



UCM Foundation
Smiser Alumni Center
Warrensburg, MO 64093
Office 660-543-8000
FAX 660-752-7257
giving@ucmo.edu
ucmo.edu/foundation

NEWS RELEASE

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For more information contact:

Traci Via

Office of Alumni Relations and Development

via@ucmo.edu

660-543-8000

UCM Foundation Grant Encourages Young Aviators, STEM Education

WARRENSBURG, Mo. (April 11, 2016) — Boy Scouts and middle school students learned more about aviation and related STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) educational opportunities this past weekend at the University of Central Missouri Max B. Swisher Skyhaven Airport, thanks to a UCM Foundation Opportunity Grant. The grant helped to underwrite costs that allowed hundreds of young adults to experience their first airplane flight and hands-on time with a flight simulator.

“These service projects have great value both to the school children, who become excited when they learn about the airport, see the planes, the hangars and the flight simulator, and to our UCM students, who learn the emotional value of making a difference in the lives of others,” said Tony Monetti, assistant dean of aviation and executive director of the airport.

UCM aviation students have been presenting evening programs throughout the year to local school districts while the Boy Scouts participated in the 2 ½ day event April 8-10. The weekend taught the Scouts about different fields of knowledge and helped them earn the Merit Badge University.

“We couldn’t do these projects without the Foundation’s support,” Monetti said, “and are grateful to the donors whose unrestricted gifts make the Opportunity Grant Program possible.”

Since starting the Opportunity Grant Program three years ago, the Foundation has authorized \$98,583 for innovative ideas that faculty and staff have to improve students’ learning experiences. Among the 14 projects funded this fiscal year are an aerial drone for communications, masculinity sensitivity training, West African drums, a transmedia storytelling lab and a “flipped” classroom.

The UCM Foundation is a nonprofit organization that raises money to benefit UCM and its students. Established in 1979, the foundation procures, maintains and administers philanthropic gifts that advance the university’s mission and help students attain their college goals. Learn more at ucmo.edu/foundation.

To find out more about the project, contact Monetti at 660-543-4969 or tmonetti@ucmo.edu.

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