

Coe College announces flight school opportunities through new partnership

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By Rebekah Vaughan

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CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (KCRG) - A new program offered through Coe College in partnership with the Eastern Iowa Airport and Revv Aviation will soon have students taking to the skies.

The new aviation management program will give students a four-year degree in running an airport. It will also give students the option to attend a new flight school.

Coe College plans to have to program open to students for the fall 2025 semester.

"We're excited to announce today a partnership with Coe College, Eastern Iowa Airport, and Revv Aviation. Together the three of us will be operating an aviation management program at Coe College," said David Hayes, the president of Coe College.

The program will offer students a bachelor's degree focusing on different aspects of running an airport.

"There's all kind of roles there that a business degree would prepare you for; managing, leading, being in HR, marketing ect," Hayes said. The program isn't just about working within the airport. It'll take students straight to the tarmac.

Students who qualify through the flight school can get certified as a commercial pilot. The flight school does come at an additional cost on top of tuition for the four-year degree.

"A student would graduate from Coe with both a B.A. in aviation management, being able to participate in the full life and activities of the college experience, as well as be endorsed to be a commercial pilot," Hayes said.

The program will give students the option to train to become pilots at a new flight school.

"The flight school will be operated out of the Cedar Rapids Airport here in this hanger that we're in today through our partnership with Revv Aviation," said Hayes.

The classes are set to start fall of 2025 but considering the nationwide pilot shortage... it could start as early as this fall.

"Airlines are retiring pilots at a high rate every year. So, what happens when airline pilots retire, they go down to the regional airlines and draw pilots up from the regional airlines. That creates a shortage in the regional airlines, so they go down to the flight instructor ranks and pull up from the flight instructor ranks and creates a shortage at the flight instructor ranks," said Jerome Hoard with Revv Aviation.

Programs like these will help the shortage of pilots eventually, but it'll take time before the impact is felt.

"Say a person starts today, it might be 3 and a half... 4 years down the road before they're eligible to be hired by an airline," Howard said.

The program would start this fall if there are enough students interested in enrolling.

"If you want to come out and give it a try, please do because you don't know you like it until you try it," Howard said.

"We're very happy and we look forward to having Coe Hawks up in the air soon," Hayes said.

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