

[HOME](#)[NEWS](#)[SPORTS](#)[OBITUARIES](#)[Assistance](#)[Printer-Friendly Version](#)[Tell Your Friends](#)[Search Archives](#)

5/27/05

Aeronautical Institute gains space, equipment

| *'We've made tremendous strides to date'*

By DAN HEATH, Staff Writer

PLATTSBURGH — Progress continues toward creation of Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute.

The proposed FAA-certified Part 147 Airframe and Powerplant School is a joint effort between Clinton Community College and CV-TEC, a division of Champlain Valley Educational Services.

CV-TEC Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute Program Coordinator James McCartney III and Clinton Community College Dean of Continuing Education David Lawliss provided an update at a recent Plattsburgh Sunrise Rotary Club meeting.

DONATIONS

"We have made tremendous strides to date," McCartney said.

That includes about \$14.7 million in legislative and corporate contributions of equipment and in-kind services, highlighted by the Clinton County Legislature authorizing the lease of two buildings and space for a new hangar.

The schools will lease space for 50 years at a cost of \$1, instead of the \$9 million it would cost at the standard \$6 per square foot.

The County Legislature also waived \$750,000 in maintenance fees over the period of the lease and donated \$1.35 million in equipment, machinery and tools from the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base.

"That is a major boost to our program. It holds great promise to us," McCartney said.

FEDERAL FUNDS SOUGHT

He was also encouraged by a second lobbying trip to Washington led by Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Garry Douglas.

The two schools are seeking \$950,000 from the Fiscal Year 2006 Veteran's Administration-Housing and Urban Development appropriations and the New York State Community Development Block Grant program to refurbish the two buildings and build a hangar.

An additional \$225,600 is sought under federal Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education legislation to provide initial staffing, program and curriculum development.

EQUIPMENT TO WORK ON

Also needed are a twin-turboprop aircraft with retractable landing gear and surface de-icing capability, a single-engine fixed-gear aircraft and a helicopter.

Champlain Air has already donated a Douglas DC-3A aircraft and other equipment valued at \$300,000. Last Saturday, a group began dismantling sections of the plane so it can be moved to the school.

"The DC-3 has many of the components needed to work on for our purposes," McCartney said.

ADVISORY COUNCIL NAMED

The formation of the Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute Advisory Council is another development. The 13-member council includes many members with experience in aviation.

Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute would be one of only four such schools in New York state, with the other three in the New York City area.

Classes could start in September of 2006 or 2007, depending on the construction timeline.

Completion of 1,900 hours of study could lead to a certificate from CV-TEC and a diploma from Clinton Community College. It would also provide the experience needed to test for a Federal Aviation Administration certificate as an airframe mechanic, a powerplant mechanic, or both.

All that could be done in just three years due to the program's articulated nature.

The skills acquired are also useful in other area industries, such as mass transportation.

Jobs could also be available at Plattsburgh International Airport, Adirondack Regional Airport and through the Homeland Security Unit in Plattsburgh.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Curriculum development is contingent on, and tied to, equipment acquisition, McCartney said. A donation of jet engines, other aeronautical equipment and a 747 aircraft by Pratt & Whitney is under corporate review.

The curriculum needs New York State Department of Education and State University of New York approval, in addition to FAA approval.

The Burlington Technical Center has donated a copy of its FAA-approved curriculum, which can be modified to meet Plattsburgh's needs once equipment is in place.

"Much of this training is already in place. We just would need to bring it up to FAA standards," Lawliss said.

The initiative has also received support from North America's largest aeronautical school, College Edouard-Montpetit in St. Hubert, Quebec. That collaboration

would allow Canadian students to work toward FAA certification and Plattsburgh students to work toward Canadian, European and South American certification, McCartney said.

Lawliss said the school is an opportunity to lead this region's economic development.

"To attract industry to the flight line, you need to have a trained workforce."

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The members of the Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute Advisory Council are:

College Edouard-Montpetit National Aerotechnical School President **Lucie Cousineau**; Plattsburgh International Airport Manager **Ralph Hensel**, representing the Clinton County Legislature; The Development Corporation President **Adore Flynn Kurtz**; Engineer Thomas LaBombard of **Thomas LaBombard**, PE; Clinton Community College Dean of Continuing Education **Dave Lawliss**; CommutAir Safety/Security Director **Russell Lawliss**, also a commercial pilot; Town of Plattsburgh Codes Officer **Don Lee**, also an aircraft and powerplant mechanic; CV-TEC Director **Dr. Barry Mack**; Composite Factory President **Edward Marin**; Project Coordinator **James McCartney III** of CV-TEC; Federal Aviation Administration Safety Inspector **Alan Miller**; Clinton Community College and CV-TEC Advisory Board Member **Tom Thatcher**; and Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute Consultant **Larry Trow** of Pratt & Whitney.

E-mail Dan Heath at: dheath@pressrepublican.com

SITE INDEX

| [Home Page](#) | [News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Out & About](#) | [About Us](#) | [Marketplace](#) |

Comments or Questions: [Online Help Desk](#)

To contact the Press-Republican, Phone: (518) 561-2300 or send mail to:
Press-Republican, 170 Margaret St., P.O. Box 459, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Copyright 2005, Plattsburgh Press-Republican, a division of Ottaway Newspapers, Inc. All rights reserved.