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The Rege Aviation Foundation offers women and minorities opportunities to soar through grants for flight training

New nonprofit to address lack of diversity in aviation industry

Washington, D.C. –**The Rege Aviation Foundation** (the Foundation) is pleased to announce the availability of flight training grants for women and minorities through the launch of its fundraising efforts and website at <http://www.theaviationfoundation.org>. The Foundation aims to increase the population of minorities and women pilots by providing grants and scholarships that will enable participants to learn to fly, become advocates in their communities for aviation, and become an inspiration to others by doing something that their peers may never have considered as a career or hobby.

“Many of us have been inspired by someone who has done something extraordinary,” said Thomas Rege, founder and CEO of the Foundation. “We hope to make the participants in our program inspirational symbols for others to do things they thought was out of reach-- if that includes flying or pursuing a career in aviation all the better.”

The Foundation promotes Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) education, empowerment and safety in aviation for minorities and women (ages 16-21) with an emphasis on economically under-served areas in an effort to diversify the industry. Currently, the population of women and minority pilots and aviation professionals is staggeringly low compared to other professions. For example, the number of African-American male pilots working for major airlines in the United States is too low to measure -- less than one half of one percent; the number of female African-American pilots is even lower. To date, there are less than 20 African-American female pilots serving as a captain for a major airline. For women pilots of all races, there are fewer than 10 percent.

The Rege Aviation Foundation is registered as a nonprofit organization with the District of Columbia, The Foundation is working to obtain 501c (3) status this year. The Foundation is also open to a fiscal sponsorship arrangement where appropriate. The Foundation has a goal of providing grants to train at least 20 young pilots by 2015. For more information, visit www.theaviationfoundation.org.

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About the Founder

When Thomas Rege learned to fly he met and continued to meet great people who shared his passion for flight. Realizing that there were few other pilots that were like him, African-American, he was inspired to share his love of flying with audiences that were perhaps not exposed to aviation and therefore did not consider it as an accessible

career. He then began a foundation to grow these ranks -- building awareness about aviation among women and minorities.

Mr. Rege is a private pilot with more than 200 hours of flight time. He has flown Cessna variants 150, 172, and 182, and is in the process of completing his Instrument Rating in a Cirrus SR20. Prior to starting the Foundation he worked in the financial services and interactive media space as program manager and account executive.

