

PRESERVE. INSPIRE. EDUCATE.

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



OCT 1, 2024 – SEPT 30, 2025

# LEADERSHIP

## A NOTE FROM THE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT & CEO

As I close out my first full year as President and CEO, I remain grateful for the trust and support that continue to propel the Museum of Aviation Foundation forward. FY25 has been a year of steady progress as we strengthen our mission and expand our role in a rapidly evolving, technology-focused Middle Georgia. Guided by the long-range 2049 vision, we are positioning the Museum as a cornerstone of the Middle Georgia Innovation Corridor and aligning our work with statewide assets to better serve both our community and the state of Georgia.

Partnerships remain at the heart of our momentum. We continue to strengthen our relationship with Robins Air Force Base, deepen our collaboration with our host, the City of Warner Robins, and expand connections across Middle Georgia and the State, reinforcing the Museum as a place where innovation, education, and community intersect.

A major highlight this year has been the development of the new GEAR Lab: Georgia Engineering, AI & Robotics. Renovation is underway, equipment has been ordered, and we look forward to a spring 2026 grand opening. This state-of-the-art laboratory will feature advanced workstations and immersive pathways in robotics, engineering, coding, XR, and artificial intelligence.

The GEAR Lab will serve as the home base for a program designed to reach far beyond our walls. Through GEAR on the Go, we will deliver transformative learning experiences across the region, creating opportunities where legacy inspires innovation for students and educators throughout Middle Georgia.

Thank you for your continued generosity and commitment. Together, we are preserving history, inspiring future generations, and building a museum that reflects the vision and promise of Middle Georgia's future.

  
**Dan Rhoades**  
President & CEO  
Museum of Aviation  
Foundation



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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## Our Mission

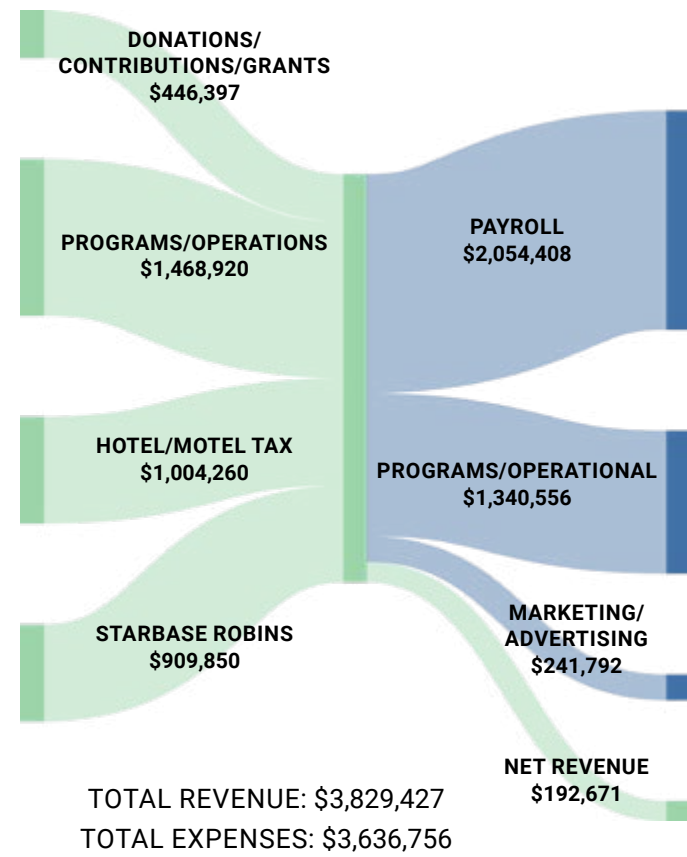
*To inspire and educate by preserving the heritage of the United States Air Force through public engagement and a superior visitor experience.*

## Our Vision

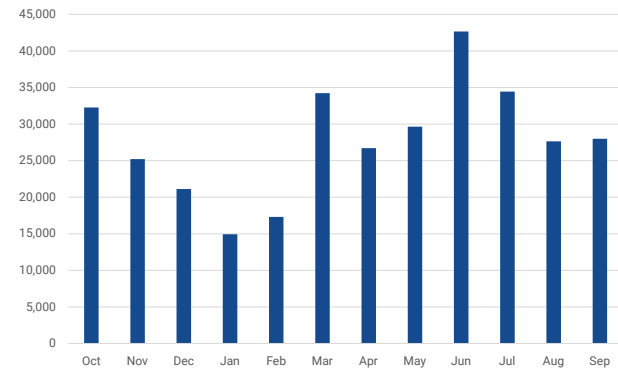
To be the most visited aviation Museum in the Southeastern U.S.

# METRICS

In the FY 2025 the Museum of Aviation welcomed over 334,000 visitors. Our educational programs, including the National STEM Academy and STARBASE Robins, served nearly 46,800 participants as we continue to promote STEM learning and innovation. Additionally, with almost 300 events hosting 48,856 guests, community engagement continues to be a priority. Our exceptional ratings- 4.8 stars on TripAdvisor, 4.9 stars on Google, 4.9 stars on Sawyer, a 91% rating on Charity Navigator, and a 100% Platinum Transparency Rating on Candid- underscore our dedication to providing an outstanding visitor experience and maintaining community trust.

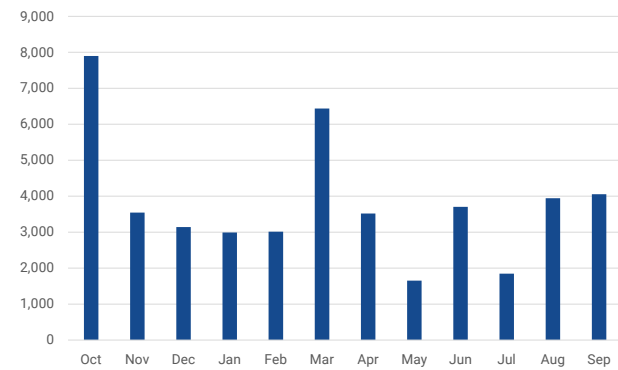


## VISITATION



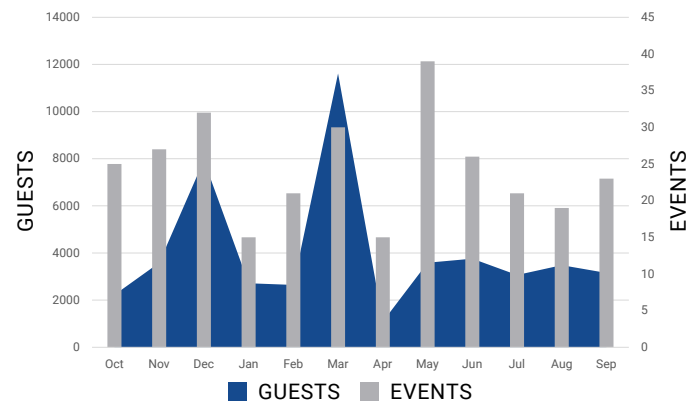
VISITATION TOTAL: 334,140

## EDUCATION



EDUCATION TOTAL: 45,748

## EVENTS



EVENT GUEST TOTAL: 48,856



# PRESERVE



## IDENTIFY, ACQUIRE, AND MAINTAIN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT FOCAL POINTS OF AIR FORCE AND AVIATION HISTORY.

The Museum of Aviation expanded its collection and preserved key historical artifacts throughout FY 2025. These additions enhance the depth and authenticity of the Museum’s exhibits, allowing visitors to engage more fully with the stories, innovations, and individuals that have shaped military aviation across generations.

### New Acquisitions:

- A World War II “sweetheart pillow” from Robins AFB.
- A uniform from the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater of WWII.
- Photographs documenting early medical practices at Robins Field.
- JSTARS memorabilia to support the museum’s recent E-8C aircraft acquisition.

### Preservation Highlights:

- Three original World War II banners created by the graphics department at Camp Wheeler, a former training ground in Middle Georgia, have been preserved. The banners received professional paper conservation treatment to address creases and are now displayed in archival-grade glass and mounting.

### Exhibit Updates:

- The museum’s art gallery has been updated with a new exhibit that highlights the history of Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) missions.
- Photo murals have been added to the hallways leading to the Scott Auditorium. The photos depict a range of USAF Airmen and aircraft and specifically highlight RAFB missions.



### ABOVE ALL

Photos from early Robins Field showing airmen activities and training.



### LEFT

A WW2, AAF uniform coat, worn by someone that served in the China Burma India theater.

## LEGACY OF THE HH-60G PAVE HAWK



Derived from the Army’s UH-60 Black Hawk, the Sikorsky HH-60G Pave Hawk was the cornerstone of the Air Force’s CSAR capability for almost three decades. Designed to recover personnel from hostile environments, the Pave Hawk is equipped with an in-flight refueling probe, advanced avionics, and defensive systems. Its specialized crew of two pilots and two special mission aviators, alongside pararescuemen, performed life-saving operations in diverse and demanding conditions.



The 920th RQW’s 301st and 305th Rescue Squadrons logged a combined total of over 32,600 flight hours and saved more than 5,000 lives. Their missions spanned major U.S. contingency operations, including Provide Comfort II, Southern and Northern Watch, Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

Beyond combat zones, the HH-60G played a critical role in humanitarian aid. During Hurricane Katrina in 2005, 920th RQW crews rescued 1,043 people from the flooded city of New Orleans. The wing also conducted challenging long-range civilian rescues, including a 2017 mission 500 nautical miles at sea that earned them Germany’s highest award for lifesaving at sea, and a 2023 medical evacuation from a cruise ship over 350 miles off the coast.

A distinctive “mustache” painted on the nose of many Pave Hawks became an unofficial symbol of the rescue community, a tradition dating back to the Vietnam-era HH-3E Jolly Green Giant. This emblem of esprit de corps even made its way to Hollywood, with four HH-60Gs featured in the 1998 film Armageddon.

As the HH-60G retires, its legacy of valor and service continues to guide the mission, paving the way for the next generation of rescue aircraft, the HH-60W Jolly Green II.

In April 2025, the Museum of Aviation welcomed a significant piece of combat search and rescue (CSAR) history with the arrival of an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter, tail number 90-26238. This aircraft was formerly operated by the 920th Rescue Wing (RQW) and marks a tribute to the wing’s nearly 30-year legacy of global rescue missions as they transition to the new HH-60W Jolly Green II.

The arrival event on April 9-10, 2025, was attended by museum staff, Robins AFB leadership, and local city officials. A key focus was honoring the Airmen who flew the aircraft. Program staff from Robins AFB, AFRC Historians, and a Combat Artist were present to conduct filmed oral history interviews and create artwork, preserving the stories of its service. Museum Curator Arthur Sullivan and Collections Manager Erin Tapp accessioned artifacts and archival documents related to this tail number’s deployment to Afghanistan.

# INSPIRE

**INSPIRE ALL VISITORS, MILITARY AND CIVILIAN, THROUGH HISTORICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND PATRIOTIC EXPERIENCES DESIGNED TO IGNITE THE IMAGINATION.**

This fiscal year, the Museum of Aviation continued to inspire our community through meaningful events, gatherings, and commemorations that brought people together in powerful ways. A total of 48,856 guests participated in 293 events, reflecting the Museum’s growing role as a hub for connection, celebration, and learning. Among these events, 120 retirements and promotions were held—an honor that underscores the Museum’s deep ties to our military community and its commitment to recognizing those who serve.

The Foundation Development Team had a record-setting year. All made possible by our incredible supporters and community champions. The generosity and enthusiasm of our community partners and supporters powered every event and strengthened the Museum of Aviation Foundation’s impact. Over 650 runners took part in our Run for Aviation Marathon; over 600 guests gathered at the 39th Annual Auction and Taste of Local Cuisine, and our two signature events: The Brig Gen Robert L. Scott, Jr. Golf Tournament and the Team Robins Challenge earned top remarks and welcomed the largest number of attendees, surpassing previous years numbers and expanding our circle of support.

On May 8, we hosted the sixth program in our Heritage Series, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the

Battle of Koh Tang, the final official battle of the Vietnam Era. Veterans Dan Hoffman and Fred Morris shared deeply personal reflections on the Mayaguez rescue operation, recounting the intense 14-hour combat that left lasting scars even five decades later. Their stories, alongside insights from former U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia Kenneth Quinn, honored the bravery, loss, and enduring legacy of those involved. The program served as a solemn reminder of the human cost of conflict and the importance of preserving these histories for future generations.

The Museum’s spirit was on full display during Family Aviation Day, held this past March, which welcomed more than 6,000 attendees. Families experienced rare, up-close access to aircraft, heard firsthand stories from aviators, and engaged with mission partners from Robins Air Force Base. Highlights included helicopter landings, performances by students from David Perdue Primary and Northside Elementary, working dog demonstrations by the 78th Security Forces Squadron, and a stirring C-130 flyover that followed the children’s rendition of the National Anthem. The event showcased the joy, curiosity, and wonder that define aviation—and reminded us why inspiring the next generation remains at the heart of our mission.

**RIGHT**

Golfers preparing for The NSA Benefit & Team Robins Challenge Golf Tournament. The annual endeavor is our most important STEM fundraiser – critical for the support of our award-winning programs.



**RIGHT**

Evolution: Motown performing at Century Showcase Theater.



**BELOW**

Attendees bidding on items at our 39th Annual Auction, Raffle, and Taste of Local Cuisine Fundraising Event.



**RIGHT**

Children exploring a static display during Family Aviation Day.





**ABOVE**

Extended Reality (XR) experiences support curious minds and innovation at the National STEM Academy.

**BELOW**

STEM City Expo attendee explores LEGO robotics and 3D printed materials at the National STEM Academy booth.



# EDUCATE

**CREATE AN ENGAGING ENVIRONMENT FOR LIFE-LONG LEARNERS WHILE PROVIDING A STEM-FOCUSED FOUNDATION FOR OUR FUTURE LEADERS AND WORKFORCE.**

The Education division at the Museum of Aviation continued to expand its impact in FY 2025 with 667 innovative programs, technology upgrades, and increased community engagement. Mission Quest received significant enhancements this year, including upgraded teambuilding components and the introduction of the All-Abilities Mission Quest Flight Simulator, a step toward making aviation-based learning accessible to all students. Advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, extended reality, and expanded robotics capabilities further the Museum's commitment to preparing students for an evolving STEM landscape.

The National STEM Academy introduced new equipment and resources to support hands-on learning, including the addition of 27 3D printers and 30 premier STEM kits in the Lending Library. Educators engaged in professional development through workshops such as the Middle Georgia Robotics Institute, which trained over 40 educators within the region. Students experienced a wide variety of programs ranging from Biomimicry Engineering Workshops to the High School Aviation Challenge.

The Museum of Aviation's 2025 Summer Camps gave students an immersive season of exploration, creativity, and hands-on discovery. Campers from Kindergarten through 11th grade engaged in dynamic weeks themed around innovation, aviation, chemistry, cyber security, robotics, space exploration, engineering, and Earth science. Across the summer, students experimented with energy, force, electricity, states of matter, and chemical reactions as they mapped the Scientific Method. From building circuits, constructing artificial hands, and performing forensic techniques with

**RIGHT**

The National STEM Academy expands its advanced technologies to include hexapod robotics to inspire and empower learning.



**ABOVE**

Mission Quest students collaborate to take flight in immersive flight simulators.

**LEFT**

Grades 6-8 National STEM Academy students investigate how light interacts with matter using advanced technology.

support from the Warner Robins Police Department, each session offered learning and real-world application.

Older students expanded their skills through advanced aviation and technology experiences. Mission Quest flight simulations placed campers in the pilot's seat as they trained on small-engine aircraft, graduated to jets, plotted flight plans, and completed multi-stage missions—some modeled after combat scenarios. Robotics and coding challenges strengthened problem-solving and teamwork, whether building Mars Rovers with Lego Spike Primes, programming Arduino systems, or designing 3D-printed creations. Additional highlights included virtual reality missions to planets, Minecraft engineering challenges, biomimicry-inspired builds, and hands-on activities exploring weather, ecosystems, and planetary science. Supported generously by the W. Mansfield Jennings, Jr. Charitable Trust and Flint EMC, the summer program empowered students to deepen their understanding of STEM fields while igniting imagination and confidence for the future.

Education programs saw continued growth in participation and outreach. Between Homeschool and STEM Lab classes, 28 sessions were offered through December, and 53 teachers registered for upcoming educator workshops. The STEM Ambassador program remained strong with six active ambassadors and two new inductees from Peach and Crawford Counties. Additional initiatives, such as hydroponics and drone-based lessons in Precision Agriculture, expanded cross-disciplinary learning opportunities for students throughout the region.

FY 2025 was also a successful year for grant acquisition and financial support. The education team submitted 46 grant and sponsorship requests and received 29 awards totaling \$273,852. These funds enabled increased access to STEM programming, supported new technologies, and helped reach more students through both on-site and outreach experiences.

# DONORS

The Museum of Aviation Foundation is sustained by the generosity of philanthropic individuals, businesses, and foundations who make our mission possible, preserving history, inspiring curiosity, and educating future generations of leaders. Through your commitment, the stories of aviation and military service continue to be shared in meaningful and engaging ways.

With hearts full of gratitude, we thank each and every donor who supported the Museum of Aviation Foundation during the 2025 Fiscal Year (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025). Your gifts are more than contributions, they are meaningful investments in the stories we protect, the programs we provide, and the experiences we create for our community and for visitors from around the world.

We are deeply grateful for these vital commitments to the Museum of Aviation. *A special thank you is extended to the City of Warner Robins for its generous support of the Museum through the Hotel Motel Excise Tax.*

To all of the many supporters, volunteers and community partners of the Museum: thank you for believing in this work, standing with us, and helping us carry this mission forward. Your dedication strengthens our ability to serve as a place of remembrance, discovery, and inspiration. Together, we ensure that the legacy of aviation and service endures and continues to inspire all who walk through our doors.

## LEGACY SOCIETY

The Museum of Aviation Foundation Legacy Society honors our most devoted champions. These individuals whose unwavering commitment of time, talent, expertise, and philanthropic support has profoundly advanced our mission. Through their leadership and generosity, they have helped preserve aviation heritage, inspire future generations, and strengthen the foundation's lasting impact. These distinguished supporters shape both our history and our future, and we are deeply grateful for their enduring dedication and belief in our mission.

Pat Bartness  
 Malcom Burgess  
 Senator Saxby Chamblis  
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 Lisa Fruge-Cirilli  
 Maj. Gen. (Ret) Rick Goddard  
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 Macon Coca-Cola Bottling Company  
 McAlister's Deli  
 Nichols, Cauley & Associates  
 On Guard Pest Control  
 Robins AFB STEM Outreach Program Office  
 Sonny's BBQ, Warner Robins  
 Robins Regional Chamber  
 Sushi Thai

*...and others that have poured time, talent and treasure into the Museum of Aviation.*



# WHERE LEGACY INSPIRES INNOVATION

## VISIT US

Take your family on a journey through time and technology at the Museum of Aviation. Explore real aircraft, experience hands-on STEM programs, and enjoy year-round events that bring generations together.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Special events, programs, and family-friendly activities you won't want to miss!



## NSA PROGRAMS

Where exploration and innovation collide with hands-on experiences PreK to adult



## FAMILY & GROUP PROGRAMS

Explore real aircraft on our Heritage Tours, or take flight in our Mission Quest experience.

## SUPPORT THE MUSEUM TODAY

Donate, become a Partner in P.I.E. member, volunteer, and help us inspire future generations!



# BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

By becoming a Partner in P.I.E. Member, you're not just donating — you're *investing in innovation, fueling education, and helping keep history alive* for generations to come.

## "P.I.E." stands for the core of our mission:

- Preserve the rich heritage of aviation and aerospace.
- Inspire curiosity and patriotism in all ages.
- Educate through hands-on STEM and history programming.

Becoming a Member will give you exclusive discounts, special gifts, and the opportunity to have your name highlighted on our Annual Report!

Scan the QR code to find out more and to become a Partner in P.I.E. Member today!

