



## **2025 Annual Report & 2026 Forecast: Project Aviator**

Prepared by Sean O'Connor- President & Treasurer January 24, 2026

Project Aviator in 2025 finished up its fourth year since founding in 2022. Since founding, Project Aviator has seen rapid growth, constant support, and frankly massive results. Throughout this year the Board of Directors has been very pleased with the amount of growth we have seen in both the Mentorship Program, Scholarship Program, and in the fundraising department. In 2025, I would like to draw specific attention to three specific items that shocked myself and the team. In 2025 we had two mentors and professional pilots donate their own scholarships that we facilitated. We also attended 4 conferences which was a huge workload for us, but went incredibly well. Lastly we blew our fundraising out of the water. Below is a breakdown of our 2025 year, 2026 expectations, and execution plans.

In 2025 Project Aviator set out to grow and have our non profits name start to become a not only recognized name, but a respected name. Below are the ways we worked to accomplish that from a monthly basis.

- JANUARY-
  - Scholarship- Written Exam Scholarship
- February
  - Scholarship- Feel the Love
- March
  - In Person Conference- Women in Aviation (Denver, CO)
  - Scholarship- Women in Aviation
- April
  - In Person Conference- UND Aerospace SAMA (Grand Forks, ND)
  - Scholarship- UND Aerospace SAMA
- May
  - Scholarship- Where There's a Will, There's a Way
  - Scholarship- Written Exam
- June
  - Pickleball Extreme at The Broadmoor
    - Pickleball, Silent Auction, "Big Ern" Guest Speaker, Networking
  - Scholarship (3)- Pickleball Extreme at The Broadmoor
  - Conference- PAPA (Las Vegas, NV)
  - Scholarship- PAPA
  - Partnership- Aviator Intelligence
- July
  - Scholarship- Second Chance (2)
  - Live Look in from Oshkosh!! Thank you to our mentor, Laura.



- August
  - Scholarship- Back to School
- September
  - Scholarship- Destination Flight Deck (2)
- October
  - Conference- RTAG (Denver, CO)
  - Scholarship- RTAG
  - YouTube- First "Interview a Mentor Video"
- November
  - Event- Career Fair at Mile High Stadium for Denver, CO Public Schools
  - Scholarship- Written Exam
  - YouTube- Second "Interview a Mentor Video"
- December
  - Scholarship- Winter
  - YouTube- Third "Interview a Mentor Video"

Below I will summarize 2025 from the different teams that Project Aviator has:

### **MENTORSHIP**

I am incredibly proud to say that Project Aviator's Mentorship program has remained steady on the mentor standpoint and has increased in the mentee standpoint. This last year we had some mentors request to become inactive or stop mentoring which was an expected reality we knew would happen. We were able to overcome some of the retirements by recruiting just as many new mentors at the career fairs and through word of mouth. On the mentee side, the program has grown rapidly in 2025 thanks to attending so many in person conferences, along with all of our other outreach. **I count 115 mentors and over 400 mentees that are active.** Hannah O'Connor, who runs that program, has done a remarkable job. Hannah was very proud to announce that we have had multiple "boomerang pilots". A boomerang pilot is a mentee of our program that is now an active mentor.

We also have had multiple mentees now make it to their dream jobs in the airlines, which is remarkable. In late 2024, which was announced on the last president's report, Hannah revamped the mentorship program. The change in the program was to better adapt to the rapidly growing demand for a mentor. The program changes have been very successful and we have been able to accommodate the massive increase in demand.



## **Scholarship**

In 2025 Project Aviator gave out \$18,600 in scholarships! Our original budget was \$8,600. This was record breaking and we can not wait to top that this coming year. We plan to use \$12,000 of 2025 donations for scholarships. Through the scholarships donated on an annual basis we expect to achieve a **minimum of a \$20,000 scholarship total goal this year. Record breaking.** (donors of the annual scholarships write checks during their specific scholarship, they do not donate in advance)

## **TREASURY**

As President I oversee all operations but I am also responsible for our bookkeeping, event planning, and IRS/State compliance. I am pleased to say that Project Aviator's books are flawless and we had a balanced budget year, with a slight excess in funds. In fundraising terms, we have hit an absolute homerun in 2025. We went over our \$17,500 fundraising goal, and raised **\$30,823 cash and \$4,500 in donated services**. Of that amount- \$28,059 is available for 2026, as some of the donations in 2025- were used to fund scholarships in 2025- along with some pre payments for 2026 activities.. ("Second Chance", "Where theses a will there's a way", "destination flight deck", and conferences). This number includes the money left over and not used in 2025. In 2024, Project Aviator raised \$17,000. The 2025 amount is almost doubled, yet again!!! This technically, was the first year we did not double the donations but, we are proud of a 81% increase in 2024 fundraising.

Project Aviator is publishing a 2026 fundraising goal of \$20,000. I realize that this is clearly less than the \$30,000+ we raised in 2025. I, along with the entire team, will work our rear ends off to go over 2025's numbers, but I do want to remain realistic. Our partner, Sierra Charlie, did not renew for 2026, which was a mutual agreement. We also sold all of our seats that were donated by Southwest Airlines. We also had some out of the blue massive donations in 2025, one that was over \$5,000. If we are able to surpass \$20,000 that would be a large achievement and that would still increase the scholarship budget in 2027.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

I would like to personally thank and recognize Southwest Airlines for donating 6 round trip tickets in 2025 along with all of those seats! Project Aviator has used those tickets and seats as a fundraising tool, which has led to the largest lump sum of money we have taken in. Thank you Southwest! We plan to have multiple Southwest Airlines ticket fundraisers throughout the year in 2026.



I would also like to thank Aviator Intelligence and Ace Interview Prep: who have provided time at our in person seminars at Sierra Charlie Flight School and have financially contributed. We can not give a bigger endorsement to these two great companies. Additionally I would like to thank Jerry and Joy- our live music partners, Flight Uniforms, and The Broadmoor Hotel. Specifically at the Broadmoor I would like to thank Chrissie Widhalm, Candice Gilmore, Karen Schott and Ann Alba.

In 2025 Project Aviator continued our partnership with Flight Uniforms. Through pilots using the code ProjectAviator15, we have received over \$120 in donations from Flight. Please use and share this link going forward. You get a 20% discount and Flight donates 5% to PA.

### **PICKLEBALL EXTREME 3rd Annual**

Our in person fundraising event encompassing a pickleball tournament, silent auction, music, and dinner will be the biggest event of the year. On June 12th, Project Aviator will be hosting this fundraiser at The World Famous Broadmoor Hotel, In Colorado Springs. More information including registration is already published on our website. [www.projectaviator.org](http://www.projectaviator.org)

Even if you are not a pickleball player, this event will be the gathering of the year for Project Aviator, that you will not want to miss. Last year we net fundraised over \$5,000 and we expect to do even better this year. The event will consist of a competitive and non competitive pickleball tournament, dinner, silent auction, live music from Jerry, Joy, and Jeremy. Along with the end of the night blow out musical sing along surprise.

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## 2026

In 2026 our highlighted goals are to increase every aspect of the organization.

- Our fundraising goal is set for \$20,000 for the calendar year via zeffe (our donation platform).
- Give out \$20,000 + in scholarships.
- Continue an online video series. So students anywhere can access material.
- Attend three in person conferences. (NATIONWIDE CHARITY!)
  - UND SAMA- Grand Forks, ND
  - PAPA- Las Vegas, NV
  - RTAG- Orlando, FL
- Put on the third Pickleball tournament and Silent Auction at The Broamdoor (June 12)
  - Bigger than ever before. BLOW OUT!

In 2025 and in 2026, no Project Aviator volunteer has or will be compensated. No services have been exchanged in return from any donation.

- TREASURY- 0
- scholarship 12,000
- Social media 300
- Mentorship 500
- In person conference 2000
- Event budget \$1,000
- Expenses \$1,500
- Total: \$17,300
- Money now \$28,059
- Surplus for future growth- \$10,759\*

\* The budget surplus is in place for any unforeseen expenses, additional scholarships, events, or unexpected price adjustments that may arise and were not estimated. Also a major reason behind having a surplus is due to two of the board members becoming parents. The President, Treasurer, Secretary, and mentorship chair are having their first child in February. These numbers for our budget are very conservative and may be increased by board approval if workload allows or if we have additional volunteers that are able to do additional behind the scenes work. We intend for the surplus to be put into an interest earning account, so the funds can grow for future scholarship and mentorship opportunities.



If there is any additional information that was not divulged in this yearly report and forecast for 2025 that you would like to know, please reach out to Sean O'Connor, President and Treasurer. [contact@projectaviator.org](mailto:contact@projectaviator.org)

As I have said and can not reiterate enough, I am so proud of our team of over 100 pilot mentors and donors. I personally never thought we would have received so much love, support, and encouragement. I am certain Project Aviator is out to make the world a better place. Watching our mentees and frankly even our mentors achieve milestones and promotions along the way is why we work so hard and will continue too. I thoroughly look forward to the next year working together as a team. Remember, June 12th will be the largest party and fundraiser of the year! I told the Broadmoor Hotel it's going to be a BLOW OUT, yet again. They have now begun to expect a great time with the best people, even hotel employees are coming this year! Below are photos of some of the 2025 highlights.

Sincerely,

Sean O'Connor

*Sean F. O'Connor*

President and Treasurer of Project Aviator

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