

# Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute receives jet engine

*'It's a new school. We're trying to help them get off the ground'*

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PLATTSBURGH — Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute has received an F-16 jet engine valued at \$400,000.

Transfer of the engine, which came from the Vermont Air National Guard, required the approval of the Defense Re-utilization Marketing Office and the New York Office of General Services.

## COMBINED EFFORT

This week, Terrance Flynn and Al Haenel of the Office of General Services were in Plattsburgh to get a look at the work being done at the institute and see the equipment that has been secured.

Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute Project Coordinator Jim McCartney said Flynn and Haenel were critical in the effort to land the engine.

"You have to stay after it. You can lose it at so many steps," McCartney said. "Once the Department of Defense released the engine, they stayed diligent on this."

Haenel, the Office of General Services surplus-property manager, said, "There was an amazing amount of time spent just on that (F-16) engine."

The Internet helps the office track what surplus items exist within the federal government, he said, and what could be available to municipalities and organizations.

"Jim (McCartney) has done the same. He seems to have a number of connections," Haenel said. "It was a combined effort that made this happen."

Flynn, assistant director of properties and fleet administration for the Office of General Services, said the educational benefit to the students and taxpayers of Plattsburgh allowed the office to secure the engine at no cost to the institute.

"It's a new school. We're trying to help them get off the ground," he said.

The Vermont Air National Guard delivered the engine to one of the Quonset hangars at Plattsburgh International Airport for storage.

## MUTUAL BENEFIT

Steve Vincent, engine manager for the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont Air National Guard, said he is glad to work with Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute to build a relationship that will be mutually beneficial.

The Vermont Air National Guard employs aircraft and engine mechanics, as well as several other aircraft-maintenance specialists, as traditional personnel, those who serve one weekend a month and two weeks a year.

The guard also employs some as full-time technicians.

Vincent said the relationship could help the guard recruit and retain skilled workers.

Jobs at Laurentian Aerospace Corp. could also help lure people looking to finish their military career in a guard unit, enabling them to reach the 20 years needed for full benefits, Vincent said.

## ENGINES

Because of weight issues, Vincent said, the F-16 engine needed to be removed before the aircraft was put on static display. Ordinarily, it would have gone to the scrap yard.

Some work was also done to remove a couple of ignition boxes and some other potentially hazardous components.

The stand that is being used to hold the engine was donated by Pratt and Whitney, McCartney said.

Vincent said the Vermont Air National Guard is working to find additional ways to help the institute. He said the paperwork has already begun for an attempt to transfer four F-4 aircraft engines that are being removed from aircraft that are also slated for display.



"You can imagine the instructional benefit of having four of the same engines side by side," McCartney said. "You could have four sets of students working simultaneously."

Vincent said the guard is also exploring the possibility of providing tools and equipment for the institute.

The Office of General Services recently approved the transfer of a Vermont Army National Guard aviation tractor (tug), McCartney said, which was to be picked up Friday. Valued at \$23,000, it is used to move aircraft from one location to another.

#### **ADVISORY BOARD**

McCartney said new Clinton County Airport Manager Roger Sorrell will be asked to serve on the institute's advisory board, as retiring Airport Manager Ralph Hensel does at present. Laurentian Aerospace has also asked to have a member on the board, McCartney said, and has linked the institute's Web site to Laurentian's Web site, which is under construction.

He said the institute is also working to secure another helicopter, which may come from a private organization.

Hulbert Brothers recently became the latest in a long line of supporters, doing plumbing work for the institute.