

# Southwest Airlines Launches New Pilot Pathways Program

[Southwest Airlines Co.](#) (NYSE: LUV) today launches an innovative career program called Destination 225° which provides pathways to becoming a competitively qualified candidate for future Southwest First Officer positions. On a compass, 225° is the southwest directional heading, and Destination 225° was developed to lead aspiring Pilots to Southwest Airlines.

With demand for qualified and professional Pilots projected to increase in the coming years, Destination 225° seeks to meet future, high-potential aviators at their current experience level and provide pathways to assist them with becoming highly skilled and qualified for future opportunities at Southwest. To offer the program, Southwest plans to join with well-known industry partners that will provide participants with training and flight experience to reinforce "The Southwest Way" of flying as candidates complete their journey to becoming a professional Pilot. Planned Destination 225° program partners include: CAE, Bell Murray Aviation, U.S. Aviation, Jet Linx, XOJET Aviation, iAero Group's Swift Air, Arizona State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, University of Nebraska Omaha, and the University of Oklahoma.

Participants who apply, interview, and are selected for the Destination 225° program will receive a Southwest mentor during their years of training, be invited to Southwest for training activities and events, and, ultimately, have the opportunity to apply for selection as a Southwest First Officer. Participants will go through comprehensive training and a continuous evaluation process intended to enable them to meet, or potentially exceed, Southwest's competitive hiring qualifications. There is no cost to apply to the program; however, candidates advancing through a training program and the selection process will be responsible for all costs incurred.

"Destination 225° will offer pathways for the development of world-class Pilots who are ready to fly 'The Southwest Way,'" said Alan Kasher, Vice President of Flight Operations. "This comprehensive training program is designed to make becoming a Southwest First Officer an attainable goal for passionate, highly-skilled individuals. Pilots in the Destination 225° pathways will receive training customized to Southwest from our partners and will be held to the competitive hiring requirements for future First Officer positions. We are looking for participants who demonstrate the technical aptitude to excel in all aspects of their training and development as a future Southwest Pilot."

[Destination 225° Pilot Pathways](#)

Interested candidates can apply to be accepted into one of the Destination 225° pathways that best matches their current or prior experience:

#### Destination 225° Cadet Pathway

The Cadet Pathway is an ab initio—"from the beginning"—program which provides passionate, skilled individuals with a multi-year training program in partnership with CAE, a worldwide leader in training for the civil aviation, defense and security, and healthcare markets. The classroom and flight training will take place at CAE's Phoenix training facility. The goal of the program is to have candidates qualified and prepared to apply for positions with planned program partners such as XOJET Aviation or Jet Linx, to gain the flying experience necessary to be a competitive First Officer candidate at Southwest.

#### Destination 225° University Pathway

The University Pathway is designed for collegiate aviators who attend a Southwest partner university or complete a Southwest Campus Reach Internship. Southwest is working to partner with four universities to offer this transition training: Arizona State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, University of Nebraska Omaha, and the University of Oklahoma. Our planned University Pathway corporate flying partners include XOJET Aviation, Jet Linx, and iAero Group's Swift Air.

#### Destination 225° Military Pathway

The Military Pathway bridges the gap for active military pilots who do not yet meet the minimums to start their career as an airline pilot. If an individual has previous rotor/powerlift experience as a military pilot, this pathway will develop the skills and experience necessary for fixed-wing airline operations. Southwest is proud to offer this transition training through a planned partnership with Bell Murray Aviation, an FAA 142 Training Center, which is dedicated to exploring training opportunities in all areas of aerospace, including individual pilot training, corporate, and military aviation operations. The planned corporate partners offering the opportunity to build the necessary flying experience are iAero Group's Swift Air, Jet Linx, and XOJET Aviation.

#### Destination 225° Employee Pathway

Southwest is known for incredible Employees, and, in a planned partnership with CAE and US Aviation Academy, Southwest Employees will be able to also apply for the Employee Pathway to pursue a career as a professional Pilot.

"We are fortunate to attract top candidates to fill our Pilot positions at Southwest but recognize that for many, the barriers to entering this career field can be prohibitive," said Julie Weber, Vice President and Chief People Officer. "Our purpose is to connect people to what's important in their lives. Therefore, it's exciting to introduce Destination 225° and provide defined pathways for aspiring aviators who dream of a career at Southwest Airlines."

For more information on the program, please visit: <http://careers.southwestair.com/D225>.

### ABOUT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

In its 49th year of service, Dallas-based [Southwest Airlines Co.](#) (NYSE: LUV) continues to differentiate itself from other air carriers with exemplary Customer Service delivered by more than 59,000 Employees to a Customer base topping 130 million passengers annually. Southwest became the nation's largest domestic air carrier in 2003 and maintains that ranking based on the U.S. Department of Transportation's most recent reporting of domestic originating passengers boarded. In peak travel seasons, Southwest operates more than 4,000 weekday departures among a network of 101 destinations in the United States and 10 additional countries.

Southwest coined [Transfarency](#)<sup>®</sup> to describe its purposed philosophy of treating Customers honestly and fairly, and low fares actually staying low. Southwest is the only major U.S. airline to offer bags fly free<sup>®</sup> to everyone (first and second checked pieces of luggage, size and weight limits apply, some carriers offer free checked bags on select routes or in qualified circumstances), and there are no change fees, though fare differences might apply.

Southwest is one of the most honored airlines in the world, known for a triple bottom line approach that contributes to the carrier's performance and productivity, the importance of its People and the communities they serve, and an overall commitment to efficiency and the planet. Learn more about how the carrier gives back to communities across the world by visiting [Southwest.com/citizenship](http://Southwest.com/citizenship).

Book Southwest Airlines' low fares online at [Southwest Airlines](#) or by phone at 800-I-FLY-SWA.

SOURCE Southwest Airlines Co.

### ABOUT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

[Southwest Airlines Co.](#) operates one of the world's most admired and awarded airlines, offering its one-of-a-kind value and Hospitality at 121 airports across 12 countries. Southwest took flight in 1971 to democratize the sky through friendly, reliable, and low-cost air travel and now carries more air travelers flying nonstop within the United States than any other airline(fn. 1). By empowering its more than 73,000(fn. 2) People to deliver unparalleled Hospitality, the maverick airline cherishes a passionate loyalty among more than 134 million Customers carried in 2025. Southwest leverages a unique legacy and mission to serve communities around the world including harnessing the power of its People and Purpose to put communities at the Heart of its success. Learn more by visiting [Southwest.com/citizenship](http://Southwest.com/citizenship).

1. Based on U.S. Dept. of Transportation quarterly Airline Origin & Destination Survey as of Q4 2025
2. Fulltime-equivalent active Employees as of March 31, 2026

Media Contacts:

Visit the Southwest Newsroom at [swamedia.com](http://swamedia.com) for multimedia assets and other Company news.

###