised I'd send you pictures so here they are!

*I love to hear from you all soon talk to you later,
Anna*

...pictures on next page



In the Spotlight

Recent Graduate Let Former Classmates Know
What It's Like "Out in the Field" - Images



In the Spotlight



Experimental Aircraft Builders Hold Annual Workshop at Chesapeake Aviation School

(3/3/10) - Aviation Institute of Maintenance (AIM), Chesapeake campus had the opportunity to host the EAA's Aircraft Builders' Workshop for the 2nd year on February 20th and 21st. EAA members from around the country attended the two day event and appreciated the academic setting we offered for their workshop. EAA offered six workshops (one of their largest offerings) and had a great turnout of around 125 people (not counting the AIM instructors who were allowed to audit the workshops). It was a great opportunity for the school to work with a wide range of aviation enthusiasts and to learn some new tricks of the trade. Our group of instructors benefited from the workshops and will be able to bring some of that experience into the classroom.

EAA is a growing and diverse organization of members with a wide range of aviation interests and backgrounds. EAA was founded in 1953 by a group of individuals in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who were interested in building their own airplanes. Through the decades, the organization expanded its mission to include antiques, classics, warbirds, aerobatic aircraft, ultralights, helicopters and contemporary manufactured aircraft.

One way the EAA showed their appreciation for the use of the facility was by offering a \$500 scholarship to a current student of the AIM, Chesapeake campus. The student scholarship was awarded to Paige Morgan for her well written EAA essay. Humbled and honored, Paige was glad to receive the scholarship and already had plans for applying it to her education. Plans are being laid to host this event again next year as part of an ongoing arrangement between the school and EAA.

It was a wonderful weekend for all involved!



In the Spotlight

Business Owner Uses Bad Economy as Opportunity to Pursue His Dream

Donald Williams had been a successful owner of a residential home and light commercial renovation business for 14 years on Maryland's Eastern Shore. However, when the economy began its downward spiral and home owners began losing their homes, Donald's business also began to spiral. Figuring that this would be the perfect opportunity to explore his lifelong dream of aviation, he discovered the Aviation Institute of Maintenance (AIM) in Chesapeake.

However, Donald had another concern – his age. After being out of school for nearly 40 years, could he return to school and do well? There was only one way to find out and Donald enrolled in the Aviation Maintenance Technician program at AIM in 2007, one month shy of his 57th birthday.

The program, which is designed to prepare students to pass the FAA Airframe & Powerplant rating exam, trains students to service, repair, and overhaul aircraft components and systems. Having been in construction virtually all of his life, learning about turbine and piston engines, propellers, composites and carburetors was an eye-opening experience for Donald initially. Nevertheless, he quickly caught on and was not only on the Director's List throughout his entire program, he also tutored and mentored his classmates. As a result, Donald was a nominee for the Aviation Technical Education Council Student of the Year Award.

Donald graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2009 with a 3.94 G.P.A. and received the "Outstanding Attendance Award." He also completed his FAA Airframe & Powerplant rating exam in minimal time and earned his rating. He is now working as an Airframe & Powerplant Mechanic for US Airways in Salisbury, Maryland, only minutes from his home. Now 59, Donald went from fixing homes to fixing airplanes and loves every minute of it.

