

MINNESOTA WING

Wing Members Experience the Thrill of Flying

Civil Air Patrol's small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS) program provides members of all ages and skill levels the chance to experience the thrill of flying. Some may be too young to fly a manned aircraft, and some may feel reluctance to embrace learning new skills outside of their comfort zone, but everyone's eyes light up when they first take control of one of the aircraft in CAP's sUAS fleet.

The sUAS training program is structured and robust, serving important roles in the wing's STEM, emergency services and aerospace education curricula. Members in training learn applicable FAA rules, weather, sUAS maintenance and programming, to name several examples. Members can then achieve qualifications ranging from demonstration pilot to full mission pilot.

Even the youngest cadets can begin by acting as sUAS technicians, assisting sUAS pilots on mission flights and advancing to obtain their FAA Part 107 remote pilot certificates and fly as mission pilots themselves. The program

offers a chance for senior and cadet members to work together on real-world missions and earn their wings.

As mission pilots, members learn to conduct flights with georeferenced, detailed mapping that can be used by FEMA and by city and county planners. The sUAS aircraft were recently used to map a golf course before a major PGA tournament, for example, so that first responders would know the locations of tents and emergency aid stations.

CAP has taken the sUAS program to the highest standard and has put in place a program that is second-to-none. The program has brought pride and energy to a new area of service. As next-generation technologies like sUAS aircraft continue to evolve, CAP will continue to embrace them for use in service to our communities, state and nation.



Cadet 2nd Lt. Nicholas Schweiger prepares to read a checklist as Maj. Thomas Fitzhenry discusses the launch with Capt. Robert Sloane and Senior Member Mitchell Berge.

Minnesota Wing 2020 Statistics

Volunteer Members

799 adult members
669 cadets
147 aircrew personnel
871 emergency responders

Squadrons

31 locations statewide

Aircraft

19 single engine
1 glider

Vehicles

27 vehicles

Interoperable Communications

18 VHF/FM repeaters
300 VHF/FM stations
39 HF stations

Missions

7 search and rescue missions
 3 lives saved*
 9 finds*
* Includes lives saved and finds credited with national team support
2 CAP, AFROTC and AFJROTC cadet orientation flight missions
4 other Air Force support missions
24 training missions
1 other state support mission
5 other missions in support of partner agencies and organizations or local municipalities

Significant Events Supported in Fiscal Year 2020

Transported 4 pallets of PPE to Des Moines, Iowa, for hospitals in Missouri; flood watch in Crookston, Minnesota

COVID-19 Mission Support

Augmenting EOCs; distributing test kits and PPE

Cadet Flying

694 CAP, AFROTC and AFJROTC cadet orientation flights

Total Hours Flown

2,514

Financial

\$80,000 in state funding
\$5,308,821 value of wing's volunteer hours

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Website

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DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ The Minnesota Wing's Camp Craig training center at Hutchinson Municipal Airport has won state planning approvals as wing leaders continue to serve as good stewards of the Legislature's \$3.5 million appropriation.
- ✓ The wing leads CAP in cadets working toward and achieving their private pilot certificates through the organization's Cadet Wings program. Two completed the program in 2019 and 11 in 2020.
- ✓ Despite COVID-19 restrictions on most activities, the wing is gaining members in certain areas and even chartering a new squadron in the western Twin Cities metro area.

