

# CASE STUDY



## AVIATION AND AEROSPACE EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS

The aviation and aerospace industry in Illinois encompasses a wide array of skilled professionals, such as pilots, engineers, mechanics, air traffic controllers, and airport managers. Educational institutions that include aviation and aerospace courses allow students from all over the world to embark on a career in aviation and prepare future pilots, engineers, mechanics, and managers to adapt to industry standards.

### SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Southern Illinois University (SIU) is home to a nationally recognized aviation program. The program has over 600 enrolled students and utilizes state of the art aviation facilities. SIU's School of Aviation offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in Aviation Flight, Aviation Management, and Aviation Technologies. The SIU Aviation Flight program, an Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI) accredited program, is located at Southern Illinois Airport (MDH) where SIU's aviation flight and technology courses are held. SIU has been associated with the airport since 1960.

Since 2018, over forty students have graduated annually from SIU's multiple aviation education programs annually. More than 50 percent of the program's graduates are employed in aviation-related jobs. Popularity in SIU's aviation program has continued to grow. In the Fall of 2020, 87 students were enrolled in the program, a 19 percent increase from Fall 2019 enrollment (73 enrolled students). In the Fall of 2020, Aviation Flight and Aviation Management were the top two majors for new first-time students and new transfer students enrolled (respectively). SIU also participates in international agreements to train students in China and prepare pilots, mechanics, and avionics technicians with Saudi Airlines.



### AVIATION MAINTENANCE TRAINING IN CHICAGO

The Aviation Institute of Maintenance (AIM) opened a one-of-a-kind training facility in Chicago's McKinley Park neighborhood in effort to increase qualified talent for Illinois' expanding aviation industry. The AIM facility also created 75 permanent jobs in the community. The training facility in Chicago is AIM's largest training facility and supports the education of over 200 enrolled students with the use of a large hangar, 17 classrooms, an avionics lab, and administrative office space. The AIM program offers FAA-certified aviation maintenance training for students, as well as courses and bachelor degree credits through partnerships with SIU's School of Aviation and City Colleges of Chicago. The program provides students with the necessary training and certifications needed to work with Chicago-based and Illinois-based airlines and aviation industries.

### AVIATION TRAINING AT DUPAGE AIRPORT

The Avel Flight School and the Illinois Aviation Academy are both located at DuPage Airport (DPA) in West Chicago. DPA is home to a branch of the Avel Flight School, which offers flight training and pilot licensing. Courses offered at the flight school include Private Pilot License, Commercial Pilot License, Instrument Rating, Flight Instructor Ratings, Single and Multi-Engine Ratings, and Aircraft/Flight Dispatcher courses. The Avel Flight School is an approved Student Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS) flight school.

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Due to the flight school's status as an approved SEVIS program, the school is able to host international students. DPA supports Avel Flight School by providing space for training facilities and aircraft. As an airport tenant, the Avel Flight School branch at DPA employs 12 people.

The Illinois Aviation Academy (IAA) is also located at DPA. IAA was established at the airport in 1933. IAA is a flight school that provides private pilot, instrument rating, commercial certificate, flight instructor, and multi-engine rating courses. The school operates over 30 aircrafts and is staffed by 16 flight instructors and six assistant chief pilots. Since the late 1990s, over 2,000 pilots have graduated from IAA and alumni of IAA work at every major airline in the United States. In addition to providing flight training, IAA also offers aircraft rental and aircraft maintenance services. As an airport tenant, IAA employs 17 people.

## INSTITUTE OF AVIATION AT PARKLAND COLLEGE

The Institute of Aviation was founded at the University of Illinois in 1946. The Institution was the first aviation school in the U.S. to be certified by the FAA to conduct all tests leading to the issuance of civilian pilot certificates. More recently, in September 2013, the University of Illinois entered into an agreement to transfer ownership of the Institute of Aviation to Parkland College, where the program is now located at University of Illinois - Willard Airport (CMI). The Parkland College program at CMI officially opened in the Fall of 2014. At CMI, Parkland College has access to has access to the University of Illinois' aircraft fleet, equipment, and ground school facilities. CMI significantly supports the school by offering a wide array of

professional development opportunities including private pilot training, commercial pilot training, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) training, and an Associate's Degree in Aviation. There are currently 24 Parkland College Institute of Aviation employees working at the airport.



## SUMMARY

*From flight training to unmanned aircraft systems training, Illinois airports support a wide variety of options for prospective aviation students. As the aviation industry continues to evolve and grow, academic institutions, such as those highlighted in this case study, will continue to have an important role in training and preparing students for successful aviation careers. Illinois airports' support of these effort will also continue to grow. Airports in Illinois provide space and facilities for academic intuitions to train and prepared the next generation of aviation professionals.*