



Utah Rotor Pathway Program Announces New Officers and Growth

On Jan. 22, members of the Utah Rotor Pathway Program met virtually to elect new officers and announce exciting new growth within the program.

Program members elected Ryan DeJong, assistant chief flight instructor, Southern Utah University (SUU), as chair; Nick Johnson, pilot, Intermountain Life Flight, as vice chair; and outgoing co-chair Cade Clark, vice president of government affairs, Helicopter Association International, as secretary.

“I am grateful for this opportunity to serve,” says DeJong. “The members of the Pathway Program are dedicated to advancing this industry and bringing opportunity to the next generation of pilots and mechanics. I look forward to working with all our stakeholders in growing this program.”

Johnson recently joined Intermountain Life Flight but participated in the Pathway Program through his previous employer. “I’m excited to continue working with the program in my role at Life Flight,” Johnson says. “Flying is a passion for me, and I’m eager to help students understand the exciting career opportunities our industry provides.”

At the Jan. 22 meeting, outgoing co-chair Mike Mower, executive director/chief instructor at SUU, expressed his gratitude to all the stakeholders who worked so hard to set up the Pathway Program. “Utah’s leaders in government, industry, and education all saw a need and came together to establish a program to build the workforce of tomorrow,” he remarked.

Clark echoed Mower’s sentiments. “I’m heartened and inspired by the stakeholders in Utah who had the forward thinking to address the state’s workforce development issues in an industry with some amazing jobs to fill.”

The Pathway Program is excited, as well, to announce the participation of additional high schools.

“While the pandemic has certainly affected our plans for growth, we’re doing our best to form new partnerships with schools across the state,” says DeJong. “We’re pleased to announce that 5 new high schools are joining the program. This takes the number of participating high schools to 17. Additionally, we’re in discussions with 10 more schools.

“We’re excited for the students in the Pathway Program,” DeJong continues. “They have a bright future with many opportunities in an industry that welcomes them.”

The Utah Rotor Pathway Program is a first-in-the-nation program that brings together industry, universities, and high schools to provide both helicopter pilot and maintenance training at the high-school level. Industry partners offer secondary-school students added benefits such as mentoring, internships, and potential job interviews upon their completion of the college-level aviation program.