

# The Rick Mantei Charitable Fund Hosts ‘Fly For Foundations’ Event, Raising Funds for Local Nonprofits

*Rick Mantei’s Fly For Foundations united the community with WWII flights, honored veteran Bruce Cook, and raised support for SC nonprofits.*

COLUMBIA, SC, UNITED STATES, August 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The skies over Columbia were filled with history, excitement, and generosity as [Rick Mantei](#) and [The Mantei Charitable Fund](#) hosted their latest “Fly For Foundations” event at Columbia Metropolitan Airport this past Saturday. Held at Eagle Aviation, the charity fundraiser gave attendees the rare opportunity to ride in authentic World War II-era aircraft while supporting several South Carolina-based nonprofit organizations.



“

Look around—do you see any other planes like these out here? These are cool planes. They trained heroes, and now they’re helping us inspire and support a new generation.”

*Rick Mantei*

Proceeds from the event benefited Sole Stepping, Foodshare South Carolina, Midlands Orphan Relief, Carolina Wildlife Care Center, Home Works of America, and Final Victory Animal Shelter—organizations dedicated to improving the lives of children, families, animals, and the broader community.

The day was made even more special by the presence of 99-year-old WWII veteran Bruce Cook, a former turret gunner who served aboard the legendary B-17 Flying Fortress. Bruce came out to share stories about his

experiences and reflect with attendees.

"I think about the sacrifices that so many people have made for the freedom we have now," Cook said. "For a lot of the guys that were in the service, they don't like to talk about it due to things they went through, but I think people now should know about it."

For host and retired Air Force pilot Colonel Rick Mantei, the event was about more than honoring the past—it was about sparking inspiration for the future.

"Look around—do you see any other planes like these out here? These are cool planes," said Rick Mantei. "They trained heroes, and now they're helping us inspire and support a new generation."

Families, veterans, aviation enthusiasts, and aspiring pilots alike came together to celebrate the joy of flight while giving back to meaningful causes.

The "Fly For Foundations" series continues this fall, with another event planned for September in Blountville, TN. The Rick Mantei Charitable Fund remains committed to using aviation as a vehicle for community impact—preserving history, honoring veterans, and supporting local charities.

Stay tuned for updates on the [next Fly For Foundations event](#).

About The Rick Mantei Charitable Fund



The Rick Mantei Charitable Fund is dedicated to strengthening communities through philanthropy, service, and events that honor veterans, support families, and give back to those in need. By leveraging aviation's unique ability to inspire, the Fund brings people together for causes that truly make a difference.

Rick Mantei

The Rick Mantei Charitable Fund

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