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Northland Aerospace Opens New Doors to the Community

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For the past year, Northland Community and Technical College's Aerospace Site has been busy with major construction and remodeling. The new areas of our state-of-the-art facility were finally opened for use by students and faculty this fall. It is exciting to see the new classrooms, labs, and hangar in use and we invited the community to celebrate with us at an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony on September 22. Beyond the facility renovation there are many new highlights that can be seen while touring. These updates include 13 state-of-the-art large scale UAS recently donated by Northrop Grumman, a wide range of small UAS, the latest equipment in aircraft electronics, advanced composite structures, geospatial, and automated technology.



Located at the Thief River Falls regional airport, the NCTC's Aerospace Site is the home to the aviation maintenance, unmanned aerial systems, imagery

analysis, geospatial intelligence, electronics technology and automated systems programs. Students in these programs must have access to state-of-the-art equipment with lab space. This renovation was designed to provide the best possible education and training for aerospace students to prepare them to enter the workforce. Through much hard work and with the help of our state and our local legislators, in particular State Senator Stumpf, we received the \$6 million needed to renovate the 57 year-old facilities. This project allowed NCTC to create a 21st century learning environment tailored to the needs of students for high demand fields in advanced technology. These careers will continue to grow at an exponential rate and NCTC is on the forefront of higher education for these programs.

Another benefit of the renovation is the commitment we are seeing within industry to partner with us on equipment donations, job placement, and industry expertise to guide curriculum to what our students need to be successful. Significant equipment donations include Minnesota based manufacturer Sentera LLC, donating many small UAS including fixed wing and multi-rotor systems, camera sensor payloads, and providing engineering expertise and technical support. In situ, a subsidiary of Boeing recently donated a quarter of a million-dollar takeoff and landing system for a tactical size UAS. Most recently, Northrop Grumman donated more than 13 airframes, including fixed wing and multi-rotor systems and all of the associated ground control station equipment for the Bat-12 and R-Bat. Partnerships such as this are paramount to setting our students up for success by allowing them access to work on the technology they will find after graduation.

These types of relationships are a defining characteristic of the high quality resources and education Northland provides to continue advancing aerospace technology and expanding the envelope in these industries. We hope you come out to Northland Aerospace to see for yourself how the change of seasons for Northland Aerospace is going to benefit our future generations of students and the community as a whole.

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