

# Call to support aviation programme for youths

Wings of Change, South Africa's first practical course to prepare high school students for a career in the aerospace industry, is being rolled out by the Cape Academy of Mathematics, Science and Technology (CAMST) High School.



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The three year course programme is offered to Grades 10-12 with the objective of introducing the vast field of aviation as a career to students. By training those who qualify and equipping them with the basic necessary skills and discipline required to succeed in this industry, the practical experience and theoretical study in the Wings of Change programme will give students a head start in their chosen field, whether it is pilot training or engineering (mechanical, civil, aeronautical), air traffic controller, mechanic, electrician or aircraft builder/designer.

The Wings of Change programme has attracted like-minded partners who have identified the value in preparing and developing South African youths for a possible career in the aviation industry.

Robin Coss Aviation will involve CAMST students in the whole production and fabrication process of a modern training aircraft: the RV 12, which the students will build under expert supervision. Once completed, the plane will be used to train CAMST students as pilots and will also generate a revenue stream for the programme through both anticipated sponsorship opportunities and through utilisation by other pilots in training.

## Partnership with the Cape Town Flying Club

The Wings of Change programme searched long and hard before securing a partnership with the Cape Town Flying Club (CTFC) for the training of students focused on attaining a Private Pilots' Licence (PPL). Rated as one of the most experienced flying schools, the CTFC is a non-profit organisation and, understanding the altruistic motive behind the programme, it is genuinely committed to the career development of the students.

The government has also recognised the potential of the Wings of Change in addressing the lack of ground level development in the aviation industry. In 2013, the government's Transport Education Training Authority (TETA) came on board as a funding partner and provided partial bursaries to support six CAMST students who did not have the financial

means to pursue their dream careers in aviation.

The programme has also attracted the support of the Sakhikamva Foundation; an NGO that has already exposed 45 000 high school students to the career possibilities that exist in the world of aviation. The foundation's partnership with Wings of Change endorses the programme as a practical avenue for the transformation and development of the aviation industry.

## **Funding needed**

"We are deeply grateful to TETA for their financial support. However, the programme is in desperate need of significant funding to achieve its primary objective of providing an opportunity for the disadvantaged youths to pursue a career in aviation. There are a vast number of eager learners who do not have the financial means to enrol in the programme, but with financial support we will be able to make their dreams become reality whilst, at the same time, supporting the longevity of the country's aviation industry," remarked Sollie Prinsloo from CAMST, who is heading up the Wings of Change programme.

The programme needs the support of both major role players in local aviation and interested corporates and individuals to ensure not only its continuance, but also that a significant contribution is made to South Africa's domestic technological industry, creating marketable skills and meaningful job opportunities for today's youths.

Contact [dayne@marcusbrewster.com](mailto:dayne@marcusbrewster.com) to make a real difference.

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