



DULUTH AVIATION INSTITUTE

preserving yesterday, inspiring today, exploring tomorrow

October 19, 2011

Contact: Sandra Ettestad
Cell Phone: (218) 310-5643
Email: hangar10@duluthaviationinstitute.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Students at Morgan Park and Woodland Middle School will be learning science and math with aviation lessons this school season.

PATH TO AVIATION – GILRUTH CONTINUUM PROGRAM IS ON THE LAUNCH PAD!

Duluth, Minn. (October 19, 2011) In answer to our nation's call to improve student performance in science and math, the Duluth Aviation Institute is stepping forward to enhance the Duluth School District science curriculum. As the city who nurtured Robert Gilruth, Father of Human Space Flight, Duluthians can again inspire our students to reach for the moon.

In collaboration with the District, the Duluth Aviation Institute will bring aviation into the classrooms of Morgan Park and Woodland Middle Schools. Sandra Ettestad, President of the Duluth Aviation Institute, with science teachers Tim Velnor, Susan Abrahamson, Nicole Munthe and Debra Showalter, piloted the *Path to Aviation – Gilruth Continuum* program last school season with 300 students. During the 2011-12 school season, all 580 sixth grade students will be presented the *Path to Aviation* curriculum. Merging our local aviation background with the educational materials from Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and Experimental Aircraft Association, a uniquely Duluth program evolved.

To administer the program, the board of trustees has hired Paul Diedrich as Education Director of the Institute. Along with local aviation volunteers, Paul will inspire students to achieve in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). “Paul is passionate about aviation and will bring to the classroom a dynamic and creative energy. He is a skilled pilot and handy mechanic, but more than that, he has integrity and compassion. We look forward to his leadership with our education goals.” Ettestad stated.

Over the course of eleven weeks, lessons will be presented, models will be assembled, “Plane Quizzes” will be answered, and extra credit projects will be finished. The top *Path to Aviation* student from each middle school will receive the *Apollo-Gilruth Continuum Award* for academic achievement. Students who excel throughout the program will also be rewarded with a Young Eagles Flight from Sky Harbor Airport. The flight will be at the parent’s discretion and is not a requirement of the Duluth School District or of the Duluth Aviation Institute.



Creating partnerships for success, the Duluth Aviation Institute will call upon EAA Duluth-Superior Chapter 272 and Cloquet Chapter 1221 to assist with the EAA Young Eagles program. The program is very successful introducing young students ages 8 – 17 to aviation with a complementary flight given by a volunteer pilot.

Without local financial support, this unique opportunity could not have happened. The Monaco Family Charitable Fund, Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation, Northland Foundation, and Arrowhead Manufacturers and Fabricators Association saw the need and have provided substantial financial support to the Institute, but additional funds are required to support the Institute’s vision. If you share our passion for aviation and STEM education, please send a donation to: Duluth Aviation Institute, Hangar 10, Sky Harbor Airport, 5000 Minnesota Avenue, Duluth, MN 55802. Morgan Park and Woodland students can only receive the tools necessary for STEM education through the generosity of local individuals and organizations.

Woodland Middle School will receive the program the first school semester and Morgan Park will receive the program the second semester. William Gronseth, Assistant Superintendent, Duluth Public Schools stated, “ We are excited about this opportunity to develop our science curriculum with a local interest, and thankful for the Institute’s efforts and dedication to our students!”

The *Path to Aviation – Gilruth Continuum* program is on the launch pad and we may soon see our young citizens reaching for the moon.

About The Duluth Aviation Institute

The Duluth Aviation Institute’s vision is a community inspired and enriched by the art and science of aviation. Robert Gilruth, Father of Human Space Flight and child citizen of Duluth, was inspired in his youth to become an aeronautical engineer resulting in great contributions to the world. As the first director of the Johnson Space Center, he led the national effort to achieve the objective of “landing man on the moon and bringing them safely back to earth.”

Preserving our local aviation history, the Institute is also building a replica of the world’s first airliner, The Lark of Duluth, originally owned by Duluthians Julius Barnes and W. D. Jones.