

LIFT

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Dear Wings of Hope Family,

It's all about relationships.

Technology can be a wonderful way to bridge distances as we all learned during COVID. Using applications like WebEx, Zoom and Teams allowed us all to keep up with one another, peek into each other's homes and get a great deal of work done.

Last month, Wings of Hope resumed travel to our global field bases with a trip to Ecuador. Having communicated for two years over the internet, sharing handshakes and hugs with our Ecuadorian partners at Alas de Socorro and meeting new friends throughout the Shell community was a welcome blessing.

It occurred to me that this trip was a lot like what we are trying to achieve for the indigenous people we serve in Ecuador. Nothing beats a face-to-face relationship, but there are times when we need to be able to be in relationship even when we cannot be face-to-face.

This was the case during our trip. Rain prevented us from flying in to visit our friends in the rainforest for six of the seven days that I was in Ecuador. Our colleagues at Alas de Socorro explained that canceled flights from rain is a weekly occurrence.

We also learned that the indigenous people living within the rainforest prefer to live happy, healthy lives in their communities. Like all of us, they do not want to travel great distances for medical care. They want to celebrate the miracle of birth at home. In short, they want to preserve their way of life.

Our trip marked an important step in a journey to provide Alas de Socorro and the community of Shell with new technologies and resources to enhance the aviation experience and answer the call of the indigenous people to be better equipped to live and thrive in their communities.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be working in close collaboration with Alas de Socorro and Shell community stakeholders to make it possible for better communication and consultation to take place, to create the ability to send lifesaving medicines via drones when our airplanes are grounded because of weather, to help strengthen the indigenous leaders to provide more direct and best-practice care in their communities.

Guided by our wonderful field base partners and with a moral mandate to extend opportunities for better health and thriving communities, our best is yet to come.

Read all about it in the pages of this edition of LIFT and come along on this journey with us.

Best regards,



**Bret Heinrich,
President & CEO**



*Changing & Saving Lives
Through the Power of Aviation*

Event RECAP



June Gala Soars to New Heights

More than 350 guests filled the Khorassan Ballroom at the Chase Park Plaza Royal Sonesta Hotel St. Louis on June 4 for the Wings of Hope Soaring to New Heights Gala. The largest annual fundraising event for Wings of Hope was the first in-person gala since February 2020.

"What a great event to see so many of our family and friends return after a more than two-year hiatus," said Wings of Hope President and CEO Bret Heinrich. "This event also represents an exciting new ascent for Wings of Hope, to soar even higher than before. People who will benefit from this spectacular party are in far-flung places around the world. They may never know the names and faces of the people who gathered to celebrate and support Wings of Hope on a beautiful June night in St. Louis, but their lives will be infinitely better for their generosity."



Rene Knott, co-anchor of KSDK's *Today in St. Louis* morning show, was emcee and auctioneer for the evening — and he kept the bids coming during the exciting live auction. In a Facebook post following the event, Rene said: "It was a blessing tonight to emcee the annual gala for Wings of Hope. It was a tremendous evening of giving and caring. Thank you to everyone who helped in making a global difference by being the wind beneath their wings."



In addition to live and silent auctions, guests enjoyed a cocktail hour, dinner and presentations about the work Wings of Hope is doing around the world using aviation to change and save lives.

Mark Brown and Heni Takacs and Craig and Rose Kaintz were the event co-chairs.

Thank you to our Aviator Circle Presenting Sponsor Fabick Cat and our First Officer sponsors: City Lifestyle Magazine, the Wings of Hope Board of Directors and Oris, the makers of a one-of-a-kind, limited-edition Wings of Hope watch which raised \$13,000 during the live auction.



We are also grateful to the following sponsors: AVMATS, Boeing, Brinkmann Constructors, Emerson, Husch Blackwell, Moneta Charitable Group Foundation, Mungenast St. Louis Acura, St. Louis Children's Hospital, Bob and Debbie Sanders, The Kaintz Family Foundation, Steve and Shirley Lieber, United Healthcare, Larry and Dot LeGrand/Wm. H. Steinlage Insurance Agency, Inc., Genesis Aerosystems, Robert and Kathleen DeRoode, Timothy and Mary Ann Beranek and Scott and Jill Davidson.



SOAR into STEM Inspires Students to Take Flight

Three years after launching in 2019, the spring 2022 SOAR into STEM project-based learning experience for middle and high school students was more hands-on than ever.

Lead teacher Robert Powell, education director for the Challenger Learning Center of St. Louis, was new to program this year.

"I love sharing my passion for math, science and aviation with the students — and in my 30-plus years in education, I've learned that the best way to get young people excited about STEM is to give them something real to work on," says Robert.

Srivaishnavi, a SOAR into STEM student, says before the program, she "didn't know much about airplanes or the mechanisms of it."

"But after seeing the amount of technology and aviation that actually goes into building it (a plane), I was more inclined toward aerospace engineering."

During session one, 28 students from area schools explored the principles of flight. Their first project was constructing a foam glider — with moveable ailerons, flaps, elevator and rudder to maneuver the aircraft in flight.

Students and volunteer mentors then worked together to build a more advanced design glider — performing flight tests and adjusting the placement of the external weight and throwing

techniques to produce the longest flight.

Jeff Rapp has been a volunteer mentor since 2019.

"Our volunteer mentors provide the students access to a wide range of aviation and STEM expertise," says Jeff, who spent his career working in IT. "This past year, I am especially proud of the work our volunteers did creating our self-created workbook covering all four program topics to help our mentors better tailor their contributions to the program goals."

Volunteer mentor Richard Steckel, an experienced engineer, pilot and airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanic, kicked off session two which covered aviation communication and navigation. Richard introduced the students to avionics — cockpit displays, radios, weather radar and similar systems — designed to make flying safer. Cathy Babis, a U.S. Army veteran, pilot and former air traffic controller discussed U.S. airspace categories, air traffic control procedures and communicating using the phonetic alphabet (i.e., Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc.).

Students also spent time using flight simulators.

The mechanics and engineering of aviation were the focus of session three. Students worked with aeronautical charts and discussed

careers in the aeronautics field and associated education paths. They got hands-on experience with the installation of an electrical system on a foam aircraft cutout. Finally, they constructed and manipulated a standard balsa wood rubber band-powered aircraft to test the effects of structure, weight and balance, and propulsion.

Wings of Hope A&P mechanic, Paul Burtis, used planes in the Wings of Hope hangar to demonstrate aircraft construction and maintenance. Students also assisted A&P mechanic Curtis Kelley with hands-on aircraft servicing tasks, including cleaning a Piper Cherokee engine with a compressed air gun.

In session four, students took a deep dive into the world of commercial and military Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), commonly called drones. They designed their own landing pads and flew camera-equipped quadcopters through an obstacle course using an app on their phones.

The grand finale for students who completed all four sessions was taking first flight lessons in a Cessna 172S training aircraft at Elite Aviation. This was the first flight lesson for the students.

To learn more about SOAR into STEM, visit <https://wingsofhope.ngo/education-outreach/soar-into-stem/>.

Program NOTES



◀ Marcos Souza, Elsa Klarich, Jose Arce, Tiffany Nelson, and Paul Méndez



Manish Kohli, Bret Heinrich and Tiffany Nelson

Piloting a New Model of Health Care Access in Ecuador

Imagine if your ability to receive emergency medical care was dependent on the weather. That is all too often the case for communities in the Ecuadorian rainforest served by Wings of Hope partner Alas de Socorro (ADS).

Due Diligence Mission

This past May, a Wings of Hope team, including Director of Programs and Evaluation Tiffany Nelson, visited the field site which is based in Shell, Ecuador, on a due diligence mission to lay the groundwork for a new project using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones, to complement the medevac flights ADS currently provides.

“What we learned is that it is VFR (visual flight rules) landings only which means if it is cloudy or rainy, they cannot land on these runways,” says Tiffany.

“This means sometimes patients will have to wait a day or two or even three — especially during rainy season — for assistance. That is one of the main motivators for the UAV program: when there is an emergency call, if we can’t get to them physically, then we can at least send medications with a UAV.”

Elsa Klarich, former Wings of Hope pilot and UAV instructor, is consulting with Wings of Hope on the project. She joined Marcos Souza, UAV project manager and Mission Aviation Fellowship missionary, to conduct a feasibility study which involved flying into the pilot communities, doing onsite surveys and finding places for the UAVs to land.

“Elsa has done an incredible job project planning hand-in-hand with Marcos,” says Tiffany. “With her experience as a UAV instructor and also in community development, she really helps guide the team.”

Tiffany arrived in Ecuador about a week after Elsa. She partnered with Jose Arce, ADS country director, on a community analysis trip to better understand existing resources and community goals.

“Jose and I went directly to the clinics in each community,” says Tiffany. “We spoke to the doctors and nurses there about the community health priorities and what they’re experiencing as health care professionals.”

Emergency medicine is the top priority.

“We also spoke with community leaders to understand their high-level priorities,” she says. “They were receptive to the concept as they understand the challenges of flying in a Cessna 206 — especially during bad weather.”

Three Pilot Communities

Wings of Hope and ADS plan on piloting the drone program in three communities: Moretecocha, Tonampare and Numbaimi. They chose these communities “because they’re the centers of their communes,” says Tiffany, which means seven to eight smaller communities come to them for resources.

“Just working in that one community means we’re giving access to several other communities from the entire commune,” Tiffany explains.

With about 4,000 people living in each commune, the 18-month pilot program has the ability to improve access to emergency medicine for over 12,000 people.

The pilot communities also were selected for their location: southeast from Shell near the Peruvian border which is the area of highest need in the Pastaza region.



The runway during rainy season



ADS Medevac flight of boy with snakebite

“Right now, if conditions do not allow for manned flying, in order for people to access emergency medications they have to make a full day’s walk to the river and then a full day’s river ride in a dugout canoe to get to the hospital,” Tiffany says. “It’s a multi-day trip.”

Snakebites and Emergency Medicine

Two of the most common uses for the drones will be delivering antibiotics to treat wounds and infections and antivenom to treat snake bites. ADS receives 80-100 snakebite calls each year in the Pastaza region alone.

The project calls for three drones launching from the ADS hangar in Shell and one stationed at Shell Hospital.

“ADS can store basic medical supplies; however, they can’t store antivenom and antibiotics. Those must be stored at the hospital,” says Tiffany.

In a typical snake-bite scenario, someone from one of the pilot communities would use a high-frequency radio (there is scant cell phone coverage) to call ADS and ask for antivenom. ADS would then contact the hospital in Shell, and they would load the medication into the capsule and launch the drone from there.

Building a More Economically Sustainable Program

Currently, ADS provides medevac flights in response to emergency calls from communities. But resources are limited, and flights are expensive — costing upwards of \$500 per transport.

“We’re working on creating a more economically sustainable program using UAVs to complement the existing medevac program,” says Tiffany.

Helping more people by using drone technology has been a longtime goal of ADS.

“When you get a call from a patient and you don’t have another way to access them, it’s really tough on the family and ADS team,” says Tiffany. “This will give the community hope whenever the plane can’t fly in.”

Spirit of Collaboration

While Elsa and Marcos were completing site surveys and Tiffany and Jose were collaborating on the project with community leaders, Wings of Hope President and CEO Bret Heinrich and board member Manish Kohli were meeting with physicians at Shell Hospital and around the region to better understand the role Wings of Hope and ADS might play in strengthening health care for indigenous peoples.

“What we heard loud and clear from the people of the rainforest was that they want to live and thrive in their communities,” says Bret. “Leaving the rainforest for health care or for other needs can sometimes be a scary proposition. The interventions we are developing in Ecuador with our partner Alas de Socorro and Shell Hospital — and many other stakeholders — will promote healthy living in the rainforest by indigenous people.”

And the indigenous communities are at the center of the project planning.

“This pilot program truly embodies the collaborative spirit we’re aspiring to throughout our global humanitarian network, working hand in hand with our partners to build sustainable programming that empowers communities,” says Tiffany.

“It is a model for other field sites.”

Wings of Hope Board Welcomes Four New Members

At its March 24 quarterly meeting, the Wings of Hope Board of Directors welcomed four new members, bringing the board to a total of 21 members — and strengthening an already robust team with extensive business, military and community experience.



Melissa Owens

CXA Healthcare Practice Lead at Cisco

Melissa’s expertise includes strategic planning, building high-performing teams, architecture modernization, vision and goal setting, vendor negotiation and management, agile methodologies, financial management, customer relationship management and hands-on tactical implementation of large-scale

integrated information systems. She is experienced in all aspects of information technology, planning, design, development and operation.

Jim Rhodes

Vice President, Human Resources, Emerson

Jim is a volunteer pilot for Angel Flight. His expertise includes human resources policies, employee and labor relations, management, employee training, compensation and human capital management systems. He also has nonprofit board experience. He earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Tennessee and his MBA from Lindenwood University.



Dr. Rollin F. Jackson, Sr.

Lieutenant Colonel US Marine Corps, Retired

Rollin is the founder and CEO of Jackson and Associates Capital Group, The Warriors Group International and co-founder and COO of Eagle One Leadership International. A licensed real estate professional and 32-year decorated combat veteran of the U.S.

Marine Corps, Rollin is a member of the University of Missouri Alumni Association, the Veteran of Foreign War (VFW) local post in St. Charles, MO, the American Legion and the NAACP. He is a Girl Scout leader and serves on the board of Chaminade College Preparatory School in St. Louis.



Gary Robert Kretz

Chief Financial Officer, Embraer Aircraft Holding, Inc.

Gary is chief financial officer (CFO) of Embraer Holding, Inc. He began his career with Embraer in 2000 as a manager of accounting responsible for U.S. Group accounting functions. In 2007, he was named controller of the U.S. Group and assumed additional responsibilities including treasury, tax planning and insurance. In 2018, Gary was named CFO, assuming all accounting and finance-related functions for the U.S. Group companies.



Calendar OF EVENTS

JULY 23

Young Ambassadors
Plane Wash
Wings of Hope Hangar

SEPTEMBER 15

Fall Airplane Raffle

SEPTEMBER 17

Taste of Hope
Wings of Hope Hangar

FAA Honors Wings of Hope Volunteer Ed Schertz

On April 26, representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) visited the Wings of Hope hangar to present longtime volunteer and former Wings of Hope pilot, Ed Schertz, two of its most coveted awards: The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award and the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award. The awards recognize Ed's 50 years of dedicated service to safe flying and aircraft maintenance practices.

Ed's wife, Irene, joined him in accepting the awards as she played an integral role in supporting Ed through his years of flying and service in the field to Wings of Hope.

Ed started flying in 1971, but his career path is unusual. Most pilots start flying humanitarian missions after a career in the military, or as a commercial or private pilot. Except for three summers flying in Alaska for Pacific Airways, Ed spent



Ed and Irene Schertz

his entire career flying humanitarian missions for Wings of Hope.

Ed's Wings of Hope journey started in 1971. He was a student at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale working on earning his pilot's and mechanic's licenses so he could work in humanitarian aviation.

"While I was at SIU, Wings of Hope did a presentation," Ed says. "I liked what I heard, and I contacted Bill Edwards (Wings of Hope co-founder); they were looking for a pilot for Peru, and I said, 'I'd like to join you.'"

When Ed told the director of the SIU aviation program, Tony DaRosa, that he was interested in joining Wings of Hope, Tony tried to convince Ed to fly for American Airlines.

Ed recalls the conversation going something like this: "I said, 'Tony, I came to school with something like Wings of Hope in mind.' Once he knew I was serious and wasn't changing my mind, he endorsed me. And the rest is history."

Soon after, he joined Wings of Hope as

a pilot and mechanic in Peru in 1971 and ran two field bases in the country until 1978. He and Irene moved to Paraguay with their two young sons, Carlos and Roberto, in 1978 to run Wings of Hope's base in Pedro Juan Caballero. In 1981, they returned to the states so Ed could be director of maintenance at Wings of Hope's St. Louis headquarters. Ed stayed in that role through 2005, and he continues to serve the organization as a volunteer mechanic.

In his aviation career, Ed has flown and maintained aircraft in the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Honduras, Belize, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, Columbia and Bolivia.

In talking about memorable career moments, Ed recalls loading 100 Rhode Island Red chicks into the cabin of his airplane and flying them to a community in Peru. The idea was to provide the indigenous Ticuna people a renewable food source.

"A year later, we land and there's nothing but Rhode Island Reds running around," Ed says. "It was just neat — it changed their quality of life."

Irene shared the story of being a young mother at home in Iquitos, Peru, with their firstborn son waiting for Ed to arrive after flying missions every day.

"We didn't have cell phones, radar, no contact with anybody," she recalls. "He would leave in the morning and come back in the evening."

And Irene would listen for the sound of Ed's Cessna landing every night.

Ed flew for the Franciscan missionaries in Peru. They had 12 mission stations that kept in contact with Ed via radio while he was flying. One day, there was a massive thunderstorm that knocked out all radio communication to the mission stations.

That evening, the missionaries came to tell Irene they had lost contact with Ed.

"They told me, 'We have not heard from the plane; we don't know where he's at. We don't know what's happened.'"

Irene worried all night.

"The next morning at 10 o'clock, the sun was shining, and he comes down the sidewalk whistling," says Irene.

When she asked Ed what happened, he said weather got bad — so he landed at one of the missions and spent the night there.

From that point on, Irene changed her mindset: "He goes off, and I don't worry until I hear from him. That was the only way I could survive anything."



Anniversary Founders Series: Joe Fabick

Joe Fabick, whose father founded the John Fabick Tractor Company in 1917, was one of the Wings of Hope founders.

It started in the summer of 1963 when a St. Louis businessman named Bill Edwards invited Joe to his home for a presentation about missionaries working in Kenya. What caught Joe's eye was an 8mm film showing a nun flying through the desert in a small fabric plane delivering care and supplies to the communities in need. The hyenas had been gnawing away at the fabric wings. So, Bill and Joe made it their mission to raise the funds to send Sister Ryan a metal plane.

That impulse of two friends who wanted to help one flying nun halfway across the world was the beginning of Wings of Hope.

On May 25, 1965, Joe presided at the sendoff ceremony at Lambert Airport of the very first Wings of Hope plane being sent into the field — and the Fabick family has been a steadfast supporter ever since.

Joe's son, Jeré, continued the tradition of generously supporting Wings of Hope. And Kelli Fabick is the fifth generation of the Fabick family to serve Wings of Hope.

"I never met my uncle Joe, but I was always aware of his legacy — not only as the second-generation leader of the Fabick Cat Company but as a driving force behind Wings of Hope," Kelli says. "As a current Wings of Hope board director and proud member of the Fabick family, I am honored to be a part of our shared legacy."

A Man of the Earth — and Sky

Joe grew up in St. Louis where his father, John, owned a tractor dealership — and the John Fabick Tractor Company grew into one of the largest Caterpillar dealerships in the country.

Joe and his two older brothers eventually took over the company, which Joe would lead for 38 years.

Although Joe's company built machines that moved the earth, he always loved the sky. An accomplished pilot, he would fly his plane over construction sites to get a birds-eye view of the progress.

He also flew helicopters. In 1948, when he was only 21, he was thought to be the youngest helicopter pilot in the world at that time.

Joe Fabick grew his company into one of the largest Caterpillar dealers in the world with his drive "to ever serve customers better." Joe viewed humanitarian service through that same lens — always seeking to better serve those in need by expanding the reach of Wings of Hope's humanitarian programming across countries and continents.

Joe was a true visionary.

In a 1974 Wings of Hope newsletter, he is quoted saying: "In the years ahead, Wings of Hope will continue to provide services exactly as they always have: free of charge as an interfaith organization serving the cause of international brotherhood."

As we embark on our sixth decade of using aviation to save and change lives, we can see that Joe's vision was right.

Thank You

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