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# QUARTERLY

VOL. 37 • ISSUE 1 WINTER 2025




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North Dakota Aviation Association
FLY-ND
CONFERENCE
March 2-4, 2025 • Fargo

North Dakota Aviation
HALL OF FAME
**2025 Inductee Announced**
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# QUARTERLY

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## From the Editor

Welcome aboard to the first edition of the 2025 Fly-ND Quarterly! I hope your new year is off to a wonderful start. **An important update: as of January 1, 2025, the print version of the Quarterly is an exclusive benefit for North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA) members.** However, everyone has access to the free digital edition at https://issuu.com/flyndquarterly. If you would like to continue receiving the print edition, it's one quick stop to become an NDAA member at https://fly-nd.com/membership. We are grateful for your continued patronage and hope you will continue to enjoy the latest North Dakota aviation news and stories within these pages. As always, our first issue of the year highlights the upcoming annual NDAA Fly-ND Conference, held March 2-4, 2025, in Fargo, ND. It is a wonderful opportunity to expand your aviation knowledge and network with other amazing aviation professionals. See page five for registration info, you don't want to miss it!

*Wishing you clear skies and unlimited visibility. Nicolette*

*Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of officers and members of NDAA or Fly-ND Quarterly staff.*
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**Tanner Overland, Chairman**
*North Dakota Aviation Association*
*chairman@fly-nd.com*

# CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Happy New Year! Here's to a year filled with fun, flying, and blue skies. With the start of 2025, we're excited to share updates and opportunities ahead for the North Dakota Aviation Association.

Save the date for the 2025 Fly-ND Conference, March 2-4, 2025, at the Delta Hotel in Fargo, North Dakota. This premier event offers an exceptional opportunity to learn, network, and celebrate our state's vibrant aviation community. Early-bird discounts are available for registrations completed by February 1, so don't wait—register today at https://fly-nd.com/events/Conference. Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are still available if you're interested in showcasing your brand, connecting with industry professionals, or supporting this fantastic event.

The conference schedule is shaping up to feature a great lineup of sessions, activities, and networking events. On Sunday, March 2nd, attendees can look forward to tours of the North Dakota Air National Guard 119th Wing and Spectrum Aeromed at Hector International Airport and an Icebreaker Social at Fargo Jet Center. Monday, March 3rd, and Tuesday, March 4th, will include panel discussions covering mental health in aviation and developments in the UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) industry, and engaging breakout sessions with US Customs, AOPA legal services, and a variety of aviation maintenance topics for IA renewal. FAA Safety Team Representatives from the Fargo FSDO will also present sessions that qualify for WINGS credits, and Kyle Wanner will deliver an insightful summary on the State of Aviation in North Dakota. Please visit https://fly-nd.com/events/Conference for the full conference agenda.

We're also excited to honor Cindy Schreiber-Beck as the 50th inductee into the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame. Join us in celebrating this significant achievement on Tuesday, March 4th, at 6:00 PM at the Delta Hotel in Fargo.

As we embark on 2025, let's embrace the spirit of adventure and connection that aviation inspires. Whether navigating the skies, turning wrenches, keeping our airports safe and operational, or simply marveling at the beauty of flight, take time to explore new horizons, connect with others, and let the skies inspire you. Here's to a happy and healthy 2025—a year to fly, discover new destinations and celebrate the joy of aviation. Looking forward to connecting with you at the Fly-ND Conference!





**Renée Murrish, Manager**
*North Dakota Aviation Association*
*701-226-1640 / manager@fly-nd.com*

FROM THE *Manager*

# Happy New Year!

New beginnings, new challenges, new connections, new adventures, and new goals to reach are a few things that make each January 1st exciting. As you set your goals for 2025, embrace the new year as an opportunity to take flight, both literally and metaphorically. Dream big and chase those dreams with determination and fire. Know that setbacks are just opportunities to adjust your course, and trust in your instincts, your knowledge, and ability to soar above the clouds. Remember aviation was and still is built on a lineage of courage and ingenuity that has pushed the limits of what is possible; be that person for yourself in 2025.

This first quarter is always an exciting time for the North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA) as our main event, the annual Fly-ND Conference, is just around the corner. Registration is open and the time to sign up is now, to take advantage of the early bird pricing. The conference team has been working really hard and has been very successful at creating valuable content for you to be able gain a wealth of knowledge. The two day conference schedule will be posted as it becomes available on the website and social platforms. On the last night of the conference, we host the Aviation Hall of Fame banquet; this banquet is a highlight for all attendees, as we recognize a well-deserved individual who has been and continues to be an incredible asset to the world of aviation. You will not want to miss the 2025 Fly-ND Conference.

If you are not already a part of this organization, make sure you take a short flight over to our website and become a member. As a 501c3, non-profit, we are able to keep this organization successful and beneficial to so many through sponsorships and memberships. As a member, your voice can help make an aviation difference, be that person for the generations to come.

*Let's Kick the Tires and Light the Fires! Renee*





North Dakota Aviation Association

# FLY-ND CONFERENCE

**March 2-4, 2025 • Fargo**

*Early Bird discount ends February 1st*

## Conference Highlights:

**The conference is an opportunity to learn more about aviation in North Dakota and network with our aviation community. Throughout the conference, sessions will be held for pilots, mechanics, airport managers, and general aviation enthusiasts.**

- **Learn from Aviation Industry Leaders**
- **IA Renewal Credits**
- **Associations Annual Business Meetings**
- **Networking Opportunities**
- **Icebreaker Event**
- **Exhibitors Night**
- **Hall of Fame Banquet**
- **Educational Sessions**
- **Breakout Sessions for Pilots, Mechanics, UAS, Aerial Applicators, and Airport Operators**

This conference is hosted by the North Dakota Aviation Association and held at Delta by Marriott, 1635 42nd Street South | Fargo | ND | 58103

## First Time Attendees Register for FREE!

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Registration and details at www.fly-nd.com/events/Conference

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**Kyle Wanner, Director**
*North Dakota Aeronautics Commission*
*701-328-9650 | kcwanner@nd.gov*

DIRECTOR'S Chair

# 2024 Year in Review for North Dakota Aviation

As we close the book on 2024, North Dakota's aviation sector looks back on a year of outstanding growth, major achievements, and innovative progress. These accomplishments—spanning airline boardings, aerial applicator operations, aviation education, infrastructure development, and UAS initiatives—highlight the vital role aviation plays in strengthening our economy and enriching our communities. Here's a quick look at some of the exciting highlights from 2024:

## Airline Boardings Soar to New Heights

Air travel in North Dakota surged in 2024, with 10% year-over-year growth and airline boardings surpassing 2.4 million passengers. This has been the best calendar year on record and the performance marks the highest level of airline boardings since the peak of the oil boom in 2014. This resurgence not only reflects a complete recovery to pre-pandemic levels but also highlights the essential role that aviation provides in linking North Dakota's businesses and travelers to the worldwide economy.

## Record-Breaking Aerial Applicator Operations

North Dakota's aerial applicators also achieved a new milestone this past year, providing services to a record 5.5 million acres—which is 1.5 million more than the annual average. This helps to emphasize the critical role that our aerial applicator businesses have in supporting our state's agriculture industry and the world's food supply. This past year:

- 78 licensed manned aerial applicators operated 183 aircraft and employed 156 pilots statewide.
- A record 21 licensed unmanned aerial applicators operated with 37 unmanned aircraft and 46 licensed pilots. They provided precision chemical application services to an additional 69,000 acres, demonstrating a rise of innovative technologies in agriculture.

## Aircraft Ownership and Aviation Fuel Sales Near All-Time Highs

In 2024, North Dakota sustained a historically high level of aircraft ownership, with approximately 2,150 based aircraft across the state. Additionally, 25.3 million gallons of taxable aviation fuel were sold during FY2024, approaching the record levels last seen during the peak oil boom years of 2014 and 2015.

## Major Infrastructure Investments

Throughout 2024, airports across North Dakota received $79 million in federal grants through the Airport Improvement Program and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. To amplify and match these funds, the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission provided $16 million in funding support which helped to move 190 different airport projects within the state forward.

## Advancing Weather Reporting Systems

Reliable weather information is critical to safe aviation operations in North Dakota, and the Aeronautics Commission continues to assist in the maintenance and development of our weather systems. Recent advancements include:

- Installations of Automated Weather Observing Systems (AWOS) at airports in Bottineau and Killdeer.
- Installations of eight different airport cameras to the FAA Weather Camera Program, providing real-time visuals on our airports for the first time.

## Statewide Planning Initiatives

To ensure long-term success, the Aeronautics Commission launched several major statewide studies in 2024:

- An update to the Statewide Pavement Condition Index study, which assesses the 60 million square feet of airport pavement. This updates the last study which was conducted in 2021.
- Updates to the Statewide System Plan, a guiding document for aviation development and investments. The new report is scheduled for release in Spring 2026, updating the last study conducted in 2014.
- A refreshed Economic Impact of Aviation Study, measuring aviation's contributions to North Dakota's economy. Findings are expected in Spring 2026, replacing the last report from 2015.

## Expanding Aviation Education and Workforce Development

Throughout 2024, the Aeronautics Commission invested approximately $125,000 in education and workforce development throughout North Dakota. Additional in-state education initiatives included:

- An FAA Workforce Development Grant was awarded to Wahpeton State College of Science to launch an aviation maintenance technology program starting in the Fall of 2025.
- In-person aviation programs are now available in seven high schools, with distance education available for all high school students statewide.
- The Annual ND Aviation Career Expo, held at the Fargo Air Museum in Fall 2024, drew over 250 students eager to explore aviation careers. The event also featured the awarding of more than $17,500 in scholarships by the North Dakota Aviation Association, supporting the next generation of aviation professionals.

## Advancing UAS Initiatives

North Dakota, through the dedicated efforts of the Northern Plains UAS Test Site, continues to lead the nation in Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) innovation. A key highlight in 2024 was the ongoing pioneering and development of VANTIS, the state's Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) network. In a recent groundbreaking announcement, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) designated North Dakota as the first state to gain access to FAA radar data which can be incorporated into the VANTIS system. This milestone significantly enhances BVLOS capabilities and unlocks unparalleled opportunities for integrating UAS operations safely into the national airspace system.

## Looking Ahead

As we move into 2025 and begin to engage policymakers during the biennial legislative session - North Dakota's aviation sector has much to celebrate. From record-breaking milestones to groundbreaking initiatives... 2024 showcased the opportunities, innovation, and the continued resilience of our aviation industry. With a solid foundation and a commitment to progress, we are ready to build on this past year's success as we continue our work to shape an even brighter future for aviation in North Dakota.

FLY-ND QUARTERLY

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# Cindy Schreiber-Beck to be inducted into North Dakota's Aviation Hall of Fame

North Dakota Aviation HALL OF FAME



*The North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame committee is excited to announce that Cindy Schreiber-Beck has been selected as the 50th inductee into the prestigious Hall of Fame. This honor recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the growth, development, and promotion of aviation in North Dakota. To learn more about the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame, visit www.fly-nd.com/hall-of-fame.*

Cynthia (Cindy) Schreiber-Beck was born on December 13, 1954, and grew up on a farm near Foxhome, MN. After graduating from Campbell High School, she earned a degree in Speech and Language Pathology from Moorhead State University and served students primarily in Minnesota. However, aviation eventually became her focus.

In 1982, Cindy married Gerry Beck, and together they operated Tri-State Aviation in Wahpeton, ND, at that time an aerial spraying and fixed based operation. Recognized as innovative, the company perfected and marketed the SuperBoom, built the first EPA approved taxi-through loading facility and in the 1990's, transitioned into the fabrication of warbird parts that converted the shop into an internationally recognized warbird rebuilding and restoration facility. Cindy continued the company after Gerry's death in 2007, and in 2017 successfully transitioned the company to new ownership, securing its legacy.

For nearly four decades, Cindy has volunteered as the Executive Director of the North Dakota Agricultural Aviation Association (NDAAA). She has tirelessly advocated for agricultural aviation at the state and national levels, convened with policymakers, organized conferences, and collaborated with neighboring states to establish the Tri-State Agricultural Aviation Convention. Her leadership was pivotal during events such as the September 11, 2001, aviation shutdown. Under her guidance, the NDAAA has maintained financial stability, strong membership, and an influential public presence.

Nationally, Cindy was active in the National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA) and Women of the NAAA (WNAAA). She assisted in the development of an educational curriculum introducing students to agricultural aviation, earning the NAAA Most Active Woman Award in 1989.

Cindy's contributions extend beyond agricultural aviation. For 25 years, she served as a commissioner on the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission (1997–2022), where her expertise influenced state aviation policy. In 2013, she was also a member of the Governor's task force that advocated for, and established, North Dakota as one of the nation's Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) test sites.

Beginning in 2015, Cindy was elected to the North Dakota House of Representatives and serves on the Education and Agriculture Committees. Her legislative work supports initiatives tied to aviation, innovation, agriculture, and education.

Cindy Schreiber-Beck's unwavering dedication and transformative contributions to aviation have earned her a place in the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame. Her leadership and advocacy leave a legacy, inspiring future generations to recognize aviation's critical role in agriculture, innovation, and community development.

## Induction Ceremony Details

Cindy will be officially inducted during the Fly-ND Conference on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Delta Hotel in Fargo, ND. The event will begin with a social at 6:00 p.m., followed by the banquet at 7:00 p.m.

For more information about the state aviation conference or to purchase tickets for the Hall of Fame banquet, visit fly-nd.com/events/conference. Questions may be directed to the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission at 701-328-9650.

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North Dakota Aviation Association

# FLY-ND CONFERENCE

March 2-4, 2025 • Fargo

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- 10 Conference and ND Aviation Hall of Fame banquet tickets
- Special recognition at the ND Aviation Hall of Fame banquet
- Triple booth exhibit space
- Logo on all marketing materials and emails
- Large logo displayed throughout the conference
- One marketing piece place in each welcome bag

## BEYOND VISUAL LINE OF SIGHT - $7,500+

- 4 conference and ND Aviation Hall of Fame banquet tickets
- Special recognition at the ND Aviation Hall of Fame banquet
- Double booth exhibit space
- Sponsor spotlight
- Logo on all marketing materials and emails
- Medium logo displayed throughout the conference
- One marketing piece place in each welcome bag

## APPROACH CONTROL - $5,000+

- 2 conference and ND Aviation Hall of Fame banquet tickets
- Special recognition at the ND Aviation Hall of Fame banquet
- Single booth exhibit space
- Sponsor spotlight
- Logo on all marketing materials and emails
- Medium logo displayed throughout the conference
- One marketing piece place in each welcome bag

## CONTROL TOWER - $3,000+

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- Medium logo displayed throughout the conference
- One marketing piece place in each welcome bag

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- Recognition throughout the conference sessions
- Sponsor spotlight and logo on all marketing materials
- Medium logo displayed throughout the conference
- One marketing piece place in each welcome bag

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- Transportation Sponsor - $1,250 (limit one)
- Refreshment Break Sponsor - $1,000 (limit three)

# ND Aeronautics Director, Kyle Wanner Honored by Airport Business Top 40 Under 40



We are excited to announce that Kyle Wanner, Executive Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission (NDAC), has been selected as a 2024 recipient of Airport Business's Top 40 Under 40 award.This honor recognizes the most innovative and promising emerging leaders who are shaping the future of aviation in North America. Recipients were chosen based on their dedication, vision, and significant achievements throughout their careers.

"The Aeronautics Commission is extremely proud of Kyle earning this award. It is a true testament for his leadership with each and every public use airport in the state and their projects." states Dr. Kim Kenville, Chair of the NDAC "He is a fierce advocate for every project and is adept at working with the local, state and federal agencies and groups. A true gem for the state! Congratulations on a this prestigious award and the hard work it takes to be recognized!"

Airport Business publishes its annual "Top 40 Under 40" list to recognize the accomplishments of rising stars and future leaders in the aviation business sector. With the aviation industry constantly evolving, it is vital to recognize up and coming professionals that are making a significant impact in the airport industry through demonstration of their exceptional leadership skills, innovative thinking, contributions to industry growth and success leading notable projects.



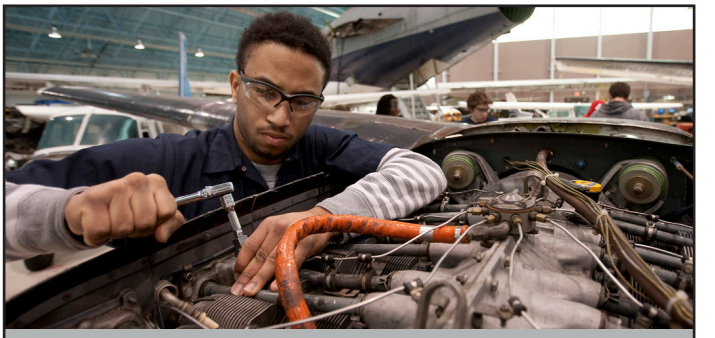

*Read the full article in the Airport Business digital magazine by clicking on the image.*




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# Minot man inducted into air show hall of fame

The late air show performer Al Pietsch of Minot was inducted into the prestigious International Council of Air Shows Foundation Air Hall of Fame.

The induction was held at an award presentation on Dec. 12 during the ICAS convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, according to ICAS information.

From 1968 through 1995, Pietsch performed throughout the U.S. and Canada in his Stolp Starduster Too, a homebuilt biplane. During the latter stages of his air show flying, he performed with his two sons, Kent and Warren, creating a multi-ship, multi-act flying circus. Pietsch was a founding member of the ICAS, a member of the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame and an honorary member of the Canadian Forces Snowbirds. He was killed in an aviation accident in 1995.

The inscription on the plaque award presented to Pietsch family members during the award presentation reads the honor is “in recognition of his contributions as an air show performer, entertainer and trailblazer.”

Two people are inducted into the Air Show Hall of Fame each year. Announcer Rob Reider was also inducted this year. During the last three decades, Reider had established himself as both a top air show narrator and a tireless advocate for the air show business. He finished his air show career at the Blue Angels Homecoming Show at Naval Air Station Pensacola earlier this year.




*Submitted Photo: Warren Pietsch, center, holds a plaque award honoring the late Al Pietsch for his induction into the Air Show Hall of Fame, and at his right is Kent Pietsch.*

Pietsch and Reider join a fraternity of air show icons in the Air Show Hall of Fame.

The awards banquet is held on the last night of the ICAS convention, at which most air show participants come to plan air shows and book acts. There were 1,900 people registered.

*Reprinted with permission from The Minot Daily News.*







# Pilot First Aid Course

August 11, 2024 | Location: Kulm, ND (D03)



A total of 27 North Dakota pilots spent the weekend in Kulm, ND, learning how to anticipate, diagnose, and treat the most common injuries sustained in off-airport emergency landings and small aircraft accidents. The Pilot First Aid Course (PFAC), created by North Dakota pilots Dr. Jon Solberg and Dr. Justin Reisenauer, was based on the guiding principles of the U.S. military's Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) course and the duo's combined 30 years of experience as emergency medicine physicians. Pilots and their passengers arrived the evening prior and were treated to a perfectly manicured grass runway, surrounded by bright yellow sunflower fields, the beautiful blue hues of a nearby lake, and a pale blue sky dotted with cotton-like clouds. The Kulm Airport staff, organized and directed by Lawrence Holmgren, treated participants to a walleye fish fry and campfire social. Stories of backcountry flights and other aviation adventures ensued until the stars came out in full force. Most participants camped next to their own aircraft; some were in tents and others directly under the stars.



The course itinerary consisted of didactics, demonstrations, and hands on workshops covering massive hemorrhage, chest and cervical spine injuries, fractures, burns, head trauma, and exposure to the elements. The Kulm Fire Department demonstrated the important differences between powdered ABC and Halotron fire extinguishers and pilots practiced emergency egress from their own aircraft, followed by the opportunity to treat simulated injuries on themselves and their passengers with supplies contained in a backcountry survival chest pack.

Drs. Solberg and Reisenauer are planning another course for next summer. The location and dates will be announced on www.jonsolbergmd.com, social media platforms, and in the Fly-ND Quarterly magazine.



## Thank You to the NDAA Allied Members

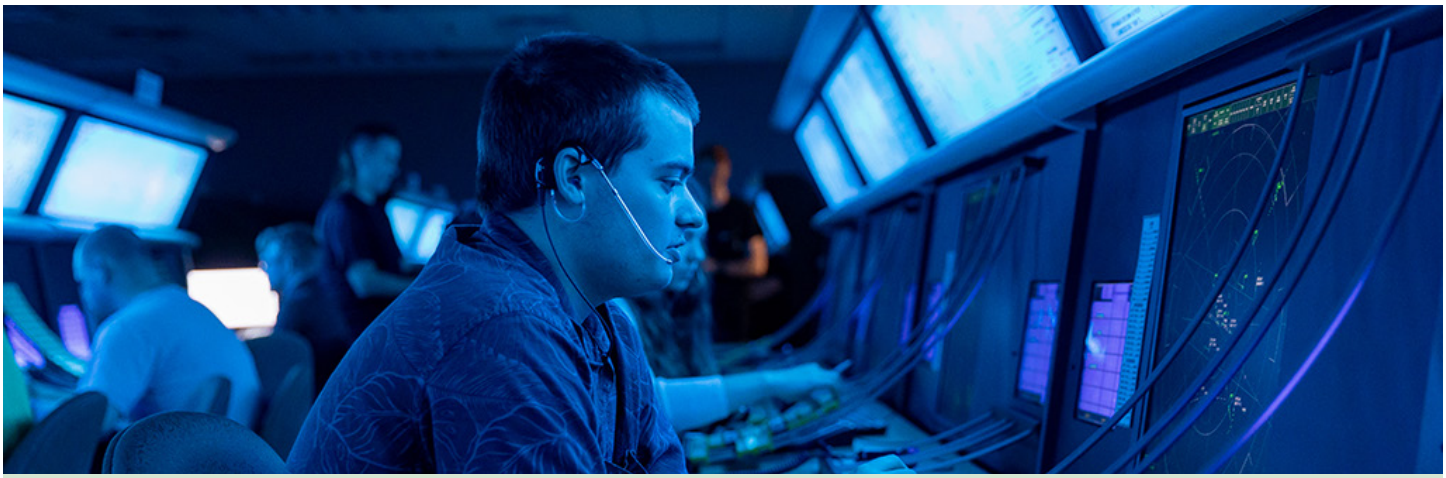
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Want to enjoy all the benefits of being a NDAA Allied Member too? Join today at www.fly-nd.com!

# FAA Air Traffic Control agreement with UND fast tracks graduates to fill needed jobs

## Beginning this spring, Air Traffic Management graduates can bypass the FAA Academy and go directly into the workforce



*A UND Air Traffic Management student monitors equipment in a laboratory. Photo by Shawna Schill/UND Today.*

Students graduating from UND's Air Traffic Management program soon will be able to get into the workforce much faster — and fill vital jobs — thanks to a new Federal Aviation Administration program.

On Monday, Dec. 9, the FAA announced that UND has been accepted into its Enhanced Air Traffic – Collegiate Training Initiative program. Prior to the implementation of this program, all prospective air traffic controllers were required to attend the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City — even if they had a university degree that trained them to work in a control tower. The FAA's agreement with UND means graduates can bypass the FAA Academy. The AT-CTI program is an FAA initiative to increase staffing in towers across the nation.

Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., who played a key role in driving the Enhanced AT-CTI program forward, visited UND in March to speak about the initiative.Hoeven said the requirement for controllers to attend the FAA Academy, regardless of education or work experience, creates a "bottleneck" that slows down hiring and contributes to a shortage of air traffic controllers.

"Today, we reach an exciting milestone in our efforts to address the air traffic controller shortage, while ensuring UND continues to lead the way across the board when it comes to aviation. We need more qualified air traffic controllers out in the workforce, and it makes sense to leverage the expertise of the John D. Odegard School of Aviationto meet this critical need. That's why, throughout this process, we made the case to the FAA for UND to play a central role in the new Enhanced AT-CTI program," said Hoeven. "Starting in the 2025 spring semester, UND's students will have the opportunity to bypass the FAA ATC Academy in Oklahoma and go directly into the workforce after graduation. That's an incredible value to students and a benefit to communities across that country, whose local economies rely on safe and reliable air service."

UND is among the first universities to be admitted into the program. Other member schools are Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Tulsa Community College and the University of Oklahoma.

Along with 31 other universities, UND is already a member of the FAA's existing Air Traffic College Training Initiative. The original program confers a number of benefits, such as reducing the amount of time graduates must spend at the FAA Academy by five weeks. The Enhanced AT-CTI program allows those graduates to bypass the 16-week program completely.

Robert Kraus, dean of Aerospace, said that UND has a

tradition of deep commitment to excellence in aerospace education. That tradition will carry on into the future, as the University works with the FAA to assess and address changes in the national airspace.

"Since graduating its first air traffic controllers in 1971, UND Aerospace has more than 50 years of experience in educating and training air traffic professionals who now serve across the industry and around the globe," Kraus said. "This ongoing commitment continues as we collaborate with the FAA to shape the future of airspace management, including the integration of uncrewed aerial systems (drones) and Advanced Air Mobility platforms."

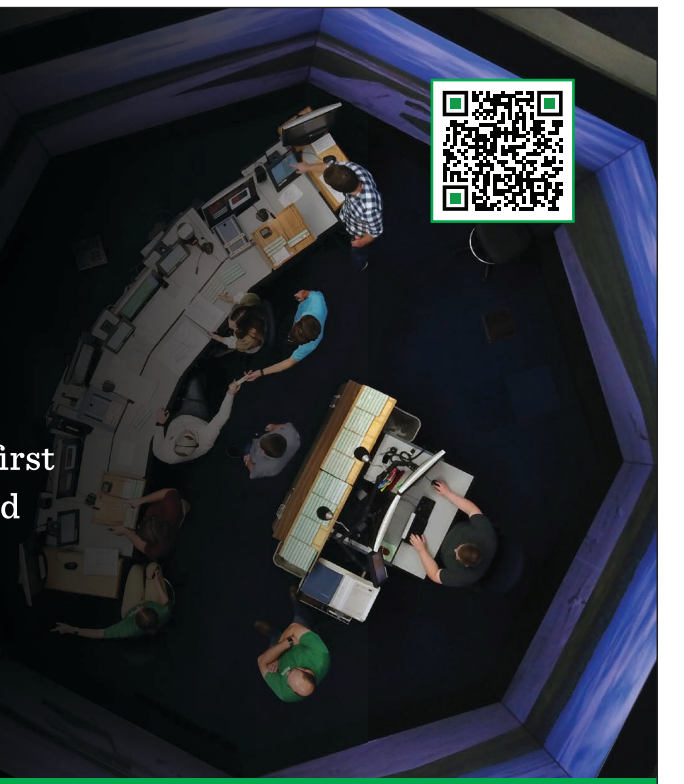
After finishing their time at UND, Air Traffic Management graduates must then pass the FAA's Air Traffic Skills Assessment (ATSA), meet medical and security requirements and pass performance verifications before taking up work in a control tower, or other authorized work environment.

Many aerospace students at UND are taught by Craig Carlson, assistant chair of UND's Air Traffic Management program. Carlson applauded the FAA team that set the Enhanced AT-CTI program in motion. The program, he said, will help ensure the safety of U.S. airways.

"I look forward to providing the FAA with highly qualified UND graduates to help alleviate the current air traffic controller shortage," he said. "This program is just what we need to grow the workforce and keep air passengers safe."

And safety is always on the minds of those both in UND Aerospace and the FAA. According to a news release,the agency has a year-round hiring policy for controllers coming from private industry and the military. The agency also is making use of new simulators to help train newly hired controllers. The Enhanced AT-CTI program is the most recent effort meant to address workforce issues for controllers.

The new FAA program also will put UND in a position for growth, Carlson said. At present, there are about 100 students in the Air Traffic Management program, but that number could triple in the coming years, when prospective students learn they can join the workforce much more quickly after graduation. Such growth also would require UND to hire additional faculty members to accommodate students in the program.

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# Pavement Condition Index, Seeing Beyond the Numbers

## Understanding Airport Pavement Needs

Airport pavements are the structural bones of aviation infrastructure, providing the foundation for every aircraft landing, takeoff, and taxiing operation. Given their critical role, maintaining these pavements in optimal condition is essential for safety, operational efficiency, and long-term cost-effectiveness. To evaluate pavement health, our airport operators across North Dakota rely on the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) — a numerical rating system ranging from 0 to 100, with 0 representing failed pavements and 100 representing new, pristine conditions. The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission (NDAC) completes a triennial PCI Study, evaluating airport pavements statewide to give airports an updated snapshot of their airport condition. While the PCI offers a valuable starting point for pavement assessment, it often falls short of providing the complete picture needed for informed decision-making. Over the years, the NDAC and our consultants have added tools to this study to help bring a clearer picture of pavement conditions.

## The Limitations of a Numerical Rating

The PCI system evaluates pavement condition by assigning a score based on visual inspections of surface distresses, such as cracking, depressions, and weathering / raveling. A numerical rating alone, however, may not reveal the underlying causes of these distresses or the extent of damage beneath the surface.

Additionally, the PCI can sometimes overexaggerate surface issues. A rating as low as 25-30 could flag pavements for a reconstruction, but if the only distresses are surface-related, simpler treatments such as an overlay or reclaim-in-place might suffice. This highlights the importance of interpreting PCI scores within the context of more detailed analyses to avoid unnecessary expenditures on extensive rehabilitation projects.

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Focusing solely on the numerical PCI scores risks oversimplifying pavement management decisions. Without a deeper investigation, airport operators may choose treatments that address the wrong issues and fail to resolve root causes. This could lead to premature pavement failure and higher long-term costs, or expensive reconstruction of perfectly healthy pavement bases.

## Digging Deeper: The Value of Comprehensive Analysis

To truly understand pavement conditions and prescribe effective solutions, a more thorough approach is required. This involves not only examining surface distresses, but also possibly investigating the pavement's subsurface layers and the soil conditions beneath. The NDAC works to address these issues with our consultants, when we conduct the triennial PCI study:

1. **Distress Type Analysis:** Surface distresses can indicate specific underlying issues. For example, alligator cracking often points to structural fatigue, while raveling may suggest surface wear or binder issues. Identifying the types and severity of distresses helps pinpoint the most appropriate maintenance or rehabilitation methods.
2. **Five-year Work Recommendation:** Our consultants provide broad recommendations for work along with the PCI numerical results, offering our airport operators a starting direction to plan out the right projects for their pavements.
3. **Soil Borings and Subsurface Testing:** If there are still questions about the pavement conditions, NDAC may recommend soil borings at a specific airport. Soil borings and other geotechnical investigations provide critical insights into the condition of the pavement's foundation. Weak or unstable subgrade conditions, poor drainage, or insufficient base materials can significantly impact pavement performance.

   Addressing these issues requires more than surface-level fixes. These aren't included as part of our PCI study, but instead recommended for specific projects when a deeper look is needed.

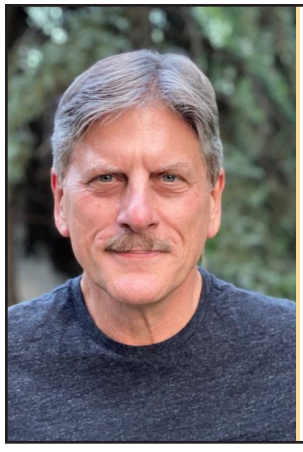
## Matching Solutions to Pavement Needs

By combining PCI data with the findings from comprehensive analyses, airport operators can make informed decisions about pavement maintenance and rehabilitation. For example:

- **Seal Coats:** If analyses indicate minor cracking or significant surface wear with no structural issues, a slurry seal coat or microsurface can provide a cost-effective solution to extend pavement life.
- **Mill & Overlay:** When surface distress is accompanied by moderate structural issues, a mill and overlay—removing the top layer of asphalt and replacing it—may be the most appropriate intervention.
- **Full-Depth Rehabilitation:** For pavements with severe structural damage, but still showing subgrade stability, a full-depth rehabilitation may be necessary to ensure long-term performance.

It is important to remember these are very broad examples. Every pavement section experiences its own unique environment, and distresses may vary quite extensively. This is why these analyses are important to properly plan each project.

In conclusion, the Pavement Condition Index is a useful tool for assessing airport pavements, but it should not be the sole determinant of maintenance and rehabilitation strategies. By going beyond the numbers and performing more detailed analyses of surface and subsurface conditions, airport operators can ensure that their pavements receive the most effective treatments. This proactive approach not only enhances safety and reliability but also maximizes the return on investment in pavement infrastructure.

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- Help support the future of Aviation in ND
- Opportunity for committee involvement – Conference, Advocacy, Strategic Planning, etc.
- Advocacy and lobbying efforts which benefit the aviation industry
- "Regional Voice" through representation on other boards and other advocacy
- Collaborate with other member groups
- Help student members to fuel aviation for tomorrow
- Protect aviation in North Dakota
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- Stay informed on aviation – related issues through regular communication
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**Individual Member** ($40) is for those with personal or employment interest in the aviation profession or industry and who support the purpose of NDAA.

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- Special Priority at the Fly-ND Annual Conference (Including hosting training opportunities, discounted booths, meeting rooms, and award recognition)
- Representation and link on the NDAA Fly-ND website
- Assistance with distribution of your organization's information and dues processing
- Organization member websites and logos are advertised on NDAA website and at the Fly-ND Conference
- Ability to submit articles for the Fly-ND Quarterly regarding organizational updates

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- Listed in *Fly-ND Quarterly* and website as an Allied Member
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- Explore all facets of aviation
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- Career advancement through job boards

# Northern Plains UAS Test Site Partners with Tennessee DOT to Create Vantis-like System



The Northern Plains UAS Test Site (NPUASTS) and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) are pleased to announce a monumental partnership to develop a system like Vantis (North Dakota's beyond-visual-line-of-sight system) in Tennessee, aimed at enhancing its UAS program over the next five years.

NPUASTS provided a comprehensive proposal to assist in the planning, development, implementation, and operation of a system to support unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and other autonomous technologies as directed by Tennessee leadership. The Test Site will collaborate with TDOT to assess current assets and infrastructure to devise a strategic plan for deploying the necessary infrastructure to meet their objectives.

The project will be executed in five phases:

- Phase 1: Regional Evaluation
- Phase 2: State Evaluation
- Phase 3: Key Site & Planning
- Phase 4: Initial Operational Capability
- Phase 5: Expansion

"We are thrilled to partner with the Tennessee Department of Transportation to advance the AAM infrastructure within the state," said Trevor Woods, Executive Director of NPUASTS. "This collaboration represents a significant step forward in creating a more interconnected and sustainable UAS ecosystem in the United States. By working together across state lines, we can achieve greater collaboration and support the development of robust infrastructure."

"We are eager to leverage NPUASTS as Tennessee continues to grow and demands on the transportation system increase," said TDOT Aeronautics Director JP Saalwaechter. "Their expertise, combined with our shared commitment to safety and innovation, will help develop a transportation network that will meet the demands and utilize emerging technologies. Together, we will create a framework that promotes a high quality of life for all Tennesseans for years to come."

NPUASTS is excited about the opportunity to contribute to Tennessee's advanced air mobility (AAM) initiative. This partnership highlights the synergies between the efforts at NPUASTS and the goals of Tennessee's UAS program, paving the way for innovative advancements in autonomous technology infrastructure.



# Priority No. 1 for the 2025 North Dakota Legislative Session

*By Ryan Riesinger*
*President, Airport Association of North Dakota*
*Executive Director, Grand Forks Regional Airport Authority*



The 2025 North Dakota Legislative Session began on Tuesday, January 7. We experienced great success in recent sessions when we worked together and made compelling cases to support our initiatives. With a team approach, extensive effort and progress were made in 2024 on our priority item for the session – Securing $120 million in State funding to support the completion of three "generational" airport projects in the next biennium.

The Federal Aviation Administration is the primary funding source for airport development nationwide. This is largely accomplished by Airport Improvement Program grants. However, as project costs have quadrupled over the last 23 years, there simply is not enough federal AIP funding, and additional State and Local funding is needed for the shortfall.

There are currently three "generational" projects (large projects that arise every 20+ years) with no viable funding plan under current federal and state programs:

1. **Dickinson-Theodore Roosevelt Regional Airport (DIK)** – Construct a new air carrier passenger terminal. The total proposed cost is $48 million.

2. **Hector International Airport (FAR)** – Reconfigure, renovate, and expand the air carrier passenger terminal. The total proposed cost is $154 million.

3. **Grand Forks International Airport (GFK)** – Reconstruct primary runway 17R/35L. The total proposed cost is $75 million. The total request of State funding to support these three generational projects is $120 million, with $30 million to DIK, $60 million to FAR, and $30 to GFK. As part of this plan, it would also require an increase of local share to complete the projects.

During 2024, the team met with Governor Burgum's staff, then Governor-elect Armstrong, and leadership from both the State Senate and House. These efforts led to the full request of $120 million being included in the Governor's Budget. While this is great news, our work has just begun.

The $120 million would benefit all airports in the State



as the $20 million of funding from the Prairie Dog Airport Infrastructure Fund would be available for other airport projects. The $120 million request also demonstrates the great need for funding of large airport projects in the future.

In addition to the $120 million funding request, we will be watching possible legislation on the Prairie Dog buckets and be prepared to defend airport viewpoints on other legislation that may be introduced. Please be ready to reach out to your legislators on these efforts.

We are also excited for the upcoming FLY-ND Conference to be held March 2nd-4th, 2025, in Fargo at the Delta Marriot Hotel. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. Registration is now available at fly-nd.com. This will be another wonderful opportunity to meet together and work to improve our aviation system for the future.

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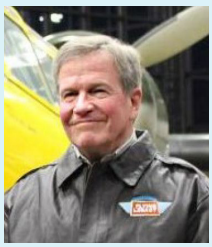
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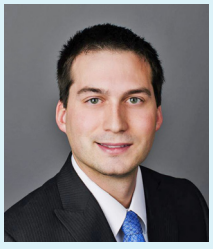
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# Grand Forks International Airport is 'poised for the future' as it opens crosswind runway

**The completion of reconstruction on the crosswind runway will allow the airport to work on the primary runway and improve safety.**

The recently reconstructed and extended crosswind runway at Grand Forks International Airport will allow the airport to maintain operations as one of the busiest airports in the country, all while preparing it for a primary runway reconstruction project.

Elected leaders, airport officials and business leaders came out Wednesday morning to celebrate the completion of the new runway. The nearly $70 million project has been on the airport's radar since the 1990s, but gained steam in 2015 during the airport's master planning process. Construction and project work, including the realignment of Country Road 5 on the airport's western edge,has been occurring since the Federal Aviation Administration gave approval to the project in 2019.



*Local, state, and federal officials cut the ribbon at the new crosswind runway at Grand Forks International Airport on Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024. Eric Hylden/Grand Forks Herald*

"These projects are generational projects and they take years to be able to complete," Airport Authority Executive Director Ryan Riesinger said. "(This runway) will certainly meet our needs, not only during the reconstruction of the primary runway, but it will also improve safety, efficiency and capacity for our airport for many years to come."

The project extended the crosswind runway, officially known as Runway 9L/27R, by 2,500 feet westward, making it 6,700 feet long. It also reconstructed the corresponding taxiways and the intersection of this runway and the airport's main runway, a process that took 12 days of round-the-clock work to minimize disruptions. The total project was funded with over $50 million in federal funds, $8.7 million from the state and $10.7 million from the the city of Grand Forks and Grand Forks County, mostly through the mills its levies.

"This runway is much needed because this is one of the top 25 busiest airports in the United States," Sen. John Hoeven, R-North Dakota, said during his speech Wednesday. "Occasionally, I was gazing over (prior to taking the podium) and I tell you, helicopters, three or four planes taking off, landing all the time, nonstop. That tells you why this is a big deal."

Dean of UND's John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences, Robert Kraus, said it actually was a quiet day for students at the airport.

"We actually restricted flying operations today to let the FAA do their job and get the runway fully open," Kraus said. "It's an amazing feat of work to get this done as quick as it did, but even more so how efficient it was and how little of an impact it had on the operations at this airport."

As one of the busiest airports in the country and the busiest in the state for take-offs and landings, Kyle Wanner, executive director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission, said Grand Forks is integral to North Dakota.

"Over the last decade, our airport system has just turned into something incredible," Wanner said. "We have a lot of work left to do, but our citizens should be proud of the airport system that they have in place and the work that's being done in the background."

This expansion, along with projects coming up like the construction of a new air traffic control tower and expansion of UND's air traffic controller program and other aviation programs, are leading Grand Forks into the future, according to local and state leaders.

"We're busy because we're busy building the future of aviation and building it from the ground up,"Hoeven said. "Air traffic controllers on the ground, pilots on fixed wing, rotary wing, and now we're working in space. So things are just going to get bigger."

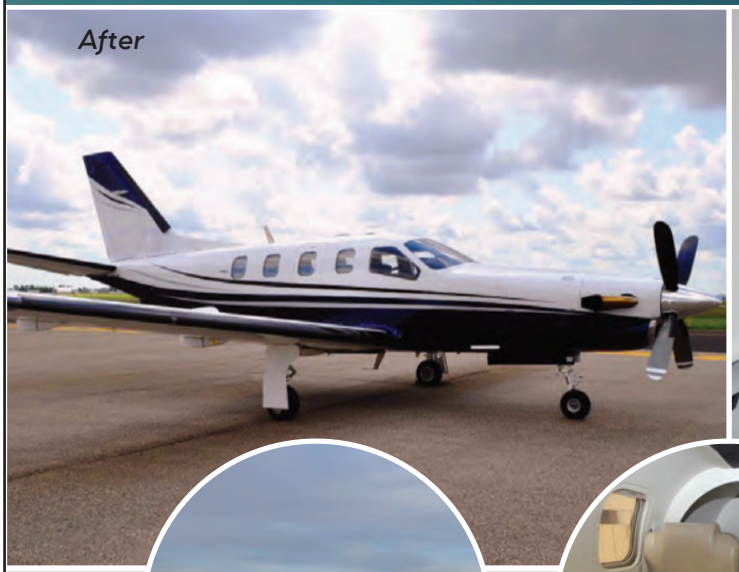
Grand Forks Mayor Brandon Bochenski also spoke during Wednesday's ceremony, saying this is just one of many exciting things happening in the city.

"You've got a brand new hospital in Altru,you have the Air Force Base poised for the future, you've got UND poised for the future, you've got the airport (now) poised for the future," Bochenski said. "Grand Forks is poised for the future."

The ceremony was attended by several dozen guests, who took a bus from the terminal to a spot actually on the runway. During the event, the dignitaries and speakers cut a ribbon to mark the runway's opening, and then invited the guests to take a group photo, with the photographer hoisted on a mechanical lift.

*By Matt Voigt. Reprinted with permission from the Grand Forks Herald*

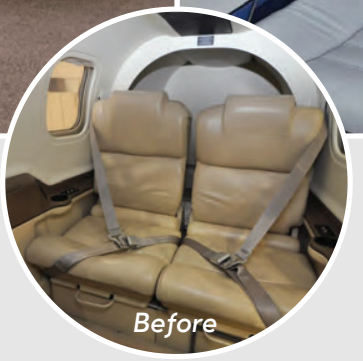
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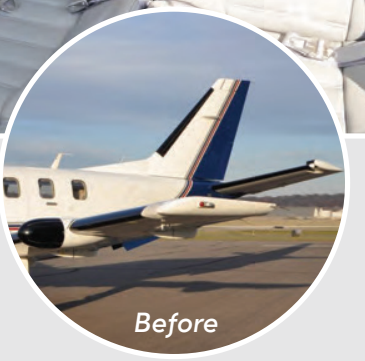









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# CALENDAR of EVENTS

*Check out the online calendar for details on these events: aero.nd.gov/events*

### February 2025

**2025 Tri-State Aerial Applicators Convention**
FEB 11-12 | Grand Forks, ND

The Tri-State Aerial Applicators Convention will be held at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, ND, in 2025! The PAASS Program will be February 11th.

### March 2025

**2025 Fly-ND Conference**
MAR 02-04 | Fargo, ND

The conference will feature sessions for pilots, mechanics, airport managers, and general aviation enthusiasts, focusing on various topics relevant to the industry. Visit the website to register today!
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