



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

September 23, 2023

### ***Girls in Aviation Day***

The United States is a global leader in aviation and aerospace, and California is home to some of the best aviation schools in the nation. Our state joins communities across the country and beyond to celebrate Girls in Aviation Day, recognizing the central contributions of women to aviation and encouraging the next generation of women and girls interested in this field to let their dreams soar.

Women are responsible for many major milestones in the origins of aviation, including Blanche Stuart Scott, the first woman to fly in the U.S. in 1910, and Harriet Quimby, who in 1911 became the first woman to earn a pilot certificate and fly across the English Channel. Other trailblazers include Bessie Coleman, who was the first African American and first Native American woman to hold a pilot license in 1921, and Amelia Earhart, whose solo flight across the Atlantic in 1932 captured the world's attention.

Other aviation leaders include Helen Richey, who became the first woman pilot hired to fly for a commercial airline in the U.S. in 1934, and Jeana Yeager, who co-piloted the first non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world in 1986. Astronaut Dr. Sally Ride, born in Encino, California, became the first American woman to travel to space in 1983, while Astronaut Eileen Collins became the first female Space Shuttle Pilot in 1995 and the first female Space Shuttle Commander in 1999.

Despite these many accomplishments, women in aviation continue to face prejudice and barriers, and are radically underrepresented in technical and leadership roles while they are overrepresented in lower-paying aviation positions. According to a 2023 report by Pilot Institute, women account for just 9.57 percent of the total number of pilots in America, and the percentage of women in aviation maintenance fields is even less. But I have faith in the girls of today, who stand on the shoulders of the women aviators who came before them and are poised to change an entire industry that needs their skills, bravery, and innovation.

Women in Aviation International (WAI) has more than 16,000 active members in over 100 countries, members in every U.S. state, and local chapters throughout the world. Members include professional pilots, military personnel, air traffic controllers, astronauts, engineers, business professionals, scientists, aircraft manufacturers, maintenance technicians, teachers, professors, students, and civil servants who are committed to strengthening the aviation and aerospace industries for women and girls.

I encourage all Californians to support and participate in Girls in Aviation Day events being held nationwide on September 23, 2023, to encourage women and girls who are interested in aviation and aerospace to follow their hearts and pursue opportunities to enter, succeed in, and one day lead in aviation and aerospace careers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom