

# Col. James L. Graham Jr. Memorial Scholarship

## Colonel James L. Graham Jr. Memorial Aviation Scholarship

The annual Colonel James L. Graham Jr. Memorial Aviation Scholarship, in the amount of \$12,000 (twelve thousand dollars), will be awarded for the first time in 2018.

Jim was a native Virginian, born in Radford, Virginia in 1942. He graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1964 with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Science, and served the Air Force all over the world –including Vietnam – retiring in 1988. He also earned a Master of Science in Industrial Engineering from the University of Southern California. He had a distinguished career working with NASA and the Space Station, which culminated at the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization during the Reagan Administration. In high school, Jim was an Eagle Scout, played football, and was in the band. Some of his lifelong interests were photography, country music, history, genealogy, hiking, NASCAR, and his Mac computer. He was devoted to volunteering, whether it was the Wounded Warriors program or the animal shelter.

His first introduction to airplanes came at the age of three when he went with his parents to watch a long line of Navy warplanes fly overhead at the airfield in Roanoke, Virginia. He took his first flight in a single-engine plane at the age of five and never forgot it. Although not being able to fly for the Air Force due to color blindness, he never gave up his dream, and after many years of waiting, he got his private pilot's license in 1998. He then purchased and owned a Tecnam Sierra with two good friends. After spending a morning flying Young Eagles at a local airport, he said his dream was to make a difference in the life of a young person, trying to instill the same love and dedication and enthusiasm he felt about airplanes and flying. Jim was a member of the AOPA and the local EAA chapter. Unfortunately, a cancer diagnosis in 2014 ended his flying career and that dream.

Jim's wife, Ann, created the scholarship for applicants who show that same passion for flying and the ambition of obtaining a pilot's certification, allowing them to pursue a career as a pilot. The scholarship will be paid directly to a recognized flight school or institution in the name of the awardee.



**Requirements to apply for the scholarship are:**

- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Virginia, be between the ages of at least 16 years old and 20 years old (parent/guardian approval if under the age of 18 years).
- The applicant must obtain an FAA Third Class physical examination and receive his/her medical certificate.
- The applicant must have a valid student pilot certificate with TSA background check; this is not required at the time of application but must be provided prior to being awarded the scholarship.
- The application must be completed and signed, and all supporting documents must be included at submission.
- The applicant must have attained a Grade Point Average of at least 3.0 in the last full year of school.
- The applicant must submit a completed essay of between 300 and 500 words explaining why he/she has a passion to learn to fly, or why he/she wishes to pursue a career in aviation. Applicant may also include any personal compelling reasons why he/she believes he/she is the best candidate for the scholarship award.
- List of volunteer or community work, job experience, club membership and other extracurricular activity.
- Two (2) Letters of Recommendation from a person well-known to the applicant, but not a relative, must be received with the application. Preferably, one of these letters should be from a person in the aviation industry.
- Young Eagles should state when and where they took their Young Eagles flight.
- Complete solo flight or achieve pilot certificate within one year of receiving scholarship.
- Applicant to submit a proposed flight plan including a statement describing how the scholarship would be spent, to include flight training intent through a flight school, name of Certified Flight Instructor (if known), when training will begin and end and proposed frequency of training. The flight plan will be reviewed by the VABA Board (which is comprised of pilots and flight instructors) to ensure it is effective but will not constitute who is awarded the scholarship.

Applications will be evaluated based on academic performance, the written essay, and letters of recommendation.

Application for the scholarship may be made by completing and signing the application form and attaching the required documents (current transcript, two letters of recommendation, an essay, parental/guardian consent, if applicable, medical certificate, proposed flight plan with training intent, and commitment to obtain valid student pilot certificate with TSA background check). Letters of recommendation should be placed in a sealed envelope, with the signature of the person signing the letter across the back sealed flap of the envelope. When complete, mail the application and attachments to arrive no later than October 15, 2018 to:

**Virginia Aviation Business Association**  
**Attn: Graham Memorial Aviation Scholarship**  
**1011 E. Main Street, Suite 400**  
**Richmond, Virginia 23219**

[www.TheVABA.org](http://www.TheVABA.org)

