



vertiflite Commentary

Invest in the Future

By Mike Hirschberg, Executive Director

As anyone paying for college knows, higher education costs are rising at an alarming pace. Since 1978, U.S. college tuition and fees have jumped 1,120%, according to an August 2012 review by Bloomberg. That is four times the increase in the U.S. consumer price index, a key measure of inflation.

These higher costs contribute to the growing challenge of attracting engineering students to careers in aerospace. Aerospace company leaders warn that we are not producing enough new engineers to replace those planning to retire in the next few years. In its latest annual survey of employers, the global recruitment, training and career management firm ManpowerGroup found that engineering jobs were the second hardest positions to fill worldwide, after skilled trade positions. In the Americas, those jobs were the hardest to fill.

Many students drawn to engineering pursue jobs in the software and petroleum industries, while others are lured to finance and management positions. More and more, students seem reluctant to invest in careers in aerospace engineering jobs, particularly in vertical flight.

The Vertical Flight Foundation (VFF) works to help students make that investment and ensure the supply of engineers to our industry.

VFF is the philanthropic arm of AHS. It is an IRS 501(c)(3) charitable organization, so contributions are deductible from U.S. income taxes. Since 1977, the Foundation has awarded more than 400 scholarships to promising undergraduate and graduate students who plan to pursue careers in vertical

flight. Students will be submitting application packages for this year's scholarships by February 1, 2013.

The scholarships are incredibly competitive, and the application requirements are extensive. Only the most promising students receive awards. But far too many highly qualified students are turned away each year due to limited funds. Given the challenges our industry faces, your contribution to the Vertical Flight Foundation is needed now more than ever.

VFF scholarships have made a real difference. Many past recipients hold important leadership positions in government, industry and academia today. Here are just a few:

- Bill Warmbrodt (a 1977 scholarship recipient) – now NASA Ames Aeromechanics Branch Chief
- Dr. Roberto Celi (1980) – a professor at University of Maryland today
- Dr. Mike Torok (1987) – Sikorsky's Vice President of CH-53K Programs
- Dr. Ashish Bagai (1994) – today a program manager at the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)
- Dr. Simon Atyeo (2006) – now a project manager at the Australian Defence Materiel Organisation

Many contributions to VFF have been made to honor and remember those who have inspired young engineers and advanced our industry, as these examples show.

Since AHS Atlanta Chapter member Charlie Crawford passed away in August, his friends and colleagues have

raised more than \$4,000 towards establishing a long-term VFF scholarship fund. Members of the AHS San Francisco Bay Area Chapter and others have raised more than \$15,000 for a dedicated scholarship in the name of Dr. Dick Carlson, who passed away in 2004, and the AHS Redstone Chapter has led efforts to raise nearly \$35,000 in honor of Barry Baskett, who passed away in 2006.

Hal Andrews, the recognized authority on U.S. Navy aviation and longtime proponent of vertical flight, was the greatest influence in my professional career. When he passed away in May 2007, I initiated the Hal Andrews Memorial Scholarship, which has been awarded annually since 2008. I remain an annual donor to support this scholarship in his memory.

Last year, the Foundation awarded 19 scholarships totaling \$50,000, thanks to the generosity and support of its contributors – members like you! But we could encourage and serve many more high-caliber students to meet the challenges of future vertical flight requirements.

Is there a teacher or mentor who was a tremendous inspiration in your career? Is there someone whose memory you would like to keep alive and pass on to future engineers? Please consider making a contribution of \$50, \$100 or more – or even starting a scholarship fund – in his or her name to help attract and retain the best and brightest students to our industry. If every member gave just \$25 per year, we would be able to award over \$150,000 annually.



The Vertical Flight Foundation recognizes four categories of contributors. The **Sustaining Patrons** are corporations or individuals who have made and continue to make contributions to the Foundation of \$1,000 or more. The Foundation recognizes individuals and organizations making contributions of \$500 to \$999.99 as **Guarantors**. Those donating \$300 to \$499.99

are **Benefactors** of the Foundation, while those who contribute \$100 to \$299.99 are recognized as **Sponsors**. Donors of \$50 to \$99.99 are **Associates** in the program. Additionally, many generous AHS members opt to contribute \$25 by checking the Foundation line item on their online or paper forms when they renew their membership.

We also encourage members to

remember AHS in their estate planning. Many individuals have bequeathed funds to the VFF scholarship fund over the years.

Similarly, many corporations make donations to help encourage the next generation of vertical flight engineers and scientists. Please see if your company is able to make a contribution. Perhaps you could instigate getting this into your company's annual planning budget of charitable giving.

Please make a contribution today. Go to www.vtol.org/vff to make an online donation by credit card. Or mail your check payable to "VFF" to AHS International headquarters, 217 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please contact Holly Cafferelli at 703-684-6777 x100 or hcafferelli@vtol.org if you have any questions.

Thank you for supporting our future vertical flight leaders!



Scan this code or visit www.vtol.org/vff to make your donation.

