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Southwest Airlines' Pilots Reach 10,000 Hours of Volunteer Time in Just Six Months

The Airline's mentoring program Adopt-A-Pilot reaches milestone

DALLAS, Aug. 13 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Nationwide, 30,000 fifth graders agree that the *Adopt-A-Pilot* program is a success. *Southwest Airlines* announced today that its *Adopt-A-Pilot* program, which involves more than 750 active pilots in 1,250 classrooms, has reached an incredible milestone of 10,000 hours of active volunteer time in just six months.

This educational program consists of "adopted" Southwest Pilots that mentor students nationwide in the areas of geography, math, science, aviation, and research skills to promote learning as a key element of success. This program was first developed in 1997 in conjunction with the US Department of Education's "America goes back to school" effort. It has been constantly updated with the help of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum and professional education consultants. The program is offered free of charge to schools.

"This program is about giving students the confidence to know they can achieve anything they want to be with the help of education," said Captain Dan Mix, a *Southwest Airlines* Pilot and active participant of *Adopt-A-Pilot* for the last five years. "It is about encouraging them to dream outside of what they see in their own communities. The program seeks to help kids identify their highest aspirations and develop a plan to achieve them."

The program also reaches outlying schools with a "virtual Pilot" where the "adopted Pilot" is reached through email, and students research geographical and historical information about the cities where the Pilot is flying. To get our Pilot's perspective on this great program check out our blog--Nuts about Southwest: <http://www.blogsouthwest.com/blog/10000-hour-milestone-adopt-a-pilot>

"The *Adopt-A-Pilot* program has touched the lives of more than 280,000 students nationwide over a period of twelve years," said Debra Benton, Southwest Airlines Director of Community Relations and Charitable Giving. "The classrooms in the program are grateful to have a commitment of corporate support that displays to students such great role models of reaching for your dreams. Pilots provide an exceptional one-on-one experience, and empower students with the gift of knowledge and inspiration.

To reach 10,000 hours of active volunteer time is an outstanding achievement by our Pilots, and we stand proud of the great commitment they have shown to the communities we serve."

After 38 years of service, Southwest Airlines, the nation's leading low-fare carrier, continues to stand above other airlines -- offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service and no hidden fees. Southwest Airlines is the most productive airline in the sky and offers

Customers a comfortable traveling experience with all premium leather seats and plenty of legroom. Southwest recently updated its gate areas and improved its boarding procedure to make flying Southwest Airlines even more convenient. Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 66 cities in 33 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,300 flights a day and has more than 35,000 Employees systemwide.

www.southwest.com/adoptapilot

SOURCE Southwest Airlines