



**For more information contact:**  
John Niehaus  
Director of Program Development  
National Association of Flight Instructors  
(269) 355-6500  
[jniehaus@nafinet.org](mailto:jniehaus@nafinet.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **KAITLYN GALLEGOS EARNS NAFI MASTER FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR ACCREDITATION**

**KALAMAZOO, MI — 5/7/2024** The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Kaitlyn Gallegos has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor.

Gallegos' journey in aviation began at age 14 when she enrolled in a local community college private pilot ground school course. With an aced final exam, Gallegos' conviction to pursue a career in aviation was solidified.



Her pursuit of excellence continued with the AOPA AV8RS scholarship, which propelled her into flight training at age 15. She achieved her private pilot certificate at Palomar Airport (KCRQ) at age 17. She enrolled at Southern Utah University (SUU), flying out of Cedar City (KCDC), where she acquired her instrument rating at 18, followed by commercial, CFI, and CFII certificates by age 19. This achievement positioned her as one of 21 female CFIs aged 18-19 in the nation at the time.

Gallegos earned a bachelor's degree in aviation sciences and a master's degree in business administration. She transitioned into a full-time position as a flight instructor for SUU Aviation and became a Gold Seal flight instructor at age 21, a testament to her skill and dedication.

In addition to her instructional duties, Gallegos' leadership within the SUU aviation community was evident when she assumed the role of assistant chief flight instructor at age 21, becoming one of the youngest female chief instructors of a Part 141 flight program in the United States. Her efforts extend

beyond the cockpit, as she actively participates in SUU's Women in Aviation chapter and aviation conferences.

Gallegos' passion for nurturing the next generation of aviators shines through in her teaching philosophy, where she prioritizes the safety and enjoyment of her students above all else. Beyond her aviation pursuits, Gallegos finds solace in the natural beauty of Southern Utah, often exploring its national parks and back country with her dog, June. Ultimately, Gallegos' aspiration is to serve as a beacon of inspiration for the next generation of aviators, particularly girls, encouraging them to pursue excellence and embrace the boundless opportunities within the realm of aviation.

*The **NAFI Master Flight Instructor Accreditation** is earned by aviation educators based upon a system of advanced professional standards and peer review. The accreditation identifies and publicly recognizes those teachers of flight who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to excellence, professional growth, and service to the aviation community. The NAFI Master Instructor accreditation is for two years and may be used to renew an FAA flight instructor certificate. Applicants must have been a CFI for two years and have given 1,000 hours of flight instruction. In addition, candidates must meet and document activity in four NAFI Master Instructor categories (Instructor, Educator, Service to the Aviation Community, and Professional Activity).*

*Members of the **National Association of Flight Instructors** work as independent instructors, at flight schools, universities, FBOs, corporate flight departments and in the military. Since 1967, NAFI and its members, who teach in thirty countries, are dedicated to increasing and maintaining the professionalism of flight instruction. NAFI members influence active pilots daily: students working to become pilots, current pilots training to advance their skills with new ratings or certificates and pilots who seek to improve their skills with recurrent training. NAFI also serves as an advocate with industry and government as a voice for flight instruction. NAFI helps shape the current and future direction of flight training. For more information about NAFI or the NAFI Master Instructor program call **866-806-6156** or visit [www.NAFINet.org](http://www.NAFINet.org).*