

New Pilot, AEMSF and Maule Tailwheel Scholarships Recognize 26 Women

BY JOY PARKER BLACKWOOD
Chairman, AEMSF



The Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund Trustees are very pleased to present the following 2009 scholarship and award winners.

With the help of a mass mailing last year to remind all members of the funding opportunities, we received a significantly higher number of applications. Regardless of the investment market downturn, we were able to provide over \$100,000 in scholarships and awards. Hopefully the market rebound will sustain this level of giving for next year.

So far, several of this year's winners have been unusually speedy in attaining their certifications and ratings. The weather must be co-operating!

At the Chicago Conference and on the 99s website we will be providing a list of commonly asked questions that we hope will provide an additional means of understanding the application process. Members who are contemplating applying should begin the process by asking questions at the Chapter level and then proceed up the chain if they need additional information not provided at the Chapter level. However, the AEMSF Trustees are always available to help and want to know if there is a snag in the communication chain so we can resolve it quickly.

Because of The 99s website, there are more women aviators, or those interested in becoming one, from many corners of the world who have been contacting us about the scholarship program and The Ninety-Nines. We hope this generates new members!

I want to personally thank all this year's winners for their dedication in providing electronic photographs suitable for this publication. I know it's a learning curve for many but you came through with flying colors!

As always, we thank our distinguished panel of judges for their invaluable time and expertise to determine this year's winners from the list of finalists.

Congratulations to all!

AEMSF SCHOLARSHIPS



EMILY BISS – Introduction to Fixed-wing Flight Testing
Greater Seattle Chapter

Growing up in the Washington, D.C. area, I spent countless weekends at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum enthralled by all number of flying machines. I was finally able to take flying lessons in college while on an exchange program at the University of North Dakota. After graduating from Brown University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, I worked as an engineer for Lockheed Martin. In 2001, I left to pursue a full-time flying career. I have worked as a flight instructor, maintenance test pilot and airline pilot before coming to Boeing in August of 2007 as a production test pilot. Two of my favorite planes are the American Champion Citabria (7ECA) and de Havilland Twin Otter (DHC-6-300).

KJERSTI BOE – Academic Scholarship, Master of Aeronautical Science
Minnesota Chapter

I, like many others, began my love of flying at an early age. I pursued my dream by attending the University of North Dakota to earn all of my flight licenses and bachelor's degree. Upon graduation I studied abroad for an extra year and was able to obtain a position at a flight training company in Norway. After a year and a half, I moved back to Minnesota and began flight instructing, which I was busy with until recently beginning as an Aviation Courseware Developer with Aerosim Technologies. I am currently participating in the PPLI program and looking forward to all of the opportunities The Ninety-Nines has to offer for my future career as an airline pilot.

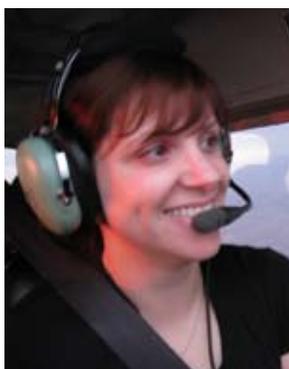


SUZANNE COLLINS – Instrument
Hampton Roads Chapter

I was born in the United Kingdom and spent my formative years in Guyana, South America. I returned to the UK to complete my studies and earned a BS in Electrical & Electronic Engineering. I later immigrated to the USA where I earned a MBA, majoring in Information Systems. I am delighted to be the recipient of an Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship and grateful for this extraordinary opportunity to realize my dream of becoming an instructor and flying for charity/charter. Earning my instrument rating is a huge step in achieving that milestone, and I'm extremely fortunate to have the support and encouragement of The Ninety-Nines, the Civil Air Patrol and many others in the community. I look forward to continuing the mission of The Ninety-Nines, helping others achieve their goals in aviation, and thank the Scholarship Chairmen Trustees and Judges for making this possible.

NORIKO DATE – Flight Instructor Class IV
First Canadian Chapter

Noriko worked for Japan Airlines in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada for 19 years, taking early retirement in 1993 and relocating to Toronto, Ontario. Inspired by an article she read detailing an around the world trip by three Ninety-Nines, Noriko began flight training at Buttonville Airport and her passion was ignited. She received her private certificate in 1996, followed by the commercial certificate in 2000 and instrument rating in 2001. Recently, she has flown as an inspector/pilot for a major pipeline. As a part of The Ninety-Nines Skywatch program (in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment), she has logged nearly 2,000 hours to date. Noriko feels very much "at home" in the aviation field and pursues her love of flying at every opportunity. Her recent coast-to-coast flight will be topped when she realizes her dream of a transatlantic flight to Europe. She is very honoured to be considered for this prestigious scholarship. With the new knowledge gained from her studies, she looks forward to passing on the joy of flying to as many aviation enthusiasts as possible.



LAURA DEL FAVERO – Certified Flight Instructor
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Laura Del Favero works in Silicon Valley as an Aviation Systems Analyst. She specializes in the modeling and simulation of operations at military airfields and training areas. A passionate flyer since 2002, Laura holds a commercial single engine land certificate, instrument rating and private single engine sea rating. She will use the generous opportunity provided by the Amelia Earhart Scholarship Fund to become a flight instructor. Laura also enjoys volunteering her time to Angel Flight as a mission pilot and to her local Humane Society providing foster care for animals.

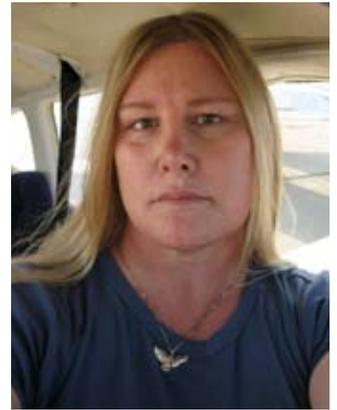


MONICA DOHERTY – Academic Scholarship, Master of Science in Aeronautical Science, Human Factors emphasis
Ambassador Chapter

Monica Doherty flies for ExpressJet Airlines, based in Houston. Her undergraduate degree is in psychology, and she is thrilled to have found a way to combine her love of aviation with psychology by pursuing a Master’s degree in Aeronautical Science with an emphasis in Human Factors. She is so thankful for the support of The Ninety-Nines in accomplishing this goal. Monica teaches Crew Resource Management to other ExpressJet pilots and feels her graduate studies will benefit the entire pilot group. Monica had her first baby, Megan, in November. She loves watching her explore the world and discover new things every day.

LISA ERICKSON – Multi-engine Instrument
Orange County Chapter

Flying, from my first introductory flight at the age of 15 through early July of last year, had always been a hobby that I love so much and always dreamed of doing as a career. Then in August of last year, in the shadow of Mt. McKinley, I experienced very personal and spiritual moments in my life while earning my ASES and tailwheel endorsement flying in the Alaskan Range. These flights changed my life and what flying means to me. Flying is no longer just a hobby. It is part of my soul. This is symbolized by an eagle totem that I now wear around my neck when I fly.



LESLIE FINK – Airline Transport Pilot
Utah Chapter

Leslie is deeply honored to receive this Amelia Earhart Scholarship so she can further her quest to keep her head in the clouds. She has been trying to keep her feet off the ground since childhood. From flying around with her superman cape to her first flight lesson in 1997, she has always had her eye on the skies. Whether instructing, recreational flying or professional piloting, she loves the motion of the airways and, from her home in Bountiful, Utah, aspires to cover as much of the beautiful skies as possible. She graduated with a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Utah and, like the limitless sky, she is fascinated by the limitless possibilities of the human mind. Today Leslie is more committed than ever to continue to fly as it has brought her so much joy and success in her life.

MARY GUEST – Airline Transport Pilot
San Gabriel Valley Chapter

As a KC-135 Aircraft Commander in the Air Force Reserves, I am fortunate enough to travel the world while serving my country. Whether I’m flying a KC-135 or a Cub, I get the same feeling every time the wheels lift off the ground — freedom and amazement. And, no matter where in the world I’m flying, that same feeling stays with me, every flight. The Ninety-Nines gives me the opportunity to share those experiences and learn from other women who have that same love of the sky, and I thank the organization as a whole for being an inspiration.





PAIGE HORTMAN – Academic Scholarship, Master – Natural/Applied Science, Aviation Mid-Atlantic Section

Paige Hortman comes from a family rich in aviation. She completed her certificates and ratings at Hortman Aviation in Philadelphia before accepting an athletic scholarship to Oklahoma State University, where she was also a flight instructor. She earned Bachelors in Aviation and Space and began a Masters in Aviation as well. Upon graduation in 2006, Paige became a first officer on a CRJ-200 for Comair Airlines out of JFK. Recently furloughed, Paige has been working at Flight Safety Wilmington as a Challenger SIC and is continuing with her Master’s degree. She recently received a KC-10 pilot slot in the USAFR with the 78th ARS at McGuire AFB.

HEIDI KLEIN – Academic Scholarship, Commercial Aviation Northwest Section

In the world of aviation, this has been a very busy and exciting year for me. Since last August, I have earned my airplane single and multi-engine commercial instrument ratings. Additionally, I am also a CFI and CFII. I am really enjoying my new roll as an instructor and am still very excited to take on new students. This year I joined the ranks as a FAA Team safety representative. I am currently working as a Flight Operations intern at American Airlines. Civil Air Patrol and community service have always been a big part of who I am. This year marked my last year as a cadet and participation on the National Cadet Advisory Council, representing nearly 3,000 cadets. The end of my undergraduate academic degree is quickly nearing, with 127 credits total and only eight left. In December, I am looking to enter the job market or work towards a Master’s degree at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.



AMANDA KOLBE – Instrument Sugarloaf Chapter

I’m Amanda Kolbe, U.S. Army Reservist, private pilot and proud winner of the 2009 Amelia Earhart Flight Training Scholarship. For as long as I can remember, I’ve been fascinated with airplanes. In 2005 I decided I had had enough of the ground and began training for my private pilot certificate, financing it with the burden of student loans. Thanks to the AE Scholarship Trustees and Judges, generous contributions to the AEMSF, the supportive members of the Sugarloaf Chapter and the women of The Ninety-Nines, I am finally able to continue my flight training and chase my dreams. Thank you all!

TRACI LEIDER – B737-300 EFIS Phoenix Chapter

I’ve decided my email address should be buymearolex.com. Why, because I’ve always wanted a Rolex watch and promised myself I would buy one as a present when I earned my private pilot certificate. Then I realized my Rolex would cost as much as my next rating, so I opted for the rating. I pushed the Rolex watch goal back numerous times so I could pursue more flying with the monies. It was money well spent, as I am currently a Lear 60 Captain for FlexJet, proudly wearing the same Mickey Mouse watch I wore for my first checkride in 1999.





HEATHER MARCHESE – Instrument
Hampton Roads Chapter

I am 19 years old and originally from White Plains, New York. I took my first flight on Delta Airlines when I was in 5th or 6th grade. Shortly after, I decided that was what I wanted to do the rest of my life — fly. Throughout the rest of my public education, the desire to become an airline pilot never changed; in fact, it grew. I had aspirations of becoming the first person in my family to attain a college degree and make it to captain of an airline. Now, I have one more year of college at Embry-Riddle's extended campus, and I'm working on my instrument rating. Thank you for this opportunity.

KELLY O'DEA – Commercial Multi-engine Instrument
Bay Cities Chapter

Kelly O'Dea has been flying for six years and is currently a flight instructor at Palo Alto Airport. She is pursuing a career in professional aviation and is looking forward to achieving the multi-engine instrument rating during the summer of 2009. She is an active member of the Bay Cities Chapter and is excited to hold the office of Director for the upcoming term. Kelly will implement programs to recruit new members and support current members with ongoing activities. Kelly strives for excellence in her performance as a pilot, a mentor and a member of The Ninety-Nines.



LAURIE PROBST – Certified Flight Instructor
Wisconsin Chapter

Once there was a young woman who loved working with children. Her part-time jobs always had something to do with kids. When her friends invited her over, she always managed to have a calming effect on even the unruliest of rugrats. Entering college, she thought she was going to be a communications major or a Russian translator. Her friends thought she was nuts. "You are so good with kids, you should be a teacher!" they remarked. Of course, this young woman was going to do what she wanted to do, and it took a while to finally sink in that yes, working with kids was a joy and teaching was a talent she truly had. Leap ahead 10 years, and this teacher takes an airplane ride and falls in love with flying. She gets her private certificate, mentors students, and other pilots start saying, "Laurie, you really should become a flight instructor. You'd be a good one!" Having learned the lesson from years ago, she reflected and thought, "Hmmm. Maybe they're right!" A new path has been set before her, and now she feels absolutely blessed to be able to combine her love of teaching with her passion for flight! Thank you!!

BECKY ROMAN-AMADOR – B757/767 Jet Type
Washington DC Chapter

Becky Roman-Amador has been an active member of the DC Chapter of The Ninety-Nines since 2004 and is a graduate of the Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI) program. She is now part of the PPLI's Leadership Coordination Team helping other women realize their dreams. She holds an Electrical Engineering degree from Wright State University and completed her civilian pilot training at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Aero Club where she became a flight instructor. Becky is also a Major with the 121st Air Refueling Wing, Ohio Air National Guard (ANG) and has been selected by ANG Headquarters to represent the Women of the ANG in their new advertising campaign. Becky spends her time off visiting D.C. area schools inspiring children "to believe" and volunteering at USOs located in the D.C.-Metro Airports. Becky is currently a CRJ captain with Mesa Airlines and hopes to be with a major airline flying international routes.



KELLY SHERET – Multi-engine Instrument
Canadian Rockies Chapter

Please allow me to extend my gratitude to The Ninety-Nines for having faith in me and supporting me on my career path. It is a heartwarming experience for me to be a mentor, lend a hand and support any fellow female aviator in order to help her achieve her goals. It is truly amazing to see that with encouragement and networking we can make our dreams come true. There is so much reward in this work. I get to experience the joy almost every day. My dream has come true. The new Pilatus PC 12 N/G has arrived. My flight training is complete, and I am an official first officer with V. Kelner Pilatus Center. My Multi-engine IFR training will begin in May. I am so excited about my life.



ELIZABETH SOMMERS – Instructor Instrument
Alameda County Chapter

I am number eight of fourteen children. My parents provided a Catholic primary and secondary education for us but were unable to provide a post-secondary education. However, they inspired us to dream and to persevere. I dream. To dream is to fly. To fly is to dream. This is my passion, this is my love: to climb, to soar and then, yes, to come down. To gently settle back to the place from which I've departed. It is my flight, our flight, and we must share it — the joy, the love, the passion. To dream, to fly, to inspire.

KATHLEEN VEATCH – Air Transport Pilot
Aloha Chapter

As a world traveler, flying has always been part of my life. After soloing, I was hooked and pursued a BS degree in Aviation and Business, minored in Aviation Safety and obtained my private certificate from Embry-Riddle University. My ground instructor's certificate was from Spain. Multi-engine Commercial, CFI and CFII was from Honolulu, and MEI from Long Beach, California. I started two flying clubs, was a flight instructor in Hawaii, Spain and California. I am captain and first officer on DC-3s and BE-18s. Currently I'm a captain on a Partenavia for Aspen Helicopters and flight instructor at CP Aviation. All thanks to The Ninety-Nines!



STACIE VOURNAS – Certified Flight Instructor
San Fernando Valley Chapter

Anastasia "Stacie" Vournas took her nine-year-old son (now 16) to a Young Eagles flight on August 17, 2002 at Whiteman Airport in California. The flight was intended to grip the aviation interest in children, but in this case it was Stacie who got captivated, not her son. Once she took the controls of the Cessna 172, she was hooked. She began ground school and flight training shortly thereafter and obtained her private certificate, instrument rating and commercial certificate. As she trained, she became very active in the San Fernando Valley Chapter. She won Rookie Pilot of the Year for her Chapter in 2004, Woman Pilot of the Year in 2007 and received an honorable mention for the Trixie Ann Schubert Service Award in 2008. She also currently serves on the Chapter board as the Corresponding Secretary. Being a Ninety-Nine is something in which Stacie takes great pride. She continues to be very active with Young Eagles and has come full circle. She now flies the children with the great enthusiasm she had on her first flight. Stacie also flies professionally for traffic watch, where she flies radio reporters representing local radio stations KNX and KFWB over traffic and news scenes.

NEW PILOT AWARDS



PAULA O'GORMAN-HARRIS – Redwood Coast Flyers Chapter

I am 23 years old, and I have many goals in life. One of the bottom steps in my ladder is to earn my private pilot certificate. I started taking lessons in 2006, and I am hooked. I live in the redwood coast of northern California. It is a great environment to challenge the persistence and judgment of any pilot. I am all too aware of constantly changing weather. The saying in the summertime is if it isn't foggy now, the fog is on its way back in. The sun is worth waiting for because this is a beautiful place to fly! I am going to continue my training, and I'd love to become a flight instructor so I can pass on the skills, knowledge and stories that others have shared with me. Much thanks to The Ninety-Nines past, present and future for inspiration and support.

CRISTI HIGGINS – Nebraska Chapter

Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, home of the Huskers, on March 10, 1975, my parents named me Cristi, spelled with no (h) or (e) or (y), apparently how you should. I grew up fast, working since I was 12 and had an apartment already on my own at 15. I said fast. I married Lonnie Higgins at 18, and we just celebrated 16 years. We have a son age 14, James, and a daughter Paige, age 10. We now live in Cortland, Nebraska population 500, if every one is home. I have my own photography and video production studio here, and other than a waitress, that has been my occupation. Always wanting to fly, I had dreams of flying the red Arrow hanging in Lincoln Municipal airport where I grew up working with Grandpa, head of security, not a pilot. The military jets across the way, I spent many hours daydreaming of. I was Wonder Woman for Halloween eight years in a row, and yes, I wanted to fly with Superman. Well life never opened an aviation door for me, but visiting Grandma one day she told me I talk about flying a lot and asked me if I intended to just talk about it. I went directly to an airport that afternoon and said, "I want to learn to fly." My first lesson and experience in a small plane would end up being my 31st birthday. Flying is financially difficult, but in every other way it has stimulated me. Through AEMSF scholarship award and from refusing to give up, I soon will be a pilot.



JAMIE MICELI – Pikes Peak Chapter

A documentary of Amelia Earhart's life on the Public Broadcasting station was my inspiration to take a discovery flight at a local flight school. Amelia said, "As soon as we left the ground I knew I myself had to fly," and this is exactly how I feel. I have always loved to fly on commercial jets but never realized that I could be the one in the cockpit. Once I get a private pilot certificate, I will work towards an instrument rating and commercial certificate. The wonderful Pikes Peak Chapter of The Ninety-Nines has been an inspiration and help in pursuing my dream. In the future, I hope to help fellow women aspiring to be pilots. This scholarship is helping me realize my full potential. Thank you to the Judges, the Pikes Peak Chapter and my awesome flight instructor.



TERESA WOLSKI – Northwoods Chapter

I'm not the first in my family to love aviation. My great-uncle, my father and my brother have pursued their dreams as pilots, from World War II to the space shuttle. Without a doubt, I have a proud tradition to follow down the runway. I have the honor and responsibility of being the first woman in my family to fly! When I was a young girl, I was quiet, shy and obedient. Sometime after becoming a mother of five daughters and an elementary teacher, I realized that I needed to set a much stronger, braver more interesting example. Since then, I have focused on science-related adventures, such as traveling to the North Pole on a science expedition with the GLOBE weather program, participating in NASA Educator Workshops, sailing on the EPA's research vessel on Lake Superior and beginning my training as a private pilot. As a future woman pilot, I will strive to help The Ninety-Nines chart new courses to inspire our daughters and our sisters in the sky!

MAULE TAILWHEEL AWARD

JONNIE LANDIS – Eastern Idaho Chapter

I grew up in the south living in North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia but have lived in Idaho for many years. It was in Idaho where another anesthetist encouraged me to take up flying. It is truly one of my great joys, and I find mountain flying, whether in the back country of Idaho or in Central America on mission trips, to be some of my most memorable experiences. My involvement in the Eastern Idaho Chapter of The Ninety-Nines and the Civil Air Patrol has been very rewarding. There is always something to do, and the many friends make it even more rewarding. In the past I have owned a Varga Kachina and a Cessna 206. It is my dream to own a plane again. I am married, the mother of two grown sons and the grandmother of four. I am a Christian author and love the piano, golden retrievers and horses.

