

Southwest Airlines and Auburn University Announce Destination 225° Partnership

Southwest Airlines is proud to welcome Auburn University as a partner in Destination 225°, the airline's First Officer development and recruitment program. With nearly 700 Professional Flight majors, Auburn University's School of Aviation students will have access to a pathway that leads to becoming competitively qualified for a Commercial Pilot career at Southwest.

"We're excited to welcome Auburn University as a partner in Southwest's Destination 225° Program," said Lee Kinnebrew, Vice President Flight Operations at Southwest Airlines. "We continue our work of introducing career pathways for the next generation of professional pilots and look forward to supporting students as they train, gain flight experience, and develop into competitively-qualified Southwest First Officer Candidates in the years ahead."

"Our School of Aviation is a shining example of excellence at Auburn, and I am thrilled to see our program aligned with Southwest Airlines," Auburn President Christopher B. Roberts said. "We are committed to providing students with experiential learning and opportunities to make an impact in the world after their days on the Plains. Career pathway programs like Southwest's Destination 225° program are a wonderful way for our aviation students to embark on fulfilling and meaningful careers after graduation. We look forward to a long and prosperous partnership with Southwest through Auburn Aviation."

"This partnership is a win-win for everyone and the latest in a long line of amazing news for the Auburn School of Aviation program," said Jim Witte, Director of Auburn's School of Aviation. "Southwest Airlines has a proven tradition of excellence in the industry, and we are excited about joining its Destination 225° pathway program to feed the pipeline of the future. Auburn Aviation graduates are making a substantial impact in the industry, and this alignment will help take that to the next level."

Auburn joins current Destination 225° University Partners Angelo State University, Arizona State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Texas Southwest University, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the University of Oklahoma. These University Partners work with Southwest to train and support collegiate aviators accepted into the Destination 225° University Pathway.

For more information on Destination 225° and other valued flying, academic, and training partners, please visit careers.southwestair.com/D225.

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1. Based on U.S. Dept. of Transportation quarterly Airline Origin & Destination Survey as of Q4 2025
2. Fulltime-equivalent active Employees as of Dec. 31, 2025

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