

34. Jordan Lyons and Gage McClinton: People in Planes

Gavin Kelly

You're listening to beyond 1894, a podcast dedicated to updating you on research, innovation and campus life happening at Louisiana Tech University. Hey, everybody, thank you for joining us on beyond 1894, the Louisiana Tech University podcast today we are joined by Dr. Jordan Lyons and student gage McLennan of the aviation program. So how are you guys doing today?

Jordan Lyons

Highly motivated. Thank you for having us.

Gavin Kelly

Oh, there we go.

Jordan Lyons

I don't want to speak for you, Gage. I'm doing great.

Gavin Kelly

That's good to know a little bit about each one of you. Do you want to go ahead and tell everybody about sort of what you do here and your role here at Louisiana Tech? Sure.

Jordan Lyons

I am currently an associate professor. And I started at Louisiana Tech as a flight instructor in 2009. And then worked in that role until 2000, who don't quote me, this is like an HR test 2013 2014, I was hired on as an in a tenure track role. And I've been here ever since. And in that period, from 2015 to 2019. I serve as the department head of aviation, but I have some amazing co workers that took the helm of the department so that I could finish my doctorate. So that kind of that helped me out a whole lot. And so I would like to publicly thank that individual.

Gavin Kelly

There you go. Well, congratulations on your doctorate. Dr. Jordan Lyons. Thank you. Thank you for being here with us today. Thank you for being a part of the aviation program here for so long for being so loyal to the program. Gauge. Tell us a little about you, man,

Gage McClinton

Well, my name is Gage. I'm a senior professional aviation major and MBA candidate. Right now I serve as the student body vice president. And I finished up the flight portion of my education over the summer, getting my flight instructor certificate. And so now I am working as a student finishing undergrad, and also on the flight end serving as an instructor. So it's opened my eyes to a lot of neat opportunities. And I've had a lot of cool experiences. So far, I also am able to serve as the risk analysis

board chairman, which is a really neat part of our program that dr. Lyons can talk a bit about later on, I imagine. But yeah, so I currently am working on fish, MBA my undergrad and moving my students along in the program.

Gavin Kelly

They're very involved very your student and a teacher and it's very cool. Also SGA. Vice President, yes, sir. Very involved with our student body. So it's very, thank you both for being here today. Sure. It's especially good to have you guys on because aviation is such a unique program. It's not an experience that students outside of aviation. Not that they can't relate to, but in a way they can't because it's so it's so special in its own right. So talk a little bit about what makes aviation unique. What makes it stand out from other programs. There are obvious reasons like the students in aviation fly planes, right. But it's a little deeper than that. So talk a little bit about that

Jordan Lyons

it is a little bit deeper. I think and you kind of that segue right into, one of the things I wanted to talk about was that one of the things that makes aviation challenging or unique at not only Louisiana Tech, but in the United States, I could even be so bold to say globally, because there's, there's only 36 programs in the world that are accredited for collegiate aviation. And we're, we're proud to be on that short list. But one of the things that makes it challenging is students at 17-18 years old, find out very quickly how to balance their life. And that's a balance between the university, the traditional university experience going into class, and hopefully doing some extracurriculars, maybe not as many as gauge. But being involved in campus while also completing that flight training. And that the flight training piece, a lot of people talk about earning your pilot's license, that the training pipeline here at Louisiana Tech goes far beyond that. We're talking about earning a pilot's license, even though that gauge and I both know that that's not what we call it, we call it a pilot certificate, but going through private, and then instrument, and then commercial flying, and then becoming a flight instructor, which I know that's on average, that's about a \$60,000 investment in that training experience, right? And so we have students that have an aptitude, a great aptitude for the classroom and a really good academic students. Or on the opposite end, we have students that are really really good stick and rudder pilots. But that's not what we're not looking for extremes. We're looking for a balance between the two. And students get really good at managing that and engage is a great a great example of how to do that successfully.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah, what's it like for you get How long have you known that you wanted to be in aviation? Was it something that you want?

Gage McClinton

To be honest, I started my aviation journey, Junior High School, I 17 and I was fully invested in going to it. And if you know me a little bit better, you'll know that it is not the personality type. And I have a couple certifications I like was fully invested in network administration and security and all that kind of stuff. And I just kind of got where I was like, I'm not, I don't want to not to speak down on it people, but in my mind is like, I don't want to sit, I just want for you, right? Just not for me. I love people. And that's kind of why I end up being VP. Because I just I love people. And I love getting involved in things, and travel and things like that. And I wanted to find a career that would allow me to do that. And so I started,

we travel a lot, and with my family, and so ended up we'd be flying, I'd be like, I wonder what they're doing up there in the cockpit, you know, and you see the pilots walking down. And I wonder if that's a viable career option. Sure enough, it sure is. So I got invested in it. And I didn't know I thought the only way to do it was military. The only way you become an airline pilots the military. And I knew there was maybe some big name collegian aviation programs, but I ended up finding tech, and I did some research and got my private pilot license before I came to Tech, I really found out that that's what I wanted to do. And you know that I wanted to invest my time or whatever it is at Tech to do that. And I to kind of speak to the as a student coming in it is very difficult initially, because instead of just showing up and taking your 12 hours, you may be taking 12 hours, but you also have to meet with your instructor at least three times a week, which if you really want to move the program, you got to meet with your instructor, you have to do the FAA side of testing. So in a lot of courses like dr. Lyons teaches instrument ground to one of our courses, you have to not only take the test in class, but at one point you have to go and drive to an FAA testing facility technology test. And to do that be successful, you have to study outside of the classroom and it's very involved. So there's a lot of moving parts right to it now and you have to balance your your schoolwork, you need to balance your flying work, you need to balance your ground knowledge and things like that. So I, I just kind of had a good, great instructor my first time and I just was able to, I hate to say blow through it, but I was able to just move right along. Smoked. Yeah, I was being modest, and just was very motivated. And I just loved it. I think that's part of it, too. It wasn't that I was, you know, super intelligent and, or anything like that. Not to discredit myself. But I think that I just fell in love with it. And I just wanted to learn more about it and got super curious. And I couldn't be satisfied with just knowing this bit, I had to go the little extra step. And I wonder what that makes that happen, you know, things like that. So, and now balancing being an instructor and finishing classes is interesting, because not only if I say, as a student, if you know, my score gets hard, I can just lay off flying for a little bit, I'll be okay. As an instructor, I can't have that I have to continue flying, I have to continue. Not only is it a job, and now I have, you know, performance minimums to meet and you know, I'm expected to do my jobs instructor, but my students are also Hey, when are we going to meet, you know, so it's, it's a little different now as an instructor, but I'd say as a student is a little challenging initially to kind of get up to pace with it and move along. But

Gavin Kelly

if you bought it sounds like if you had to boil it down to how you do it, it's it's passion, it's, that gives you that little bit extra,

Gage McClinton

I think you can identify and not to, you know, talk about students, but I think you can identify even with some that I have personally, those that are truly deeply passionate about it and those that are just moving ladder wrong and meeting the minimums. You know, I think the the private pilot course is challenging, but the instrument course, the next set, that's where you, I'm either going to do it or I'm not, you know,

it's a make or break.

Gage McClinton

It's a make or break kind of deal because it is a little difficult. But anyways, yeah, it's passionate, I'd say,

Gavin Kelly

great. So do you know, I mean, it sounds like there are for sure, lots of avenues that aviation can lead someone to. So do you know what exactly you want to do when, when you're? Well, I'm done. I'm

Gage McClinton

actually sure. I definitely want to go in the airlines. But I'm also interested in the academic side of things in academia, which I'm doing my MBA, so that could open up opportunity as far as the management side of not necessarily in aviation as a whole but maybe in our program specifically if there's opportunities that open itself up or teaching.

Gavin Kelly

Did you know that that was something you might want to do before you started no being an instructor

Gage McClinton

I I didn't honestly I didn't quite think so. I thought I was just straight to the airlines as soon as I got 1000 hours. And I started teaching and I really kind of fell in love with in a one on one setting. And I had a buddy of mine who who's an instructor as well. Well, and he's graduated from the program. And he's working here at Tech. And he picked up a course to teach in the classroom setting. And the more I talked to him about it, the more I was like, that may be something I'm interested in to doing. And so we'll see what happens whenever I finished undergrad. But it will be something that I will investigate. Absolutely. But definitely, one day going to the airlines. So

Gavin Kelly

Gotcha. Well, you got some time to figure it out. I do. Yeah, you got to take it a day. That's my goodness. Yeah. So I keep saying that aviation is such a unique program. So I'm sure that there are tons of activities and events that go on that maybe not a lot of the student body is aware of, and especially events that may have been impacted by the way things have changed over the last year and the effects that the pandemic has had on everybody in the way that things have shifted around. So now that things are sort of shifting in a different direction, how has that affected aviation?

Jordan Lyons

Last quarter, in one of my classes, I'm talking to the students and we just the way I structure my classes, it's it's more of a conversation than me talking to them for for the whole time, I like to have a good dialogue and aviation students are more than happy to share their opinions on all kinds of things, which is awesome, but I was talking to them last quarter. And I mentioned AVFEST, which is short for aviation festival. And they gave me a deer in the headlights look. And so I pause for about five seconds. And I'm like what is happening? This is this is one of the events that makes Louisiana Tech aviation. all by itself. When you compare our program to others within the United States, it has been used as an exemplar as best practice with alumni. Okay. But they didn't know what it was because of tornadoes, and hurricanes, and pandemics, right? And I'm like, has it been that long, and it has it's been three years since we've had an AV fest event. But knock on wood. We're having one in April. So AV fest is always the last full weekend in April. And it's an opportunity for not only our alumni to come back. And

that's really where how it started to get our alumni back on campus and networking with our current students, but also allows parents and other tech family members to come in and just socialize, get caught up, figure out what's going on within the department figure out what's going on within the industry. There's lots of food, to eat yourself into a food coma. Nice, you know, with fish fries, and hat and burger burns. And a formal banquet in the banquet is an opportunity where we award department scholarships to usually about 30 of our students. One of the criteria for this scholarships is a financial need. Well, I'm telling you that every aviation student is in fine. Yeah, so just an opportunity to recognize academic achievement performance at the at the airport, but also just really to get together once a year. And it has been, I don't want to use the word depressing, but it sucks. Yeah, you know, not being able to do this event. But we're able to do that. So FS is one of them. Another event that is very special to me and the program and our students for that matter and gauge, I don't even know if you're aware of these gauge gauge. This is a great example. We got a gauge notes about mock interviews, maybe you've heard of them. I've heard of mock interviews. It's a time where we get about eight to 10 of our alumni, airline alumni back on campus, and they do airline style interviews to our seniors, our seniors, specifically that are enrolled in an aviation professionalism course. And they put them through the wringer. And just we want to make that interview harder than the real thing. And all all of the students that have participated in this mock interview experiences have said that the real interview was I don't want to say a joke, but they were ready. They were ready already. They were prepared. And so we're looking forward to doing that in February. So mock interviews and and fast are two of the events that we haven't done in almost three years. Yeah, that we're going to be able to cycle back in this this academic year. And I'm very excited about that.

Gavin Kelly

That's good. AVFEST sounds like a lot of fun.

Jordan Lyons

Everybody's like, good.

Gavin Kelly

Next question. That's my next question. It sounds like a knot. I mean, it serves its purpose, but also just a celebration of the department in the program. So that's really cool. So when it comes to things like AF s and students connecting with alumni and even with the mock interviews and things final things like that, how, what is sort of a, I guess a typical aviation students journey, in terms of knowing what they want to do versus finding out what their options are so like how many different paths can aviation take you down gauges talked about? Quite a few. But what's what are sort of the avenues for student as they go through the program?

Jordan Lyons

I mentioned earlier, before we were before we started the podcast that, you know, I'd like to generalize. This is a generalization, but I would say that the majority of our studio engage you jump in if I say something that's like, what, but there's three primary paths. And the airline which gage mentioned the airline route, which historically was all military pilots, you know, the majority of our students take that path. Gotcha. I would be, I would say 75 to 80. Okay, gotcha, the majority path to path two would be the corporate route, which is what I used to do on this kind of on the side before I became straight a

straight up academic, which like, gave, I never thought I would do that, but I love it. But the corporate route would be flying for business or flying for a family. And that's very attractive, because it's, you may flat last or you may fly more, but you flat the equipment you want when you want. It's, it's a little bit more. Well, airlines are more predictable. But some people like that on call pilot work. It's more private. Yeah, I was gonna say your beeper beeps. But what's, what's a vapor, and it's cool. It is neat, and you can make as much money as an airline pilot. But going back to what we were talking about just a second ago, is, if you're doing it for the money, you're doing it for the wrong reason. That's passion. It's passion straight up. But that's route two. And then of course, route three would be the military. And we have graduates in all major airlines, all regional airlines, all branches of the military. I won't say all corporate avenues, because there's so many of them, right? There's they're all over major corporations, families, what you know, all of it. So those are the three primary ones. But airlines or their need is high. And they're paying really, really well and have been for a few years, even when they weren't paying well, which is heck, five, six years ago, our graduate placement rate was still 100%. There you go. So students get jobs. Yeah, but now they're getting jobs. And they're getting paid comfortably in their first year, which is which is great. So

Gavin Kelly

and it sounds like it's one of the things like we've touched on that if you get through the program, and you get to the point where it's time for you to get a job, you're well equipped, not only because of the prestige of the program, but because you've had to struggle to, for lack of a better word to get through, because you have to find that balance and right, find that passion and get through it. So by the time we get to the end, you've all got your toughest challenges almost out of the way, right, you know, so you're well equipped for that job.

Gage McClinton

I would say one thing to that is I don't think we've mentioned, too, so the major is professional aviation, the required minor is aviation management. So there's a whole nother set of aviation related courses that are kept in house and everything, but it's aviation management type things. So not only do students have opportunities in all of the aviation, the flying side of things, they also prepared to go out, we have one CFI that just left this, he went out and picked up an airport manager job. And so not only are students prepared for the flying side of things, they're also prepared. I don't want to say land side, but they're prepared for the like it they Yeah, they're prepared for the the the ground ops, management and that side of things. And it's cool, because not only can you go and you understand how to fly the planes, but you understand the management practices of the company you're working for. And if an employer not only asked you to, hey, can you fly this plane from me? But can you manage this plane for me? Can you manage the finances of keeping this plane ready to go at all times, then you're prepared outside of the cockpit. So our programs pretty neat and structured out like that. So

Jordan Lyons

it's it supports our primary goal of creating that balance, you know, again, you know, not just flying. And that was before right before I joined tech, it was actually when I was a student here, where they they mandated that Aviation Management minor, and we've never looked back. And that is a huge, I'm glad you brought that up getting that is a huge factor that makes tech different than just going to a flight

school. Right, you know, just creating that, that awesome experience of getting exposed areas outside of the cockpit.

Gavin Kelly

It sounds like it sounds like there's tons of crossover. That was my thought. But it also all kind of sounds like two separate degrees because it's it's two separate sides of the same sort of industry. I'm

Jordan Lyons

glad you said that. It is another degree because we have a four year baccalaureate degree in aviation management as well, which is a popular spot for a lot of students. But most of the incoming students at Tech they see bright shiny airplanes, the latest the latest technology you can get and we're blessed to have that equipment and a special shout out to our system and the state of Louisiana and Dr. Guys, for backing us up on that aircraft purchase. Amazing for our students button. There's so many things to do in aviation beyond getting in that cockpit and flying. You know, there are different roles for pilots, and it's not just flying.

Gavin Kelly

Gotcha. So it's we've talked multiple times about how it's a unique program. It's a unique sort of department here at Tech compared to other students and their journeys. They're majors. What makes the aviation program here stand out nationally, maybe even globally, what made what separates us from other aviation programs around the country? Sure.

Jordan Lyons

One of my responsibilities within the department outside of teaching is to assist with our accreditation process, specifically, programmatic accreditation, it's a huge it's a huge point for me, and personally and professionally, simply because like I mentioned before, we're on a very short list of institutions within the world that offer an program that's accredited through the aviation accreditation board International, we are very proud of that status. And that status means that we meet a performance standard criteria across the board, student quality faculty quality, equipment, quality, safety, that's kind of important. And it is a big relationship, our relationship with our alums, all of these areas are evaluated by this external accrediting body. And we have 100% stakeholder buy in and have for quite some time, we were one of the first in the country to be accredited through API. And we've perfected that process. That's why accreditation exists right to get better and better. And we've perfected that process and gotten better and better every year. And it's so important to me that I wrote my dissertation on it. And I wrote my dissertation on the value of accreditation, what contextual variables may influence compliance with existing criteria, and also, more importantly, adapting to this unprecedented industry demand for our graduates? How do we do this complex assessment process, when our faculty and staff are leaving so fast, that we may not be able to get hired new hires in fast enough to continue that accreditation process, and it's not a one man or one woman show, it requires a team to be successful? And so I looked at, you know, how our programs doing that, and believe it or not, programs are using their alums to help supplement some of those decisions. Gotcha. Well be part of the decision making process.

Gavin Kelly

So we the program here is accredited. And it's that in of itself is, like I said, a shortlist. And so being accredited is one thing, but doing it well and doing it standing out. And we do it well here. Yes, yes,

Jordan Lyons

I am. Proud to say that. Yeah, absolutely. And we also have an amazing safety record. I'm knocking on where you go. But I have had parents ask me, you know, how, how do you do this? How do you have 20 year olds teaching 18 year olds how to flip \$400,000 airplanes, and do it safely. And I say that we hire the right people.

Gage McClinton

It's remarkable I am I'm getting ready to send one of my students who's just turned 18. And I'm about to turn 21, right. And I'm about to send him on a 200 nautical mile cross country from here to Jackson. So I'm, I'm like a worried dad on reloading and I tell him Be safe. Be careful, get off your phone. But yeah, it is remarkable the safety record, but I think the and he's an expert on this, but I can just a little bit from my experience, we have a awesome culture in our program. The safety culture is really cool. And any any safety expert will tell you that to have a safe program, you've got to have a great safety culture, one that promotes and encourages safe behavior and discourages those bad actors that are you know, unsafe for bad practices. And we're always working on it. We're having a CFI meeting tonight. So all of our instructors meet monthly. And that's just one of the things that we do. We're meeting tonight, and we discuss safety topics and student related topics and practice topics. So all these different meetings that we have, we have the risk analysis board, which is a student and instructor comprised group, which meets and advises on different safety related topics. But I would say going back to the general topic of how we stand out from a student perspective, there are a lot of big name big universities, not to name any but some are located in South Florida that are very expensive. And will get you the same exact thing at the end of the day. A four year accredited four year degree that are very expensive, come with a lot of you know, Glamour and whatever. And in the day, it's the same thing. Yeah. And I remember when I was looking at it, I to be honest, I you know, I saw that big university I said, Well, that's where I want to go, that's the best one in the country. And I look at it and I was like, alright, well that's it's a little expensive, but you know, whatever. And then I was looking around and my mom ended up actually stumbling on somebody said some about Louisiana Tech. So what about that and I looked it up and I'm like, well, it's uncontrolled airport. It's a small university smaller. And but when I stepped on campus So I was like, Okay, this is different than what was looked at. And when I looked at the price tables, that was also a little bit revealing. But the neatest thing about it is in our program, you show up day one, we had a student, I had one of my students this fall quarter, he showed up day one, he got registered for classes, he showed up to his first day class. And the next day, he met with me, and we were in a plane. And I think that's something unique about our program is the first quarter at Tech, you are in a plane, or you know, you're you're flying and you're meeting with an instructor, some universities, you have to wait until a certain point to start flying. So it's hard because we talked about how unique it is and how challenging is imagine not doing the flying part of it being in an airplane, some students not having been in a plane before they came to tech, until you've taken two or three semesters of challenging ground crimes. If I got into plane, and I said, this isn't for me, after I've done all that I would be so upset, you know. So it's neat, because not only do students know quicker if they're passionate about it, but they're able to move in the program quicker because of the opportunities that are on day one, and our program. So there you

Gavin Kelly

go, you spoke to sort of what that is relatable to every Tech student, I think the bigger is not always better. Students come here and they like it here because it's a more close knit school, they can develop relationships with their instructors, their teachers, and they feel they get that sort of one on one. I've

Gage McClinton

been saying this whenever I was running for vice president and I was talking about this with student body. One of the neat things about tech is that it is a small university with the resources of a major, big huge university. I mean, we have in our in our departments physically we have the instructors and the staff, specifically the faculty, dr. Lyons and the other instructors, our experience is amazing. You have such knowledgeable instructors and the resources, the planes out there. So nice

Gavin Kelly

they are, if you're listening, you need to find some photos of the planes we have because they are their

Gage McClinton

state of the art. I mean, it is such nice equipment to fly. It's a It's honestly it's a it's a privilege to be able to teach in the in the aircraft. And it's so cool because it allows us to really expose the students to more than just to kind of give a little backdrop, there's steam gauge, which is your traditional analog instruments. And then there's our fancy g 1000. Basically big computer screens that we have. And it's cool because we get to expose students to some things that they'll find in bigger. We talked about corporate aviation, that's what you'll find in corporate aviation, usually in those nicer, bigger airplanes. So it's our resources, our faculty here at Tech, and our program is really awesome while keeping it close knit smaller, or you're not just one little fish in a huge sea. You know, it's a smaller, close knit community. It's

Gavin Kelly

Tech family, right? That's it.

Jordan Lyons

And you know, we say that we tell as one exam we tell ABI our accrediting body, the visiting team, they come every five years and we we get a new team every year, but we tell them about the culture at Louisiana Tech and the culture within our department and they're like okay, but then they show up on campus. And you can see it in our in the debriefs in the reports. They're like, this is this is real. And I'm thinking yeah, I told you it was in that that's, that's probably one of the main reasons that I'm still here. Not not not in the airline. I love it here. And I knock on wood. I hope to retire here. I love it. So I love rust and so much I'm very local. There you go. But yeah, blessed.

Gavin Kelly

There you go. That's what we like to hear. You mentioned planes. I mean, let's talk planes. i Let's talk every everything everything I ever learned about aviation today pretty much has come from you guys sitting here today talking. So let's just talk about I guess maybe different types of planes that we have

when we what's your favorite type of plane to fly? I mean, I'm not even totally sure the question to ask I'm sure you've got all sorts of information.

Gage McClinton

Yeah, boy. Gauge hit it. Well, we have so at Tech, we have a we have a Cessna Skyhawk is what we have, I think we have 13 of those 172 model S's and I forget the year 2008 17 To that Oh, a little sooner, sorry. 2018 I'm sorry, I was thinking 18 or 17. But yeah, 2007 2017 models with the G 1000s. We also have some Piper arrows with retractable gear. So our students are able to get complex experience and basically, you have aircraft that have fixed landing gear, tricycle gear, and then you have aircraft that are able to retract their landing gear, and the FAA deems that a complex airplane. And so for one of our courses or commercial course, the student actually has to have a certain amount of time as pilot in command of a complex airplane. And so that allows us to accomplish that They're they have nice avionics and we also and this is not officially through Louisiana Tech. But the Davison's so kindly allowed us to do some multi engine instruction through their new Piper Seminole, which I actually just completed over the summer. Two engines. Yes. So wow, you have single engine and you have multi engine planes. Multi just describing one that has more than one, right? Okay, just good. Just clarifying just clarify. But it is a Piper. So it looks very similar to the Piper Arrow that students have already been flying. Except this one has two engines. And it also has the G 1000. Cockpit display as well. So it's pretty neat. I would say the most fun I've had in my training was had in Seminole. There. Yeah, it was something about having to introduce you felt like a real pilot?

Gavin Kelly

I don't know. So what is the difference is it more is more power hours, it's more,

Gage McClinton

it's definitely more power. It is faster, very fast. So one thing that you have to manage, we talked about managing tasks a lot and back and forth between classroom and work, but specifically in cockpit. You have a lot of cockpit management tasks going on. So even in the single engine in the Skyhawk, even though things are happening slower, you still have to manage running a checklist and Marlon in the seminar what's happening twice as fast Wow. And so when you're doing like instrument procedures where I'm having to hit designate points, designate speeds and desert altitudes and you're managing all this stuff. Everything's you're coming up on everything so much quicker. And so that was one thing that I really had to adapt to was the task management side of things, especially when I headed over to Monroe, which is a towered environment. So they have a controller and your license is at risk. If you get in too bad of a bond. They say, Hey, we're going to talk to the FAA about you you know that that was a nice way to say that yeah, isn't it but anyways, um, when you go over there and they're they're giving you instructions and you're having to comply with that and do this and do that. It was really fun though, because it opened up the door after I got my multi to new opportunities at corporate in Eldorado. I got the opportunity. I work as one of the backup pilots for King Air, which is a really big multi engine plane. So like the the plane that we have the car that the Davidsons allow us to teach out of the Seminole has to 180 horsepower engines. King Air has to 730 horsepower home, turboprop. Wow. So your move you're cruising, you're moving how fast sounds like it's a turbo progress compared to a piston engine. So piston engine, just your typical car Type engine, turboprop. It's a jet engine that has propeller

slammed on the front of it. So it's, it's pretty cool. I'd say on all the planes that I've flown that the King Air has been a really neat experience. But the planes at Tech are, of course, it's just neat, you know?

Gavin Kelly

Absolutely. But it does sound like power and speed is can make it more fun.

Gage McClinton

So don't let it don't let any aviation major fool you. They're always looking for faster. Always, always it's going to coolness level goes up with speed and power.

Jordan Lyons

Sometimes the new students say, you know, I want to fly something a little bit faster in training. And I'm thinking okay, well, you have to pay for that. Yeah, right. That's the tricky word. So you know, it's finding that balance between what students need for industry, and what they are willing to pay for, right? Because the students must pay for that flight training experience, just like any other business, no flight school. So we operate that flight school as part of our academic department. But you know, you, we have to keep it affordable. And one of the ways we do that is flying the most popular general aviation training airplane in the world. And that's the Cessna sky.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah. And that's and that's also another unique sort of set up as it's a flight school attached to a department and program, which is not really anything that other departments around here, it's sort of function as you know, right. So Well, guys, thank you for joining me here today, before we leave it, this aviation program might be an attractive option to somebody out there listening, or it might just be straight up interesting enough for them to want to know, how do you get into this program?

Jordan Lyons

I can, I can answer that one gauge. If you if you're interested in aviation, either as a high school student or heck, even as a current Tech student, I'll start with the students that haven't started college. Yeah. What you would need to do is apply to Louisiana Tech as a university. And then that university application automatically submits an application to our department, and mostly GE Aviation programs, now our selective admissions, and we went selective admissions a few years ago. And so once you apply to the university, that application again gets sent to the department, and we would want you to have that application submitted to the university by December 15th. So we're coming up on next year's deadline, pretty grimy, and apply by December the 15th. And also complete a campus visit. And that campus visit is critical, because we want our department to give that student and the parents are those families the information they need to make an informed decision specifically about the commitment, everything we've talked about, really, yeah, the commitment and the cost and everything up front, we want students to know that up front. So that December 15 deadline qualifies you or it's an application for the following academic year. And we make selection in February March timeframe for the upcoming academic year. Current students that are interested in a major change to Louisiana Tech should stop by our aviation office in Davidson Hall 320. And let the staff know that they're interested. And they will put their name on a roster. And we evaluate those major change requests on a quarterly basis. And those major change requests are based on cumulative GPA. Gosh, so 3.0 is the minimum. But the

driving force behind the number of students that we can comfortably and safely admit is based on our instructor resources. So as we shut out the game, yeah, right. as we as we train more gauges, we can enroll more students. Gotcha.

Gavin Kelly

So there you go. Thank you for answering that question. And thank you guys, both for being here today. I know I learned a lot. I hope everybody listened and learned a lot. Gates, good luck finishing things out and moving along in your career. dr. Lyons, thank you so much for being here and being a part of the Tech family and helping mold our students, especially our aviation students, which as we learned today are unique in more ways than one. So thank you guys very much for being here today. Thank you. Appreciate

Gage McClinton

it. This is really fun. All right.

Gavin Kelly

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