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Air Canada Maintenance welcomes students during Young Women in Aviation Day



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Kicking tires on potential career paths took on a whole new meaning for a group of young women who visited Air Canada's maintenance hangars in Montreal in November. Not only did they get to meet women who work in non-traditional roles at Air Canada, they also got up close and personal with one of our aircraft – including its oversized tires.

The event showcased women in positions across all organizational levels at Air Canada who were eager to share their passion for this exciting business. The goal of the initiative is to give young women who are considering a job in aviation an opportunity to learn about the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) career paths at Air Canada working with some of the most technologically advanced passenger aircraft flying today in aircraft maintenance, engineering, technical writing as well as in Systems Operations Control.

“At Air Canada, we are dedicated to ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in the organization,” said Arielle Meloul-Wechsler, Senior Vice President, People, Culture and Communications at Air Canada.

"It's a wonderful day, filled with strong and successful women from the Maintenance Branch, as well as other areas of the business. We try to make it fun and inviting for the young women and believe our internal talent are quite effective in delivering the message of aviation as an exciting and rewarding career option," said Capucine Michaud, General Manager of Cabin Standards/Services at Air Canada.

Students as young as 15 and all the way through university spent the day at Air Canada's headquarters in Montreal in maintenance Hangar 3, learning firsthand what working in aviation is like, including a visit of Air Canada's newest planes, the Boeing 737 MAX8.

Laurie Breton, who is studying aircraft maintenance at the École nationale d'aérotechnique (a technical college), said the visit to the aircraft was the best part of her day.

"I am a girl who loves to touch everything. I am curious so being able to see first-hand on the ground how things are done was my favourite moment," Breton said.

In her third year at the school, Breton is also starting to look at possible career options after graduation.

"I am looking at all the companies I could apply to for a job eventually in aircraft maintenance," Breton said, adding that Air Canada is right at the top of the list. "I would love to be a part the airline workforce. So this gives me a look at a potential job in the field. The mechanics here seem very well organized. That is my field of study and that's where I want to work. What I saw of the company also interested me. It seems very organized, it's nice planes, ones that are more and more modern that would be pleasant to work on."

Sandrine Renaud is also studying aircraft maintenance at the École nationale d'aérotechnique.

"I wanted to come and see the career opportunities and what it was like (at Air Canada). We did a visit of the museum and a visit of the hangars and workshops on the different kind of jobs," Renaud said.

She was most impressed by the hangars because she was able to see what it would be like working on the aircraft for maintenance.

Stephanie Fiore, an aerospace engineering student at Concordia University who is focusing on aerodynamic and propulsion said the day was really interesting for her.

"I had a chance to speak with Dominique (Bergeron), a pilot, and she has (taken) the same path I want to follow," Fiore said.

Fiore said Bergeron was an engineer before and then became a pilot. The student from Italy has followed a similar path, studying in engineering while also taking lessons for her private pilot license.

Fiore appreciated the chance to meet so many women working in the industry at Air Canada.

"Everyone is really available, and I find it really interesting that they do this to promote aviation for women."

Christina-Maria Katsari is from Greece and studying materials engineering at McGill University and currently working toward a PhD.

"I like the aerospace field in general and I thought it would be nice to come to the largest (airline) company here in Canada,"

Katsari said.

The most interesting part of her day was talking to the pilot in the cockpit of the Boeing 737 MAX8.

“I had never spoken to a pilot of a commercial airplane and I got a chance to talk to her about the differences (between flying) in a country like Canada and (other) countries.”

She said she would like to work on failure analysis in the future. “If something goes wrong with an engine, I would like to be able to find a solution.”

For more information on the event, email the Young Women in Aviation committee at ywia@aircanada.ca



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