

# Cheetah Learning Honors Kyle Riley, PMP® with Distinguished Cheetah Alum Award for Creative Applications

*Recognized for applying project management principles to engineer a remarkable career transition from corporate PMP® to airline captain.*

PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, March 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Cheetah Learning](#), a global leader in accelerated [project management](#) education, announced today that Kyle Riley, PMP®, has been named a [Distinguished Cheetah Alum](#) in the category of Creative Applications. This honor recognizes alumni who have found innovative and inspiring ways to apply the skills, frameworks, and mindset gained through PMP® certification far beyond the traditional boundaries of project management.

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*Kyle Riley*

Kyle completed Cheetah Learning's accelerated PMP® Boot Camp in April 2011 and went on to serve for over a decade as a project manager in the cable, MSO, and telecommunications industry. During that time, he led three separate provisioning and telephony switch migrations following multiple mergers and acquisitions. But it is what came next that makes Kyle's story extraordinary.

In 2017, facing a job relocation that would not work for his family, Kyle made a bold decision: he would pursue his childhood dream of becoming a professional pilot. But,

that move required an additional 767 flight hours to make the dream a reality. Without a literal Gantt chart in hand, he drew upon the project management skills sharpened through Cheetah



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Learning to map out an 11-month career transition plan. The result was a methodical, milestone-driven journey from corporate project manager to first officer at a regional airline.

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Kyle's path in aviation has been as ambitious and structured as any major corporate project. In 2018, he flew scheduled charter operations in remote Southwest Alaska for more than five months - one of the most demanding operational environments in commercial aviation. Despite a global pandemic disrupting timelines across industries, Kyle leveraged careful planning and fortuitous timing to advance from a regional carrier to a legacy airline in May 2022. Within two years of reaching the major carrier level, he earned an upgrade to captain on the Boeing 757/767 fleet.

The Creative Applications distinction celebrates Cheetah alumni who demonstrate that the value of project management extends well beyond the corporate conference room. Kyle's story is a testament to the transferability of PM thinking - from scoping a career pivot, to managing risk in remote Alaskan airspace, to executing one of the most methodical professional transformations imaginable. His experience also illustrates how PMP certification continues to generate career value long after the exam, with recruiters still reaching out to him today based on his PM credentials.

"Kyle's story is exactly the kind of creative application of PM principles that inspires us," said a spokesperson for Cheetah Learning. "He didn't just use his PMP to climb a corporate ladder - he used it to build an entirely new one. The discipline, planning, and execution thinking he developed through Cheetah Learning gave him the confidence and tools to make a dream a reality."

Beyond his aviation career, Kyle has applied his PMP skills in his personal life, including home renovation projects and service on non-profit boards over the past 15-plus years. He credits daily prioritization - learning to focus on what matters most and resist the pull of minutiae - as one of the most enduring lessons from his Cheetah training.

Although Kyle's day job now takes place at 37,000 feet, he maintains his PMP® certification as a professional safety net and a point of pride. "I put a lot of effort into obtaining it," he noted, "and I know it is a great profession to fall back on, should anything ever prevent me from flying."

Cheetah Learning's Distinguished Alum program recognizes individuals who embody the organization's mission to create faster learners, stronger leaders, and lasting professional impact. Kyle Riley's recognition illustrates that the most creative applications of project management may be the ones no one saw coming.

To learn more about Cheetah Learning's accelerated PMP® programs and Distinguished Alum awards, visit [www.CheetahLearning.com](http://www.CheetahLearning.com).

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