

LOS ANGELES ACE CAMP “ GIVING WINGS to DREAMS “

The joint sponsored Organization of Black Airline Pilots and National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees 2008 ACE Camp concluded on July 19 after a successful and motivated week at the Compton Airport. The camp this year ran from July 14-19, with thirty eight highly motivated students from age 12 to 16. With the internet age the ACE camp programs are reaching young people beyond the borders of the United States. This year in Los Angeles we had three who came on vacation from Jamaica to attend the ACE camp. The response we got from attendees this year was overwhelming.

The week began with a welcome breakfast and introduction to the program and staff. We had a few guest speakers including the regional administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and his assistant. The day concluded with a lesson in ethics and how a site is selected along with the preparation involved in the construction of an airport.

Day two started off with breakfast, followed by an airplane walk around session. Then it was off to whet our appetites with a treat of helicopters. First stop was The Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau in Long Beach where they use the Eurocopters for patrol and the Sikorsky H3 for rescue operations (the Sikorsky was purchased for \$1.00 from the military). At the Robinson Helicopter plant the tour went from the start to finish of production of the R22 and R44.

Day three took us to Torrance control tower and the FAA regional office. There was information on different aspects of the industry - the oversight if you will. This opened up avenues to the non-pilots in the group.

Day four was the highlight for most because we met Malo, the K-9 and his handler. Their job is to keep us safe from explosive devices while we go about the daily grind of flying. The 79000 pound green giant vehicle used by ARFF (Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting) was a delight - the famous retirement arc display excited the crowd. After lunch United Airlines showcased their operation and airplanes along with the history of the airlines in book form.

After the day five visit to Boeing to see the C17 and C130 simulators it was time for graduation and flying. Everyone took advantage of the opportunity to pilot an aircraft with their families in attendance. The flying was done on Friday and Saturday with the help of the Young Eagles and OBAP members.

The entire week gave a broad perspective of the aerospace industry, and the young people who participated came away with a different view of what goes on in the industry and the role they can play in the future.

Sincerely,

Carlton Skerrett
OBAP west Region VP