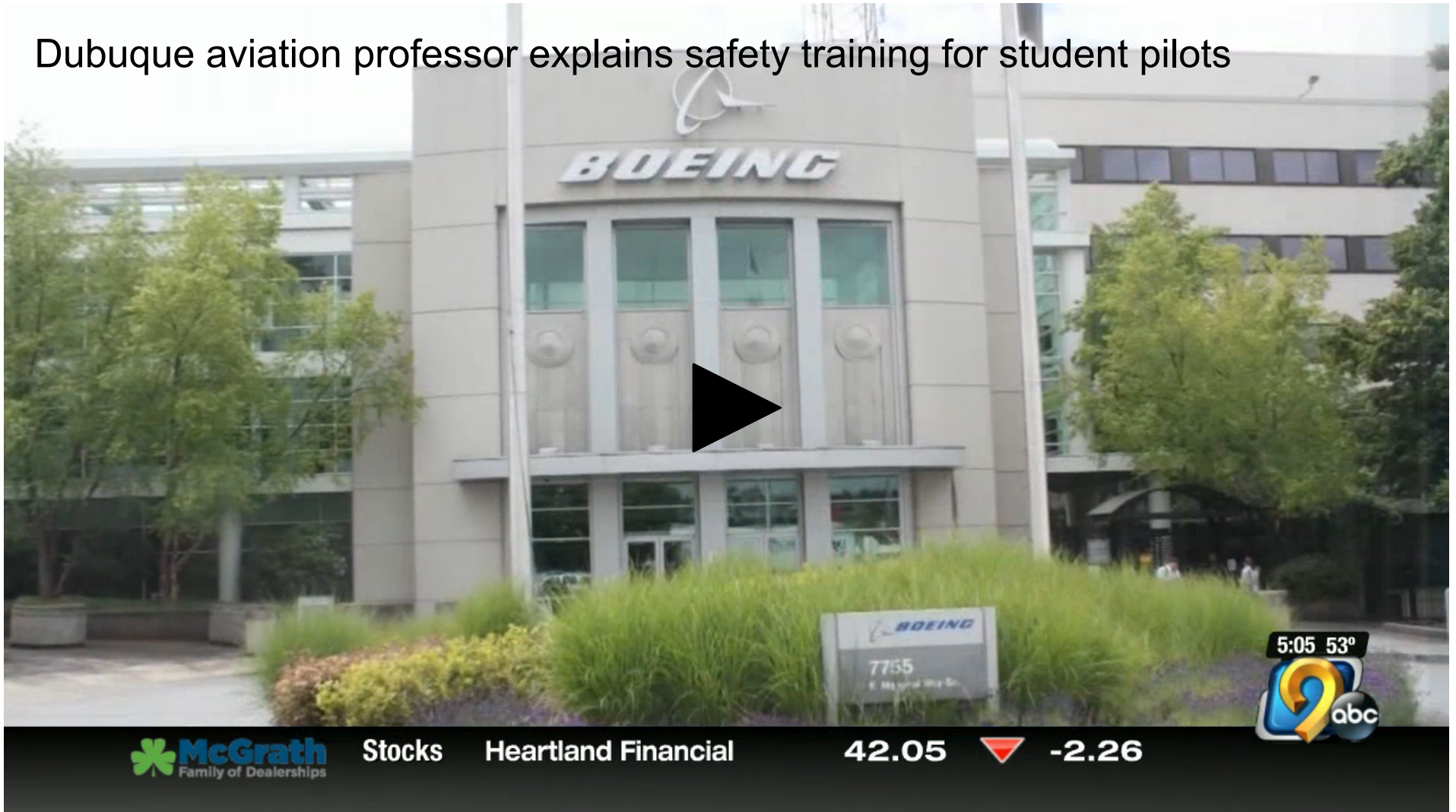


University of Dubuque aviation professor explains safety training for student pilots

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An eastern Iowa college is explaining how it trains its students to become pilots after recent plane crashes have sparked discussions about pilot training.



A University of Dubuque student and professor work through a flight simulator at the Flight Control Center on Friday, March 22, 2019. (Allison Wong, KCRG-TV9)

According to reports, the Ethiopian plane and an Indonesian 737 Max that crashed last October lacked two safety sensors that indicate if a jet's nose points up or down. CNN reports there's evidence that Boeing told airlines its 737 Max jets were fundamentally similar to previous models, and there was little need for extensive pilot training. Indonesia's Garuda Airlines is the first carrier canceling an order of 737 Max jets, one that totaled nearly five billion dollars.

The University of Dubuque has an aviation program and says it spends a lot of time teaching students how to react to malfunctions.

Assistant Professor Tony Foster said before learning automation, students are taught how to fly manually.

"To an extent, there is some truth to the idea that airplanes fly themselves. But, there's also a lot of emphases now on making sure the pilots have those ☹ manual flying skills," Foster said. "There's an appropriate balance between being able to still hand fly but also being able to manage the systems."

Once automation is in play, students get plenty of experience with failures through simulations.

Foster said, "We are constantly training our students with auto-pilot failures, with GPS failures, with other system malfunctions to kind of make sure that they're prepared to adapt to unforeseen circumstances."

During simulations, a professor sits next to a student and can make changes to the flight as he or she is practicing.

According to Foster, students receive up to 300 hours of flying before receiving certificates, and up to 1,000 as instructors.

Recent graduate Jared Bennett said his classes prepared him for flying solo. He is a Certified Flight Instructor and teaches in the aviation program.

He said "automation is great. It kind of leads to the error of complacency, so we kind of stress in our training, you know learning to hand fly the aircraft first and then knowing the characteristics and the limitations of our automation systems."

Foster said pilots also receive additional training when they get a job with an airliner about the specific aircraft they will be flying.

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The image displays three promotional banners side-by-side. The left banner is for PetSmart, advertising aquarium supplies with offers like 'BOGO 50% off' and 'save \$20'. The middle banner is for Petco, featuring ACANA dog food bags and the slogan 'Nourish as nature intended.' The right banner is for NAPA, showcasing automotive parts and accessories with various price points and discounts like 'SAVE UP TO \$10'.

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