

# Mission Aviation Training Academy

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## PARTNERING WITH FIELD MISSIONS

MATA graduates serving on the field know where to turn when they need a helping hand they can trust with a project. You may have read in past newsletters about disassembling, crating, and shipping two C-206s to Micronesia for Pacific Missionary Aviation at the request of MATA alumnus Amos Collins. Most recently, our mechanics are lending a hand to get a Cherokee Six back in



service for Jeremy Crowell. Jeremy said,

"It is fun to be working in the MATA hangar again. Several years ago, I was a flight instructor/mechanic

here, so it brings back a lot of fond memories. Today, I am a missionary pastor/pilot in southwest Alaska serving with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC) Home Missions Department and with our aviation arm, Free Lutheran Association of Pilot Supporters (FLAPS).

We brought down our Naknek, Alaska-based Cherokee Six last September to do a scheduled engine rebuild and avionics upgrades. It has been a joy to be able to work together with the MATA staff to get this project accomplished. The facilities here are amazing and even more amazing are the people that God has called to serve here at MATA. As I look back to the

humble beginnings of MATA, I continue to marvel at God's great blessings upon this ministry. Thanks again MATA staff! And thanks to the Lord! To God be the Glory!"



Ian, Dary, and Gordon inspect the new engine for the Cherokee Six



Ian Rojas is a MATA graduate, earning his Instrument Rating, Commercial Pilot certificate, and Multi-engine

Airplane Rating with us. Additionally, Ian flew our C-182 to western Alaska and served three weeks at Kako Retreat Center flying Native Alaskans from remote villages to Bible camp. The next big step for Ian in the progression to becoming a missionary pilot is a "technical evaluation" with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to confirm his pilot and mechanic skills are at the level required for their standardization and field training before being assigned overseas.

Ian feels fairly comfortable with his pilot skills, but has not been using his aircraft mechanic licenses in a general aviation application with Boeing, where he has been hanging engines on B-787s. With his MAF technical evaluation

## TWO INTERNS START AT MATA

anticipated in May, Ian left his Boeing job, income, and benefits to volunteer as a maintenance intern at MATA. He has been getting lots of light airplane maintenance, including 100-hour inspections, annual inspections, and structural repair work, under the supervision of Dary Finck and Gordon Bakke.

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MATA has needed another full-time flight instructor for some time, but has been unable to find a qualified candidate willing to help on more than a part-time basis. Benjamin Bookman earned his Instrument Rating and Commercial Pilot certificate with us, and was concerned about gaining the required flight time to apply for New Tribes Mission Aviation (NTMA). He considered going back to a job in Colorado and trying to get more flying time as he could afford it, but MATA staff members suggested another option. We offered to use

undesignated scholarship funds to send Benjamin to a flight instructor training course in Florida if he would stay at MATA as a full-time instructor for a year, benefiting both MATA and Benjamin.

Benjamin recently returned from Florida, and is taking checkrides with an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner to earn his Flight Instructor certificate with Airplane Single-Engine and Instrument - Airplane ratings. Benjamin will then instruct at MATA while building his flight time and experience. He must supplement his pay as a flight instructor with additional income, and building up his support team now should be a great start in building a support base to allow full-time missionary service later.





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Training Pilots for Missions

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## THREE NEW PRIVATE PILOTS IN JANUARY!

We had a perfect start to the new year with students Ella Robbins and Caleb Webster earning their Private Pilot certificate on New Years Day! Trey Henderson was not far behind, earning his Private Pilot certificate on January 24th. These three students were



Caleb Webster shaking hands with flight examiner Neal Karman



Allen Koopman, CFI, CFII, and Bible teacher

Certified Instrument Instructors Allen Koopman and Jonathan Miller are ready to teach their Instrument Rating ground course in March.

Besides teaching ground instruction, Allen Koopman also leads our discipleship training and Bible study for our students on Friday night. Allen's vision is for MATA grads to be able to feed themselves spiritually.



Ella Robbins

Ethan Hancock are also very close to finishing the requirements needed to take their final flight exam.



Chief Instructor Gary Elliott congratulates Trey Henderson

## MATATHON 2016



MATA's annual run, walk, or bike around the Arlington Airport Trail will be held on **May 14th**. Get involved by supporting and participating in this annual event. All proceeds will go toward MATA's flight program where we are training missionary pilots for His service.

Call or go online to get registration forms and pledge sheets.



Benjamin Robbins relaxing after his 2016 run last year

## Director's Corner



though we think about the past, our focus is on the future. Shortly before

The 2nd month of 2016 will soon be history. We have mentioned a few things that have happened, but even

beginning to write this I mailed a letter of acceptance to an applicant who wants to begin training in August. Because he already has his Private Pilot license he will be enrolled in the Instrument Rating course. We are excited about having two interns to help us now. Lord willing we will have a new full-time staff member in June. We have opportunities to help in Alaska with

Bible camp flying. Just how that will all work out we are not sure. We would like to have at least one of our graduates flying up North and getting valuable mission field flying experience this summer.

On another note, to make giving more convenient for some, we can take credit card, stocks, and bank transfers though National Christian Foundation. See our website for

details. [www.mata-usa.org](http://www.mata-usa.org)  
Check and cash should come directly to the MATA office or P.O. Box 3655, Arlington, WA 98223. We appreciate your support!

*Gordon Bakke*  
Executive Director