

## FLIGHT VT Program Launch

June 5, 2021 @ 10:00

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### **BACKGROUND:**

“Vermont Flight Academy is working with Burlington International Airport and BETA Technologies to launch FLIGHT VT, an initiative that aims to inspire and empower youth by providing them with the opportunity to fly a plane. The program was first launched as a one-day pilot (pun intended) last year and was so successful, VFA is expanding this summer to three days. As many as 100 youth will join VFA and BETA certified flight instructors to fly planes over their hometowns.”

**WHAT:** VFA Flight VT Summer Launch Event. The event will include aircraft and equipment to help youth learn more about potential opportunities in aviation. Available at the launch will be a Vermont Air National Guard (VTANG) F-35; Air Force simulator; ALIA, BETA’s electric vertical aircraft; Vermont Army National Guard Helicopter; VTANG Airport Fire Trucks, BTV Snow Equipment; Cessna 172 simulator and a food truck to keep everyone fed.

*30 minutes of kick off remarks at 10:00, LG speaks at 10:05 for 1-2 minutes*

**WHERE:** Vermont Flight Academy, 355 Valley Rd, South Burlington, VT

### **WHO:**

Vermont Youth!

Tyler Brown, Executive Director, Vermont Flight Academy

Lt. Governor Molly Gray

Gene Richards and Nic Longo, Burlington International Airport

Kyle Clark, Founder, BETA Technologies

Brigadier General David Manfredi, Vermont National Guard

Mark Redmond, Executive Director, Spectrum Youth & Family Services

Christine Lloyd-Newberry, Executive Director, Sara Holbrook Community Center

Vicki Smith, Executive Director, King Street Youth Center

Tanya Benosky, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club of Burlington

Kat Nelson, CEO, Boys & Girls Club of Vergennes

Robin Guillian, Director of Aviation, Vermont Technical College

## REMARKS:

Hello everyone – what a beautiful day in Vermont!

Thank you, Tyler, for having me today. I want to first express my sincere gratitude for all the incredible work you're doing to give back to Vermont and congratulate you on what is already such an incredible success.

I also want to thank the supporting organizations, the Burlington International Airport, BETA Technologies, our VT National Guard, Spectrum Youth & Family Services, Sara Holbrook Community Center, King Street Youth Center, Boys & Girls Club of Burlington, Boys & Girls Club of Vergennes, and Vermont Technical College.

I'm thrilled to be here surrounded by so many incredible organizations working together to strengthen our communities and offer life changing opportunities to Vermont youth.

I'm also so excited to see all the young women here today. Women are vastly underrepresented in aviation careers, only making up about 7% of all certified aviators. But as we know, women, particularly women right here in Vermont, are breaking down barriers. Kelsey Flannery, of the Guard, is training to fly F35s right now– and you could too.

I'll do my best to keep things brief and fun today, as I know you're all looking forward to getting over to check out all the cool equipment – but I would be remised if I didn't touch on the vital role this program is playing in addressing Vermont's demographic crisis and workforce development.

We know that young people are leaving Vermont. Just like I did when I was young, you want to see the world outside of the state.

But what if I told you there were great paying jobs in aviation and aviation support right here in Vermont? Jobs that allow you the freedom to explore, travel, see Vermont and the world from a new perspective, but still be able to call this place home.

I know this to be true firsthand. I'm very proud of my fiancé, Mike, who is a pilot and spends his workday flying up and down the east coast, but also raises two incredible kiddos right here at home in Vermont.

Through the BTC's aviation maintenance program, Vermont Tech's commercial pilot program, engineering at UVM, ROTC, BETA - the country's leading electric aviation company, and the Vermont National Guard - there are so many opportunities for training and education to launch careers right here in Vermont.

I hope that today gives you a glimpse into what's possible and you know that there are people here who are so excited to help you find the path that is right fit or you.

I can't wait to watch the first planes take off.

Have a great day and thanks for having me.