Cleared for Takeoff! SUNY Schenectady To Train New Wave of Air Traffic Controllers Through Partnership With FAA

Students complete same training as FAA Academy, earn degree in 2 years, work on largest ATC simulator in eastern U.S. and can be placed directly into FAA towers

SCHENECTADY, NY, UNITED STATES, June 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- SUNY Schenectady is one of only two community colleges across the country, and one of six colleges or universities in the nation, certified to offer the Enhanced Air Traffic–Collegiate Training Initiative (AT-CTI) program, through a partnership with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Providing affordable tuition, the latest technology and numerous student supports, the College delivers the same thorough curriculum and advanced technology as the FAA Air Traffic Controller Academy at Oklahoma City.

Amy Parish, Vice President of North America Programs for UFA, Inc., guides Cameron Robson, SUNY Schenectady Aviation Science major, on the new Air Traffic Control simulator at SUNY Schenectady.

The Enhanced AT-CTI program expands opportunities for students to begin their Air Traffic Control careers after two years of education and rigorous training, as they fill critical shortages in the air traffic control industry. This means that students who graduate from the SUNY Schenectady program and pass the FAA-administered Air Traffic Skills Assessment (ATSA) are able to bypass six months of training at the FAA site in Oklahoma City and can start working in an FAA tower. In addition to passing the ATSA, graduates must meet medical and security requirements.

These graduates will be at the forefront of filling the pipeline of Air Traffic Controllers needed across the country, while embarking on rewarding careers in the aviation industry. A typical starting salary for an Air Traffic Controller is $57,000* with a median salary of $144,580**.

As towers are upgraded to new technology, SUNY Schenectady graduates are best positioned to lead the new Air Traffic Controller workforce. They will be learning on the College's new Air Traffic Control simulator, which is the largest and most comprehensive simulator at a community college east of the Mississippi River.

The FAA-approved SUNY Schenectady ATC Simulator features:
• 3 ATC Tower stations for ultra-realistic training
• Seven 75" monitors for 215 degrees of complete tower immersion
• 4 radar TRACON stations for multi-training scenarios and realism
• ATSpeak which reinforces radar, tower, ramp, pilot, and airside driver phraseologies
• 7 Remote Pilot stations for real human-voice responses and pilotage

The new Air Traffic Control simulator at SUNY Schenectady. The College, located in upstate New York, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recently signed an agreement for SUNY Schenectady to become the next school in the Enhanced Air Traffic – Co

The SUNY Schenectady logo.

How do students get started in the Enhanced AT-CTI program? Students need to:
• Obtain or possess a current Class-2 medical certificate issued through an FAA Aeromedical Examiner (AME);
• Be a U.S. citizen verifiable with U.S. passport or U.S. birth certificate;
• Have a record free of any convictions that may disqualify them from obtaining an FAA security clearance;
• Be fluent in English and have no speech impediments, and
• Have one year of full-time work experience (or part-time experience that adds up to one year of full-time work experience).

The entrance exam requirement for employment in FAA control towers is restricted to those 18 to 31 years of age.

SUNY Schenectady is now accepting applications for the Enhanced AT-CTI program at www.sunysccc.edu/apply for the Fall Semester. In addition to the ATC degree program, the SUNY Schenectady Center for Aviation Sciences offers an A.S. degree in Aviation Science: Pilot, and an Aviation Science: Non-Pilot Administration and Management A.A.S. degree.

SUNY Schenectady will be hosting an Aviation Open House on Wednesday, June 25, from 5:30 to 7:00 PM on campus (78 Washington Avenue, Schenectady, N.Y., 12305). Prospective students are invited to attend this exciting event to learn more about the academic programs that are part of the Center for Aviation Sciences, admissions, financial aid, student life, academic/student supports, and tour the new simulators. They are asked to register for the event at sunysccc.edu/atc.

SUNY Schenectady, located in upstate New York, is within four hours of FAA towers in more than 10 major and mid-sized commercial flight markets. Students are able to live affordably and have employment opportunities throughout the Capital Region, while attending SUNY Schenectady. Please contact the Office of Admissions at 518-381-1366 or admissions@sunysccc.edu for more information on how to apply.

*Federal Aviation Administration
**U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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