Wings of Hope receives $125,000 for STEM programs

Wings of Hope, a Chesterfield-based nonprofit, recently received a $125,000 grant from Boeing to support its Soar into STEM program, a hands-on learning experience designed to provide local students experience in aviation and STEM-related career paths.

"Boeing has made significant investments in STEM education for youth," Wings of Hope President and CEO Bret Heirich said. "They provided substantial seed funding for our pilot Soar into STEM program, and this latest grant will enable us to expand the program and expose more of our youth to the tremendous opportunities in STEM and aviation careers."

The grant will allow Wings of Hope to more than double the number of students who participate in Soar into STEM. The program includes lessons in hands-on maintenance, repair and modification of an airplane to be used flying medical and/or humanitarian missions; experiencing a flight simulator; and piloting a small-engine aircraft under the close supervision of a flight instructor. The spring 2019 pilot program served students from three St. Louis-area school districts and the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri.

"As a pilot, I understand the value of programs that engage students in this way. It is incredibly rewarding to see students who are working on a plane in our hangar suddenly light up and make that connection between STEM learning and a career path they can create for themselves," Wings of Hope Board Chairman Don Kukla said. "If not for participating in our program, the idea of actually being a pilot or a mechanic or a scientist might never have occurred to many of these students."

Wings of Hope is accepting inquiries from interested school districts for 2020. In the U.S., Wings of Hope provides free medical air transportation services to individuals who need access to specialized medical care. The organization also works with in-country partners to provide medical treatment and transport to individuals living in isolated areas.

Chicago-based Boeing is the world’s largest aerospace company and leading manufacturer of commercial jetliners and defense, space and security systems.

ST. LOUIS COUNTY

Pedal the Cause donates $4.74 million to cancer research

Pedal the Cause, a community-wide fundraising bike challenge, recently donated $4,743,422 to Siteman Cancer Center and Siteman Kids at St. Louis Children’s Hospital to help fund ongoing cancer research. One hundred percent of the proceeds will go toward research opportunities at both.

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