



The Sweet Sounds of September



Hello Aviation Alumni and Friends,

It's the middle of September and I am as excited as I am every time I hear that modern marvel by Earth, Wind & Fire! ALL of the students are back on campus, there is a buzz in the air, and there is action all around the campus. Don't get me wrong, the summer is great around the College of Aviation, but it is hard to beat that first "September Morn" when life return to full capacity at Western Michigan University.

First thing first – SAVE THE DATE!! The Aviation Recognition Dinner is coming up quick. Friday, November 10! The 2023 Excellence in Diversity winner and the Hall of Honor class will be announced very soon. Make sure to put the date on your calendar, so that you're ready to register as soon as we make the announcement! Want to sign up now? See below.

Second thing – Do you like winning free stuff? The participation in the alumni started to significantly lag, resulting in its hibernation. So, I wanted to do a quick little survey. Please [click here](#) to fill it out! Your participation will result in registering you for this month's prize!

Lastly, don't forget! There are a lot of great things happening at WMU. The University just opened up the brand new student center (it is amazing!), we have ushered in the new era of Bronco Football with Coach Lance Taylor's debut, Homecoming is right around the corner (Saturday, October 14), and we have a bunch of new apparel in [Captain Dave's Aviation Emporium](#)! And ... with Bronco Football also comes the return of the Bronco Marching Band! Another example of the "sweet sound of September!"

Alumni Feature

Featured this month is 2010 Aviation Flight Science Alumnus Aaron Jones. If there is one constant in the Universe (and aviation), it is change and adaptability. Graduating at one of the darkest periods of aviation opportunities, Jones, currently at Spirit Airlines, exemplified the necessity of being flexible, adaptable, and determined. Read his story by clicking the link below! Remember, scroll to the bottom of the email for additional stories on College of Aviation students, faculty and staff.

News, Events and Save the Dates!

- **SIGN UP NOW- The 2023 WMU Aviation Recognition Dinner**

- Friday, Nov. 10
 - 5:30 p.m. - Cash Bar
 - 6:15 p.m. - Dinner
 - 7 p.m. - Program Begins
- Can't attend? How about sponsoring a student or two? Email me for the promo code
- Sponsorships also available [here!](#)

- **Ignite Potential, Purpose and Possibility**

- Did you know there are several creative ways to not only support Western Michigan University, but also benefit you and those you love? By giving non-cash assets, you can benefit from significant tax savings and ignite the potential, purpose and possibility of Broncos today... and for generations to come. No matter your goals, The Office of Gift Planning at WMU is here to help you craft the plan that best meets your financial needs and leaves the philanthropic legacy you envision
- For more information, contact [Jennifer Yelovina](#), WMU Senior Director of Gift Planning

- **In Memoriam**

- It is with a heavy heart that we must inform you that a great alumni of the College of Aviation Family has passed away. William "Buck" Rapley, Class of 1970-Winner of the Wright Brothers Master Pilots Award, great supporter, and good friend. I had the honor to correspond and talk with Buck for several years. He loved aviation and WMU. He wore his Brown and Gold proudly, and always answered when we needed anything.
- A couple of my favorite quotes from Buck:
 - “Aviation is the GREATEST of all endeavors. Pursue it with enthusiasm!!!”
 - “My education at WMU allowed me to retire early... GO BRONCOS!”

Thanks for being great supporters! Please let us know how you are doing. Send updates to tom.thinnes@wmich.edu!

Go Broncos!

Tom

Tom Thinnes
Western Michigan University
College of Aviation
Recruitment, Marketing, and Outreach

Rising from Republic Airways and Soaring with Spirit Airlines:
Aaron Jones Climbs Higher



If change is good for the soul, these are the best of times for Aaron Jones.

The spring 2010 graduate of the College of Aviation recently swapped captain's uniforms, ending a nearly 10-year stint with Republic Airways and changing into the colors of Spirit Airlines.

Coming out of Ann Arbor Pioneer High School in 2006, Jones came to the Western campus with a bit of collegiate aviation in his system. He was dual-enrolled at Eastern Michigan University where he took an "intro" class, a couple of computer-programming courses, and completed his flight training. He had 12 credit hours in the bank when he first stepped on to the home of the Broncos. All of that provided early-enrollment opportunities and the class schedule he wanted each semester. "

[Read More](#)

Broncopalooza: A Feel-Good Funkadelic Festival



Groove back to the 70's at this year's Alumni Homecoming Tailgate! Joins us on the Grand Lawn at Heritage Hall on Saturday, Oct. 14 from noon to 3 p.m. for good food, fun games, and activities for the kids (and so much more!). It's going to be DYN-O-MITE, so grab your Bronco Buds and secure your spots today! "

[Register Here](#)

Catch WMU Bronco Hockey vs Team USA

Saturday, October 07 @ 7:00 PM EDT

Purchase Deadline: October 06 @ 7:00 PM



Western Michigan vs NTDP U18s
USA Hockey Arena, Plymouth, MI

Bronco Hockey is facing off against Team USA! Catch the game with your fellow Bronco fans on Saturday, Oct. 7 at USA Hockey Arena in Plymouth. You can find the Brown & Gold in sections 110 and 111. Tickets are \$15 and include admission, parking, and a \$2 donation to WMU. Don't miss it, get more info and your tickets today!

[Buy Your Tickets Today](#)

- [Rising Up with Riley Trygstad – Taking to the Skies and Piloting Her Path](#)
- [Cruising with Kalitta Air – Arvin Sierra Climbs High within the Aviation Management World](#)
- [Alumna returns to WMU as new leader of DEI](#)
- [Sculpture artist Harumi Ori creates fiery-hued mural for new student center](#)

So that all may learn

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Donations made today are an investment in providing unique opportunities for students and pave a pathway for generations to come, ensuring that 'all may learn' at WMU.



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