



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
Department of Transportation

# 2025 NCDOT ACE Academy Information Session

Cyndy Falgout, NCDOT Interim Contract Program Manager

October 15, 2024

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina

## Topics for Today



- **Team Introductions**
- **Nuts & Bolts**
- **Sharing Best Practices**
- **Next Steps**
- **Q&A**
- **Adjourn**



**Jason Schronce**  
Deputy Director,  
Programs and Planning



**Bridgette Barthe**  
NCDOT Communications

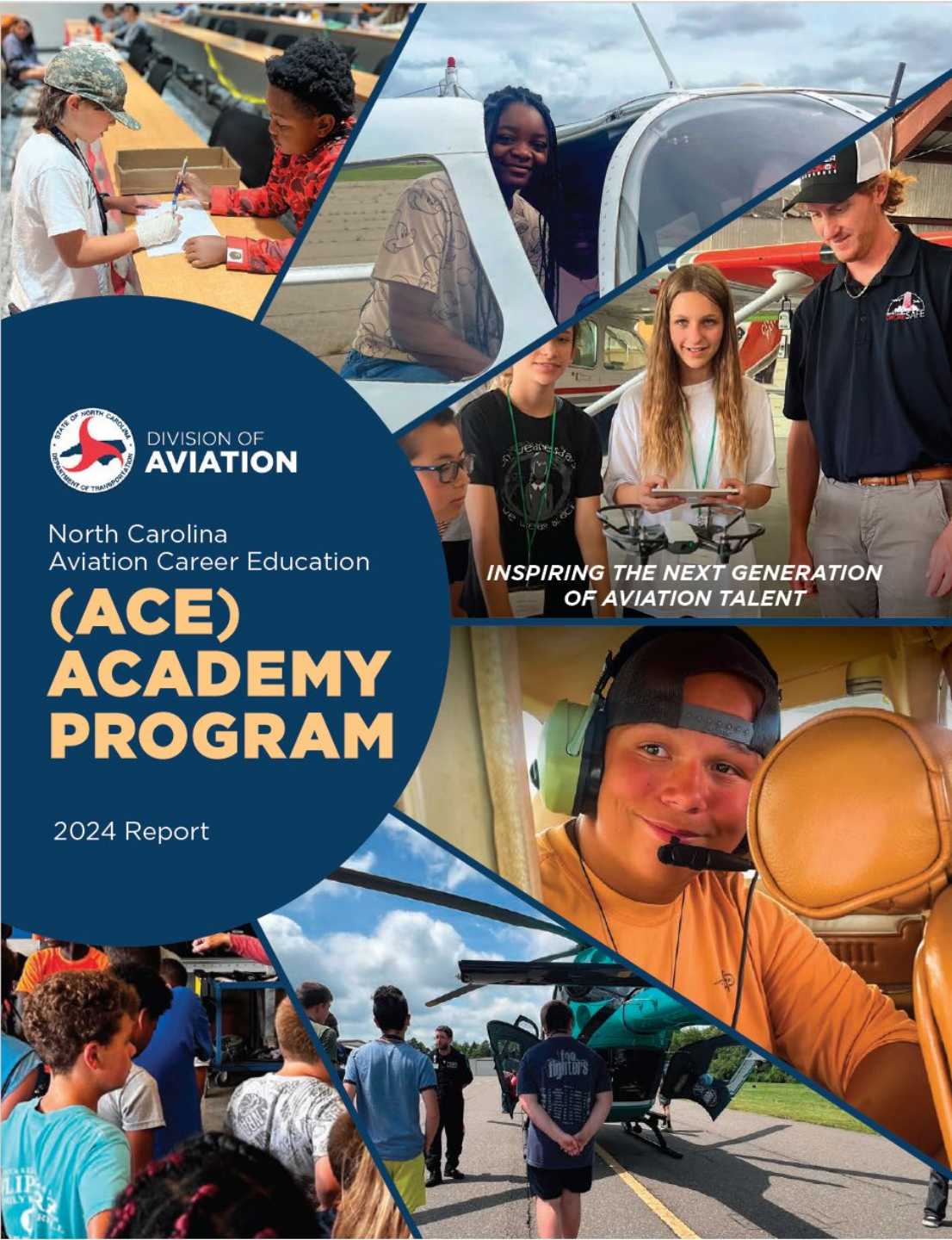


**Evan Arnold**  
N.C. State University Educator

# Nuts & Bolts

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DIVISION OF  
**AVIATION**

North Carolina  
Aviation Career Education

# **(ACE) ACADEMY PROGRAM**

2024 Report

*INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION  
OF AVIATION TALENT*

2025 NCDOT ACE Academy Information Session

## **Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy Grant Program**

*Inspiring the Next Generation of Aviation Talent*

- NCDOT program aligns with FAA ACE Academy program
- Seeks to develop state aviation/aerospace talent pipeline
- NCDOT provides up to \$5K grant per airport for direct costs

## ACE Academy Value? *What Airports Say*

### Workforce Development

- Exposing young people and students from distressed communities to career opportunities many are not aware of
- Early exposure and education to help create a pipeline of skilled individuals who may pursue careers at the local airport and within the broader aviation industry, addressing future workforce needs

### Community Engagement and Awareness

- Fostering strong ties between the airport and the local community by hosting events, workshops, and tours that are accessible to students and their families
- Enhancing public awareness and appreciation of the airport's role in the community and the diverse opportunities it offers

### Visibility and Reputation

- Elevating the airport's profile as an educational hub and community partner
- Strengthening the airport's reputation as a forward-thinking institution committed to fostering talent and supporting local initiatives
- Elevating the reputation of the organizations that support the ACE Academy





## 2025 Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy Program Schedule



- Nov. 15 – Applications due (*emailed today and available on Connect site*)
- Dec. 6 – Airports notified of grant determination
- February 2025:
  - Grantee Kickoff Workshop
  - Joint publicity (website, press releases, social media posts)
- June-August 2025 – ACE Academies held
- July-September 2025 – Within 30 days of last day of camp, airports:
  - Complete online reporting form
  - File for reimbursement
- October 2025:
  - Annual report distributed to airports
  - Planning begins for 2026 cycle

# Overview flyer contains requirements

*Emailing today, posting on the Connect site*



DIVISION OF  
**AVIATION**

**2025 ACE Academies**

## NCDOT Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy Program

*Developing North Carolina's Aviation Talent Pipeline*

■ Applications for 2025 funding accepted through Nov. 15, 2024 ■

### Program Overview

North Carolina's system of 72 public airports generates more than \$72 billion of economic impact each year – 11% percent of the state's GDP – and more than 330,000 jobs.

North Carolina must inspire and develop a strong talent pipeline to fill those jobs and support this growing sector.

Public airports fuel a vibrant aviation economy that includes aerospace manufacturing and maintenance, air freight and military aviation, as well as on-airport businesses, from airlines to fixed-based operations, flight schools to crop dusting operations. Added to that is the state's rapidly expanding unmanned aircraft systems industry, which is opening new markets and new ways of doing business.

All of these businesses and industries spell jobs and opportunity for North Carolina people and communities.

**The Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy Program supports aviation workforce development by providing up to \$5,000 per airport annually for public airports that host aviation career-focused summer academies for elementary, middle and high school students.**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Aviation, in alignment with the Federal Aviation Administration's ACE Academy program, offers this financial support to help inspire young people to explore and pursue the many rewarding careers available in the state's aerospace sector.

### Eligibility

N.C.'s 72 public use airports that are eligible for infrastructure development grants through the NCDOT Division of Aviation are eligible to apply for ACE Academy funding.

Airports are encouraged to team with a local educational or nonprofit organization to benefit from their expertise in



educating young people and to encourage strong airport-community connections.

### 2025 Funding

A selection committee will review applications and notify applicants of their funding determination for 2025 academies on Dec. 8, 2024.

### Use of Funds

NCDOT funds must be used to cover the direct cost of ACE academies, such as supplies and vendor costs. Past ACE academies have purchased such items as flight simulators, field trip tickets, aircraft rides, model rocket kits and safety materials. NCDOT funds may not be used for administration or staffing.

### Academy Requirements

**Format.** ACE academies must host at least 20 unique students (no double counting of students in different camps). Preference will be given to airports serving students in lower-socio-economic areas, as determined by the N.C. Department of Commerce county tier designation, and programs providing an engaging experience for as many students as practicable.

**Content.** ACE academies are encouraged to cover the following topics:

- Eligibility – 72 N.C. NPAIS airports
- Airports encouraged to team with a local educational or nonprofit partner
- Grant funds may be used for direct costs, not administration/staffing
- Must host at least 20 students, many more encouraged
- Preference given to camps that serve students in lower socio-economic areas and diverse demographics to fill the talent gap
- Topics can range across the aerospace/aviation spectrum with focus on career exploration
- NCDOT provides a career presentation and drone demo for all camps



# Online reporting required within 30 days to receive funds

- ▶ **No change from 2024**
- ▶ **Will review in detail with grantees at the February grantee kickoff workshop**

smartsheet

## 2024 NCDOT Aviation ACE Academy Report & Evaluation

Thank you for hosting an ACE Academy for your community.

Please complete this final report and program evaluation within 30 days of the end date of your funded Academy.

Your NCDOT funding will be processed once you submit this form.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Your responses must be submitted at one time (not started and saved to finish later). We suggest having your program description, participation and financial numbers, and required documentation ready to submit before you begin entering your responses.

QUESTIONS? Contact Cyndy Falgout, [crfalgout@ncdot.gov](mailto:crfalgout@ncdot.gov).

### Academy Overview

**Airport Name \***

Select

**Contact Name \***

**Contact Phone \***

**Email \***

**Name of Academy \***

**Describe the ACE Academy you hosted. \***

(Goals, theme, types of activities, special experiences, etc.) If you need more room, feel free to upload a longer summary using the File Upload feature at the bottom of this form.

**Location of Academy \***

- Academy details
- Partner details (key for annual report)
- Participant data
- Cost & scholarship data
- Evaluation responses
- Uploads:
  1. Academy Schedule/Itinerary
  2. Photos Academy highlights, with *signed photo release forms\* required for participants in photos that are under 18 (recommend making release part of your application)*
  3. Copy of your student evaluation survey\* and student responses

\* NCDOT can provide template

# Questions/Comments about Nuts & Bolts?

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# Best Practices from Experienced Hosts

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*How to ensure a successful ACE Academy!*



# Typical Academy Offerings



- Airport tours
- Tenant tours
- Community partner tours
- Presentations/Demos
- Activities and instruction

# Tenant/Partner Tour Examples



- Manufacturers
- MROs
- Fixed-base operators
- Firefighting operations
- Military installations
- Community college facilities
- Hickory Aviation Museum
- Virginia Air and Space Museum
- N.C. Global TransPark

# Presentation/Demo Examples



Mountain Air Cargo will bring a team to speak on careers at any Academy

►Contact: Hilary Patterson, Director,  
Recruiting & Outreach, 704-813-0085

- Air traffic controllers
- Military and private pilots
- Airlines
- Charter services
- Airport management
- Aviation security personnel
- Retired aviation workers (commercial, airport, military)

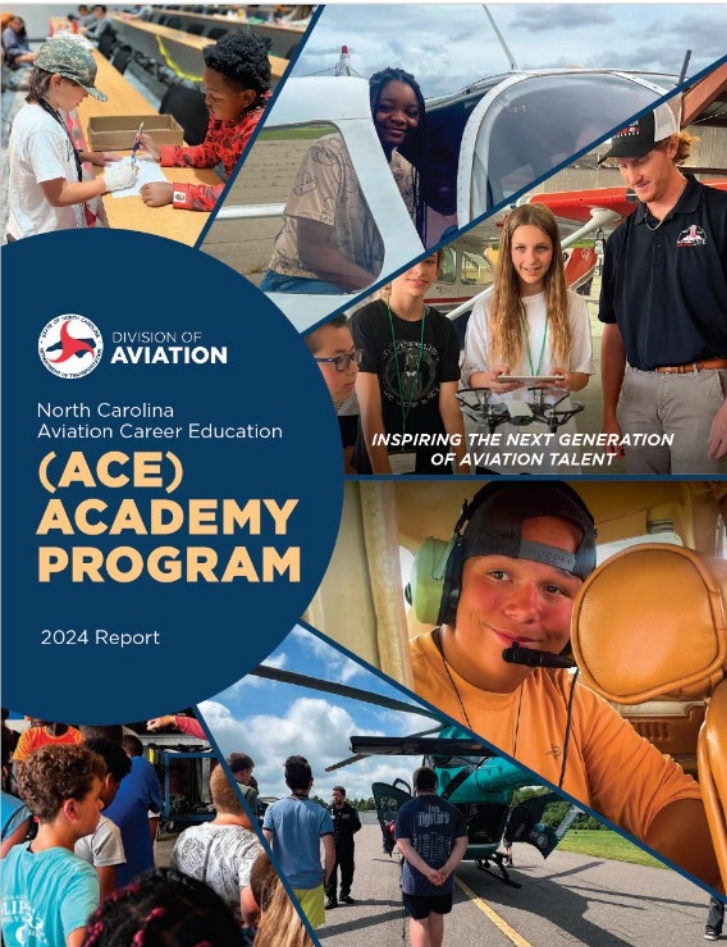


## Activity/Instruction Examples

- Remote controlled helicopters
- Paper airplane contest
- Flight experiences/instruction
- Egg drop challenge (gravity lesson)
- Balsa wood airplane and rocket building
- Bottle rockets
- Hot air balloons
- Flight simulators
- Airfoil construction and wind tunnel testing
- Financial literacy (Credit Union leads)



## 2024 ACE Academy Hosts



- Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport
- Curtis L. Brown Field Airport
- Fayetteville Regional Airport
- Kinston Regional Jetport
- Smith Reynolds Airport
- Statesville Regional Airport
- Washington-Warren Field Airport



# Fayetteville Regional Airport





# Kinston Regional Jetport





# Statesville Regional Airport



# Questions? Comments?

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# **Next Steps**

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# Develop a Plan, Submit an Application



- ▶ Nov. 15 – Applications due *(download application from the Connect site or NCDOT Aviation site)*
- ▶ Dec. 6 – Airports notified of grant determination and next steps





# Contact Us

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