

AIRLINE PILOT THANKS YOUNG EAGLES MENTORS

BY KATIE HOLLIDAY-GREENLEY, EAA 1186406, ASSISTANT EDITOR

JOE CORAGGIO, EAA Lifetime 563242, got his first ride in a general aviation aircraft just one year after the Young Eagles program began, and although it wasn't an official Young Eagles ride, he said it sparked something in him.



"It was just a ride," he said. "I didn't really understand that aviation was accessible to me at that point. It was more or less a joy-ride. And then the Young Eagles program is what told me it was accessible."

After his Young Eagles ride in 1995, Joe started spending time at Capitol Airport in Brookfield, Wisconsin, and said he soon became the resident airport kid.

"I became known as the 'Ramp Rat,'" he said. "EAA Chapters 11 and 18 took me in as one of their own and saw to it that I learned about airplanes and flying, giving me the right seat on many \$100 hamburger missions. Those two chapters have a long history of taking young people under their collective wings and mentoring them to successful pursuit of aviation both as a career and as a hobby."

WHAT'S NEXT

The EAA Flight Plan helps new Young Eagles continue on the path to achieving their aviation dreams. It starts with a free student membership to EAA and to the Academy of Model Aeronautics as well as access to Sporty's online Learn to Fly Course followed by a voucher for a free first flight lesson. EAA also administers several college and flight-training scholarships to ensure Young Eagles who want to pursue a pilot certificate have the resources they need. Find out more about the flight plan at www.EAA.org/flightplan.

With encouragement from the chapters, Joe went on to take flying lessons from his Young Eagles pilot Eric Whyte, EAA Lifetime 357260, who was himself a Young Eagle and today is a professional pilot. In addition to his career in aviation, Joe is also a longtime AirVenture volunteer, vice-chairman of the AirVenture Cup Race, and a homebuilder.

YOUNG EAGLES VS. EAGLE FLIGHTS

PARTICIPANT AGES

FLIGHT REQUIREMENTS

Current EAA member

EAA Youth Protection Program and background check

Valid airman certificate (sport or greater)

Current medical, sport pilot privileges, or BasicMed as required

Current flight review

Current in the aircraft you plan to use

Must use airworthy aircraft

Have aircraft liability insurance

Subject to all applicable FARs

Complete Young Eagles registration form

Before flight with pilot and parent signature

Complete Eagle Flights registration form

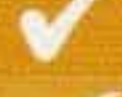
Before flight with pilot and participant signature



8-17



18-plus



“The people that I got my Young Eagles ride from were heavily involved in experimental homebuilt airplanes, and that gave me the spark to want to build my own ... and that’s now flying,” he said of his modified Long-EZ nicknamed *Betty*. “It took me seven-and-a-half years to build, and so anybody that I give a Young Eagles ride to in my airplane is getting a Young Eagles ride in an airplane built by a Young Eagle.”

As involved in aviation as he is now, Joe said he doesn’t come from a family of enthusiasts and credits the pilots and EAAers he’s met through Young Eagles with his successes.

“To the pilots and volunteers that are involved in the Young Eagles program ... yes, what they do does work and does make a difference in people’s lives,” he said. “It gets people involved in aviation and ... when they find somebody that they think might have a deeper level of interest than just going for an airplane ride for a day that it really makes a difference when they follow up and help to make aviation accessible to that particular Young Eagle. That’s what Eric Whyte did for me, and that’s really hugely important. It’s great to give Young Eagles rides, but I think it’s even better to go the next step, and that’s what our EAA chapters in southeastern Wisconsin have done for me and Eric Whyte. And that’s made a huge difference.” **EAA**