

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

California Capital Airshow Inspires Next Generation of Aviators and Innovators at Positive Altitude STEM Event

Hundreds of families from across the region experience aviation and STEM up close at Mather Airport

SACRAMENTO, CA — June 8, 2026 — The California Capital Airshow (CCA) brought the wonder of flight and the excitement of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to hundreds of young people on May 30, 2026, through its annual Positive Altitude event at Mather Airport. Families from across the Sacramento region gathered for the half-day program, which introduced youth of all ages to careers and opportunities in aviation and aerospace.

The event opened with a lunchtime conversation and keynote address by Darby Dustman, Director of Strategy & Programs at VELA and a rocket propulsion leader with more than a decade in aerospace and defense. Dustman has worked on hypersonic systems, boosters for NASA's Artemis program, and next-generation missile technology, and brought that real-world experience to life for a room full of curious kids. "Every person you admire has a failure story," said Dustman. "You just usually only see the launch."

Her remarks set the tone for an afternoon of exploration and discovery.

Following the keynote, attendees fanned out across dozens of interactive exhibits showcasing the breadth of aviation and aerospace careers. Young visitors got up close with aircraft and equipment from REACH Air Medical Systems, the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department Air Unit and Drone team, UPS, FedEx, and the U.S. Coast Guard, and many more, seeing firsthand the wide range of professionals who keep the equipment and technology in the skies running. Interactive science and STEM demonstrations, including exhibits from Mad Science, rounded out an afternoon designed to spark curiosity across every discipline.

"We want every kid who comes through this event to see someone who looks like them, doing a job they never knew existed," said Darcy Brewer, CEO of the California Capital Airshow. "Aviation is air traffic controllers, medics, engineers, package delivery, law enforcement, and so much more. Events like this help inspire the future of our industry, so we want these kids to be exposed to the tremendous opportunities ahead of them."

Positive Altitude is one of the free youth STEM programs the California Capital Airshow produces each year, with the ACE Academy and Destination Aviation events also happening this summer. All are free for participants and designed to reach youth who may not otherwise have access to aviation experiences.

[Photos and video from the event](#) are available for press use.

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About California Capital Airshow

Established in 2004, the California Capital Airshow 501(c)3 plans and operates the exciting, family-friendly annual event designed to honor the Sacramento region's rich aviation heritage and veterans

while using the power and magic of flight to inspire young people. CCA gives back to the community through scholarships, charitable group donations and exciting educational youth programming throughout the year. For more information about the airshow, performers, and discount tickets, please visit www.californiacapitalairshow.com.