

# AETC commander presents Duckworth Award to 558th FTS

*By Capt. Ashley Walker, 12th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs / Published March 08, 2013*



**JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO - RANDOLPH, TEXAS --** Gen. Edward Rice Jr., commander of Air Education and Training Command, presented the 2011 Col. Joseph B. Duckworth Annual USAF Instrument award to the 558th Flying Training Squadron here March 8.

The award recognizes an individual or unit who has made the most significant contribution to aerospace instrument flight over the previous year. Submissions usually include new or improved flight instructional methods, use of existing equipment, aircraft instrumentation, and development of equipment.

The 558th developed a flight training program that satisfies

Federal Aviation Association and International Civil Aviation Organization requirements for instrument flight. The evolutionary training program leverages existing joint primary pilot training courseware and extensive use of simulators. The remotely piloted aircraft instrument qualification team was chosen for their efforts in developing the first pilot instrument qualification course for RPA operations.

"When undergraduate RPA training was first developed students were able to use existing T-6 simulators that all undergraduate pilot training students use, but as the number of RPA pilot students increased the simulator time became scarce," said Lt. Col. Scott Cerone, 558th FTS commander.

In 2011 the subject matter experts in the 558th FTS teamed with SimiGon to develop and improve a flying training device, or FTD, that would meet the squadron's training needs. The FTD they developed was not only certified by the FAA as a level five training device, it was built at less than one tenth the cost of a traditional flight simulator.

"Our FTDs cost the Air Force \$270,000 versus a traditional T-6 simulator which has a price tag of \$3 million and it still provides a level of fidelity where traditional flight requirements can be accomplished," said Cerone.

Cerone credits the squadron's expert instructors with the evaluation and operational development of the FTD and its FAA certification.

"The device we developed has capabilities that are almost like a traditional aircraft yet costs less than a simulator," said Chris Schweinsberg, 558th FTS lead civilian simulator instructor.

"This process took more than a year to design and implement with an additional three months of evaluation and

improvements," said Schweinsberg. "Our civilian simulator instructor team continued to work with SimiGon to improve simulated aircraft handling, T-6 flight modeling and avionics, graphics, and hardware improvements."

"We are very fortunate to have a motivated instructor cadre who believe there is always room for improvement," said Schweinsberg of his team who are all former Air Force instructor pilots, who flew aircraft ranging from the F-4s and F-111s, to the MC-130, B-52 and C-17.

"This is a tremendous honor for the squadron and all credit goes to the instructors of the 558th FTS and their dedication to the mission," said Cerone.

"This advancement of instrument training is a testament to the high caliber training that occurs here. Our instructor cadre is innovative and looks for every opportunity to drive forward and push the boundaries of training. We are honored that General Welsh acknowledged the efforts of our instructors."

While presenting the award to the 558th FTS, Rice commented "Job exceedingly well done. You not only represent your squadron, but the wing and AETC well as you continue to produce quality pilots and aviators."



The 558th Flying Training Squadron at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, conducts undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft training and is comprised of three formal courses for officer and enlisted Airmen, plus a military training flight responsible for the oversight and mentoring of non-prior service enlisted students that are fresh out of basic military training. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Rich McFadden)



A student pilot enrolled in Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training at the 558th Flying Training Squadron, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, goes through the pre-flight checklist with an instructor July 10. The pilot was the first student to fly in a new, innovative T-6 Texan II simulator, which uses projects to create a 3-D training environment. The squadron is using 10 of the new simulators to train RPA pilots. EDITOR'S NOTE: The names were withheld for security concerns. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Clinton Atkins)



A student pilot enrolled in Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training at the 558th Flying Training Squadron, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, prepare to taxi prior to takeoff in a new T-6 Texan II simulator July 10. The new setup has dramatically increased the ability to train RPA pilots, and the ingenuity behind the new simulator saves the Air Force millions of dollars. EDITOR'S NOTE: The name were for security concerns. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Clinton Atkins)



The new T-6 Texan II simulator instrument panel uses a single flat panel monitor and software to recreate the look and feel with digital displays and gauges. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Clinton Atkins)



A student pilot enrolled in Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training at the 558th Flying Training Squadron, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, takes off in a new T-6 Texan II simulator July 10. The 558 FTS purchased 10 new simulators for \$3

million, which saved the squadron millions of dollar when compared to a traditional T-6 simulator, which cost \$3 million each. EDITOR'S NOTE: The student pilot's name was withheld due to security concerns. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Clinton Atkins)



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Gen. Edward Rice Jr., Commander of Air Education and Training Command, presents the 2011 Col. Joseph B. Duckworth Annual USAF Instrument award to Lt. Col. Scott Cerone, 558th Flying Training Squadron commander, at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas March 8, 2013. The 558th FTS' remotely piloted aircraft instrument qualification team earned the award for their efforts in developing the first pilot instrument qualification course for RPA operations. The program leverages existing joint primary pilot training courseware and extensive use of simulators. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Josh Rodriguez)

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