



EAA Info Sheet

EAA Young Eagles Program

Basic Facts:

- ▶ EAA launched the program in 1992 to give young people ages 8-17 an opportunity to fly in a general aviation airplane.
- ▶ Flights are offered free of charge and made possible through the generosity of EAA member volunteers.
- ▶ A major objective of the program upon its founding in 1992 was to inspire a million young people with introductory general aviation flights before the centennial of powered flight, a major nationwide celebration on Dec. 17, 2003, marking the Wright brothers' historic first at Kitty Hawk, NC. The EAA community rallied and met this objective on Nov. 13, 2003.
- ▶ More than 1.4 million Young Eagles have enjoyed a flight through the program. Young Eagles have been registered in more than 90 different countries and have been flown by more than 42,000 volunteer pilots.
- ▶ Actor, pilot, and aviation enthusiast Harrison Ford has served as the EAA Young Eagles Program's chairman since early 2004. The program's founding chairman in 1992 was actor Cliff Robertson, also an avid pilot. Two years later, aviation legend Chuck Yeager succeeded Robertson and served in the post through the end of 2003.



Benefits of the EAA Young Eagles Program:

The EAA Young Eagles Program fulfills five important purposes:

- ▶ **It inspires youth and promotes their achievement.** Young Eagles flight experiences with EAA volunteer pilots reinforce the message of earned reward. The youngster sees firsthand that pilots — by applying themselves and being self-disciplined and focused on a goal — earn the reward of flight. The experience is also educational, reinforcing principles of math, physics, and mechanical engineering.
- ▶ **It builds a future for aviation.** Although not all youth inspired by an EAA Young Eagles experience will further pursue an interest in aviation, many of them will. The EAA Young Eagles program plants seeds that will reap the pilots, aeronautical engineers, and other aviation leaders of tomorrow.
- ▶ **It provides a highly rewarding way to participate in aviation.** Promoting participation in aviation is a major part of EAA's mission. EAA Young Eagles rallies and fly-ins help to keep our members active in pursuing their passion. These events give pilots another good reason to fly, present many other volunteering opportunities, and bring chapter members together, strengthening the community of aviation enthusiasts.
- ▶ **It sustains regional and local airports.** Many small airports struggle to remain solvent. EAA Young Eagles rallies and fly-ins provide local airports a much-needed boost in publicity and business. The vitality of these airports, in turn, promotes commerce and the economic activity in the surrounding local communities.
- ▶ **It serves as an ambassador for general aviation.** In many ways, particularly in the post-9/11 era, general aviation has been misunderstood and, consequently, “under attack.” Policymakers and other public figures have assailed general aviation as a nuisance or a security threat. The EAA Young Eagles Program can help to dispel those misconceptions and show people in communities all across the nation the commercial, economic, educational, inspirational, and recreational value of general aviation.