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Southwest Airlines Adopt-A-Pilot Program Takes Off for Students Nationwide

Pilots Volunteer in Community Relations Educational Program to Mentor Tens of Thousands of Students in Science, Math, Geography, Writing, Career-Planning and More

DALLAS, Feb. 4 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- What is a major geographical feature of St. Louis? How does the Bernoulli Principle relate to flight? What are three short-term goals that can help you reach your future career goals? More than 25,000 students nationwide will find answers to questions like these as they participate in the Southwest Airlines Adopt-A-Pilot community relations program this year.

To further its commitment to community and education, Southwest Airlines is kicking off its annual Adopt-A-Pilot program this month. From February through May, fifth-grade students in more than 800 classes across the country will "adopt" Southwest Airlines Pilots in this award-winning educational mentorship program that leads students through science, geography, math, writing, and other core subjects, all based in aviation-related activities. Students will also research careers, develop life values, and realize the importance of staying in school.

Part of the 2008 program includes the launch of a brand new web site to support the Adopt-A-Pilot program. The new site, <http://www.southwest.com/adoptapilot>, features a brand new design, course curriculum ideas, a blog for students, teachers, and Pilots, and exciting educational activities.

"The program is part of Southwest Airlines' commitment to be the 'hometown airline' in every community we serve. Our Employees want to contribute wherever they live, work, and play - and Adopt-A-Pilot is one of Southwest's premiere community relations programs that enables our Employees to make a positive difference," said Linda Rutherford, Southwest's Vice President of Public Relations and Community Affairs.

Hundreds of Southwest Pilots are volunteering in this year's Southwest Airlines Adopt-A-Pilot community relations program. During the four-week long mentorship program, Pilots volunteer their time in adoptive classrooms and correspond from the "road" via e-mail and postcards. Classrooms chart the Pilot's course on an official United States route map and complete lessons related to the Pilot's monthly flying schedule. For additional program information and to view the program curriculum please log on to the web site at <http://www.southwest.com/adoptapilot>.

"We are so grateful to work with hundreds of motivated teachers and tens of thousands of inspiring students nationwide through the Southwest Airlines Adopt-A-Pilot program," added Chuck Magill, Southwest's Vice President of Flight Operations. "We are so proud of the hundreds of our Pilots who volunteer in this program; but as many of our Pilots tell us, we get much more out of it than we give. After so many hours of volunteering in our nation's

schools and meeting so many teachers, our thanks go out to all the teachers who are truly making a positive difference on a daily basis with America's children."

Beyond the program's core mentorship and curriculum-based activities, Adopt-A-Pilot includes many other innovative learning opportunities. This year, Adopt-A-Pilot will partner with the WNBA for joint visits from Pilots and players at select schools to emphasize the importance of education and hard work in reaching future goals. The Adopt-A-Pilot Blog (<http://www.adoptapilot.blogs.com>), has become a popular technology-based addition where participating Pilots, teachers, and students nationwide share ideas and photos.

Created in 1997, Adopt-A-Pilot started as a small community outreach program in just 50 classrooms in Southwest's destination cities, and now it reaches more than 800 classrooms in large and small-town communities nationwide. Southwest Airlines developed the program in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education and the Smithsonian Institute's National Air and Space Museum. National leaders such Gen. Colin Powell, President Bill Clinton, and First Lady Laura Bush have recognized the excellence that the Adopt-A-Pilot program offers students.

Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 64 cities in 32 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,400 flights a day and has 33,000+ Employees systemwide.

Click here to view program photos:

<http://gallery.swamedia.com/photos/value=open/type=jpg>

<http://www.southwest.com>

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