

## Education

Tennessee airports contribute to building a strong aviation workforce by partnering with educational institutions across the state and providing hands-on industry training to students. Recent data shows that aviation education opportunities ranging from flight training to university programs are located at 25 Tennessee airports—32 percent of all the airports in the system. Four of these collegiate aviation programs are profiled below.

### **Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) – A Nationally Recognized Aerospace Program**

MTSU is home to one of the most respected aerospace programs in the nation. The program consists of 17 full-time staff members, 75 flight instructors, and approximately 1,000 students, making it one of the largest collegiate aviation programs in the country. The flight training program is hosted at MTSU's Aerospace Airport Campus, located at Murfreesboro Municipal Airport (MBT). The program has been associated with the airport since 1952. Today, the MTSU Aerospace program is the airport's largest tenant and one of its largest economic assets. Murfreesboro Municipal Airport ranks second in the state for operations at a general aviation airport, largely due to daily flight operations related to MTSU and their fleet of 33 training aircraft. Murfreesboro Municipal Airport recently received a \$1 million grant award from the Aeronautics Economic Development Fund to expand the apron at the MTSU Aerospace Airport Campus. The expansion of the facilities at the airport campus will enable Murfreesboro Municipal Airport to continue supporting a growing MTSU Aerospace program, which has experienced over 30 percent growth in the last three years.



### **Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) – Statewide Aviation Education**

The TCAT system is a network of 27 colleges across the state of Tennessee. The TCAT campuses of Memphis, Morristown, and Nashville currently offer aviation programs which provide students with specialized classroom instruction and hands-on experience in aviation. Upon completion of the program, students are eligible to take the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Certification Exam to become licensed aviation mechanics.

These aviation programs are all housed at or near airports: the Memphis Aviation Maintenance Technology program is at the Memphis International Airport (MEM), the Morristown program is close to the Moore-Murrell Airport (MOR), and the Nashville program is located near the John C. Tune Airport (JWN). The TCAT aviation program is set to expand with the aid of a \$2 million Aeronautics Economic Development Fund grant. The grant will be used to fund construction of a 22,000-square-foot aviation maintenance technology facility at Winchester Municipal Airport (BGF). The new facility is expected to be completed within the next three years and will expand TCAT's Aviation Maintenance Program to Franklin County and the greater Southern Middle Tennessee Region.

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### Northeast State Community College (NeSCC)- Unique Opportunities in the Tri-Cities Region

Located in Blountville, NeSCC Aviation Technology program provides education in aviation technology, and it is the only community college in Tennessee to offer an Associate's degree with FAA certification. The program currently consists of two faculty members and 24 students. The goal of the Aviation Technology program is to increase the number of aircraft technicians within the Tri-Cities region. As of 2019, NeSCC has been coordinating with the Tri-Cities Airport (TRI) to make this goal a reality by relocating the program's entire instructional operation to a 13,000-square-foot hangar at the airport. This relocation is part of a \$1.6 million grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, with additional funding of \$500,000 from the Tri-Cities Airport. The program's future hangar will house office space, a technology lab, work areas, and the school's helicopter and aircraft, providing space to train up to 72 students. Once relocated, the program will be in close proximity to the Aerospace Park, a 160-acre development site designed as a hub for aircraft-related maintenance, repair, and overhaul companies.

### University of Memphis - Supporting Students from High School, to College, and Beyond

The University of Memphis offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Commercial Aviation in partnership with Crew Training International (CTI) Professional Flight Training. The CTI training facility is located at the Millington-Memphis Airport (NQA) in a 20,000-square-foot hangar, located less than 20 miles from the university campus. CTI generates the most economic impact of any tenant at the Millington-Memphis Airport and employs 22 people.

In addition to the Commercial Aviation program, the University of Memphis supports high school students through a partnership with East High School's T-STEM program, a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) program focused on transportation (T). The T-STEM program includes an aviation track that provides students an opportunity to earn relevant certifications, credentials, and college credit. The T-STEM program is also supported by nearby Tennessee airports, including Millington-Memphis Airport, Memphis International Airport (MEM), Covington Municipal Airport (M04), General Dewitt Spain Airport (M01), Fayette County Airport (FYE), and Charles W. Baker Airport (2M8), which present to a combined 400 STEM students every year.



## Overview

Tennessee airports support the education and training of future aviation professionals through partnership with universities, community colleges, and flight training programs across the state. Airports house programs' training facilities and equipment and, in some cases, provide financial contributions for program expansion. As the aviation industry continues to grow, so will the need for a professionally-trained workforce. Educational institutions across Tennessee, in partnership with the state's airports, are ensuring that this demand is being met.