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Southwest Airlines Adopt-A-Pilot(R) Program Lands in Schools Nationwide

Southwest Airlines' Pilots Volunteer to Share the Spirit of Learning to Thousands of Students across the United States

DALLAS, Jan. 13 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- What do you want to be when you grow up? Perhaps Pilot is one of the answers. For many students across the country that might be closer than they dream. Southwest Airlines today announces the official takeoff of its award winning, Educational and Mentoring program, Adopt-A-Pilot®!

From January through May, fifth-grade students in more than 1,200 classes across the country will "adopt" Southwest Airlines Pilots through a program that leads students through science, geography, math, writing, and other core subjects, all based in aviation-related activities. Students also will research careers, develop life values, and realize the importance of staying in school.

"Our pledge to our communities extends farther than our service at the airport, it's the total involvement of our Employees to empower the participants to learn and understand they can be all they want to be in life through education," said Linda Rutherford, Southwest's Vice President of Communications and Strategic Outreach.

Nearly 800 Southwest Pilots are volunteering in this year's Adopt-A-Pilot® program. During the four-week long curriculum, Pilots volunteer their time in participating 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. To learn more about the program visit www.southwest.com/adoptapilot or our blog <http://www.blogsouthwest.com/blog/southwest-pilots-go-back-school>

"We are proud to have so many of our Pilots committed to sharing their knowledge and experiences with tens of thousands of participants nationwide through the Southwest Airlines Adopt-A-Pilot program," added Chuck Magill, Southwest's Vice President of Flight Operations.

Beyond the program's core mentorship and curriculum-based activities, Adopt-A-Pilot includes many other innovative learning opportunities.

Created in 1997, Adopt-A-Pilot® started as a small community outreach program in just 50 classrooms in Southwest's destination cities, to reach more than 1,200 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 Institution of National Air and Space Museum. National leaders such as 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 68 cities in 35 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,200 flights a day and has nearly 35,000 Employees.

About Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines' Share the Spirit program embodies the culture of positive impact in the communities it serves – demonstrated through Southwest's charitable giving, Employee volunteerism, and community relations programs. Southwest Airlines is one of the most honored airlines in the world, consistently appearing on the FORTUNE Magazine's "Most Admired Companies" list. 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. Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) currently serves 68 cities in 35 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,300 flights a day and has more than 35,000 Employees systemwide who work hard each and every day to provide excellent Customer service and make a difference in the community. To learn more about Southwest's community involvement, visit www.southwest.com/cares.

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