



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nancy Houghton, Director of External Affairs, Pritzker Military Library,
nhoughton@pritzkermilitarylibrary.org, 312-374-9333

Captain Ed Ellis, JAGC, USN (Ret) Vice President/Corporate Secretary, Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, eellis@navalaviationmuseum.org, 850-453-2389

Top Performing Chicago Public School JROTC Students Attend National Flight Academy and Learn about Chicago's WWII Navy History

CHICAGO, July 18, 2013 -- Nine of Chicago Public Schools' top JROTC Military Academy students attended the Ambition Experimental Pilot Program at National Flight Academy in Pensacola, FL from July 7-12. This special opportunity included a 5-day, all-expense paid trip to Academy's 102,000 sq. ft. four-story structure, designed to simulate an aircraft carrier. Inside this state-of-the-art facility, students participated in a fun, immersive program featuring science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skill-based activities.

"I came to this program with my eyes wide open," said Malcolm Dunn, one of the students who attended the Academy and a senior at Air Force Academy High School. "My dream is to become a commercial pilot and this experience has encouraged me to pursue my dream and that it is possible to achieve it."

A special aspect of the trip was the opportunity for students to learn about Chicago's unique maritime history. During World War II, more than 17,000 pilots trained for aircraft carrier service on the waters of Lake Michigan. A and T Recovery recovers lost aircraft from the lake on behalf of the Navy and the planes are restored at National Naval Aviation Museum, which runs the flight academy.

Students saw first-hand some of these World War II-era aircraft that have been recovered from Lake Michigan and are currently being restored. Restored aircraft reside at O'Hare and Midway airports, and options are being explored to add a third display in a Chicago-area museum or similar accessible location.

"This trip allowed high performing JROTC students from Chicago to participate in a world-class program and learn about Chicago's World War II Naval history," said Kenneth Clarke, president and CEO of Pritzker Military Library.

The trip was made possible thanks to donations and support from A and T Recovery, Warbird Heritage Foundation, The Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, and the Pritzker Military Library. To earn a place at the Academy, each student was asked to complete a military history research paper using the resources at the Pritzker Military Library.

Captain Ed Ellis, Vice-President and Corporate Secretary of the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation stated: "Pensacola, Florida is known as the 'Cradle of Naval Aviation' but Chicago and the Great Lakes were the 'Graduate School' for Naval Aviators on their way to war. I firmly believe that victory in the Pacific was possible because of the training Naval Aviators received in Chicago."

Pritzker Military Library
104 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60603 p 312.374.9333 f 312.374.9314
www.pritzkermilitarylibrary.org



About the Pritzker Military Library

Part military history and information center, part museum – the Library is open to the public with an extensive collection of books, artifacts and rotating exhibits covering many eras and branches of the military. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the Library is a center where citizens and Citizen Soldiers come together to learn from each other, about military history and the role of the Armed Forces in today's society.

About the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation

The Naval Aviation Museum Foundation was formed in 1966 and is responsible for funding the construction of the National Naval Aviation Museum and the National Flight Academy; over 500,000 square feet dedicated to the preservation of the proud history and heritage of Naval Aviation. The Foundation also underwrites the recovery and restoration of the historic aircraft recovered from Lake Michigan. Over 160 Navy aircraft are on display in the Museum along with exhibits, simulators, an IMAX theater, restaurant and gift shop