

Molly Westhoven

Aviation Scholarship

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On one particularly hot summer day my mom was searching for things to do to keep ten year old me busy, which is when she stumbled upon the Young Eagles Program. This program helps to introduce young kids to the aviation field by having experienced pilots take them up for a flight in a cessna. The moment that I stepped foot in the plane I fell in love, and my mom knew it too. She always says she has never seen me smile as big as I did the day that I stepped out of the plane after my flight. At the time she didn't realize it, but now it is clear, going up for that flight and having the ability to take the controls and fly the plane had inspired me to become a pilot.

Ever since that day I have wanted to go into the aviation field. At first I was unsure of what exactly I wanted to do, but I knew whatever it was it would involve aviation. As the time went on I began taking lessons to be able to obtain my private pilot's license, which is how I discovered that I want to be a commercial pilot. When I began taking lessons I had a few different male instructors that would all teach me, but I never felt like I clicked with any of them. That is until I met Hannah. She was the first instructor to truly inspire me and show me that if I worked hard I too would be able to become a pilot. The aviation industry can seem very intimidating to many young girls because it is a male dominated field. So by seeing how successful Hannah had become in the aviation field it helped give me the confidence that I needed to be able to pursue my dreams of having a career in aviation. Without her words of encouragement I would not be where I am today, attending a top aviation school, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, this fall pursuing my dreams of becoming a pilot.

This spring when I visited ERAU, it only solidified my passion for aviation. As I was taking a campus tour and seeing not only the technology and simulators that the university had to offer, but also the students engaging with all of the resources. I knew that this was the place I wanted to be.