



Vermont
Works for
Women

Press and Photo Release

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Please see attached photos.

Rosie's Girls Take Flight

VT Flight Academy opens the skies – and a world of opportunity – to 25 middle school girls

South Burlington, VT – Two dozen middle school girls took to the skies above Burlington today, experiencing firsthand that the sky is indeed the limit on their hopes and dreams. As part of Vermont Works for Women's Rosie's Girls summer program, and thanks to a new partnership with the Vermont Flight Academy, the girls got a taste of the exhilaration of flying while also learning about a range of aviation careers -- from air traffic control to piloting to aircraft maintenance.

The campers enjoyed a tour of the Burlington Airport – including a behind the scenes look at JetBlue -- but their biggest thrill came from going up in the air. Among the girls' excited reactions were comments like "This was beyond insane!" and "I want to get my pilot's license!"

Kelly Walsh, Girls Program Coordinator at Vermont Works for Women, stated that today's aviation day perfectly reflects the goals of Rosie's Girls. "Our singular aim is not for participants to decide that they want to become pilots ... or carpenters or electricians. It is our intention to expose the girls to these technical activities to help them develop the capacities and confidence that will enable them to move about in the world with self-confidence and eagerness, with exposure to a broad range of career options, and with a sense that they can be or do whatever they wish."

"We thank the Vermont Flight Academy for opening the skies to Rosie's Girls," said Tiff Bluemle, Executive Director of Vermont Works for Women, the Winooski-based nonprofit that coordinates the Rosie's Girls summer program in both Essex Junction and Barre. "We are grateful to Sandra Bolger and her staff at the Academy – as well as today's volunteer pilots, tour guides and instructors -- for not only providing this unique opportunity but also for serving as great examples of women in aviation."

Rosie's Girls is a program for young adolescent girls designed to build self-esteem, perseverance and leadership through learning and applying basic skills in the skilled trades (e.g. carpentry, welding, electrical wiring, bike repair, and auto repair). Through these nontraditional activities, young girls are challenged to develop a broader sense of themselves and their capabilities, learn independence, and expand their math and science skills through concrete applications.

(more)

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Celebrating its 11th year, the three-week Rosie's Girls® day camp helps middle school girls see that they can do anything – wield a blowtorch, master a chop saw, conquer a ropes course, learn about women in history, build a stonewall, and make new friends. VWW runs two Rosie's Girls programs (in Essex at the Center for Technology – Essex and at the Barre Tech Center in Barre); other Rosie's Girls programs are replicated in four other Vermont communities as well as nationally.

Rosie's Girls is a program of Vermont Works for Women whose mission is to help women and girls recognize their potential and explore, pursue and excel in work that leads to economic independence. For more information, contact Lucy Comstock-Gay at 802-655-8900, ext. 110, 603-731-6041 (cell) or lcomstockgay@vtworkforwomen.org. Additional information can be found at www.vtworksforwomen.org or www.rosiesgirls.org.

Photo Caption #1: Lucy Sopchak, 12, of Essex Junction shares her enthusiasm after her flight by exclaiming, "I want to get my pilot's license!"

Photo Caption #2: A group of campers enjoyed exploring the insides of an old Air Force plane inside the Vermont Flight Academy hangar.

Photo Caption #3: Under the watchful eye of their pilot and Sandra Bolger, Executive Director of the Vermont Flight Academy, several Rosie's Girls exit the plane after an exhilarating ride.

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