

News from the MARSHALL UNIVERSITY Division of AVIATION



2020

Meet Bill Noe, for whom Marshall's School of Aviation is named



Bill Noe started as a pilot for NetJets and worked up to president and COO.

Bill Noe has always been a risk taker. The former standout swimmer for Marshall stepped down after a 23-year career at NetJets, as a pilot with over 10,000 flight hours and culminating with an eight-year stint as the company's president and chief operating officer, and joined Marshall University, his alma mater. He serves as a member of the Marshall University Board of Governors and as executive aviation specialist for the university's new Division of Aviation.

Marshall has recognized his service to the university and his successful career in aviation by naming the flight school the Bill Noe Flight School at Marshall University. The school's new bachelor's degree program will be available in the fall of 2021.

"I feel as if I have come full circle," Noe said. "I got a great education at Marshall, and now I have the opportunity to help not only Appalachian students like me but future aviators from all over fulfill their dreams as I did by working at NetJets."

NetJets, owned by renowned billionaire Warren Buffett, has the largest fleet of private jets in the world.

"Our business was getting people on a jet, taking them where they want to go and having it be a pleasant experience," Noe explained. "It was also about giving them that 'wow' factor. Our customers included some of the most famous and influential people in the world."

The story of how Noe made his way from the deep end of Huntington's Olympic Pool to a spacious office at the NetJets world headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, is compelling. And, like most success stories, it is a study in hard work, determination, passion and fate.

Bill Noe was born in Ashland, Kentucky, and grew up in Huntington. His father, William E. Noe Sr., was a salesman, and his mother, Francis A. Noe, a nurse anesthetist.

"I always loved the water and I loved to compete," Noe explained. "Although it's a team sport, it's all up to the individual as to how well they perform. For me, racing the clock was everything."

After fielding scholarship offers from dozens of colleges across the country, including Ohio State and Florida, he ultimately decided to stay in Huntington and swim for Marshall's charismatic coach, Bob Saunders.

"Bill was one of the most exciting recruits we ever had in our program," Saunders said. "He was being wooed by a lot of big-time colleges, and we were afraid we wouldn't get him. Bill was so versatile that we could use him in nearly any race. He was such an easygoing kid and never caused me any problems. He is certainly one of the greatest swimmers Huntington has ever produced."

"I was very proud to be a collegiate athlete for Marshall University, and I still am," Noe said.

Noe was at a crossroads in 1987. He was a senior at Marshall but was burned out both in the swimming pool and in the classroom. Even though he was just one semester from graduating, he walked away from school and went to work for an industrial contractor.

"The offer came and I thought, 'Why not?' I really had this desire to get out and see the country, and that's what I did. It was a risky move."

As fate would have it, the owner of the company was a pilot who liked to fly in his spare time.

"One day the owner took me up in his plane and that sealed the deal for me," Noe recalled. "I decided before we landed that flying was what I wanted to do with my life."

Noe quit his job and made a beeline for Vero Beach, Florida, where he enrolled in flight school. He rented a rundown apartment near the beach that was filled with cockroaches.

"But that was OK with me," Noe said. "I was flying and absorbing everything I could about aviation. I never looked back."

After completing flight school and earning his pilot's license, Noe accepted a job as an instructor, but his long-term dream was to work for Executive Jet. However, the company (which changed its name to NetJets in 2001) required all its prospective pilots to have a minimum of 2,500 hours of flying time. Undeterred, Noe began building up hours and ultimately landed his dream job in 1993. He flew all across North America before entering the company's international program. In the span of just two years he flew all over the planet, visiting every continent except Australia and Antarctica.

Noe's desire to spend more time with his family became a reality when the company began taking notice of his leadership qualities in 1994. He was smart, hardworking and, much like his father, immensely likable. As a result, the company began grooming him for management positions. He was promoted to chief pilot of the Gulfstream program, which meant he would be spending less time in the air and more time behind a desk. The family then relocated to Hilton Head, South Carolina, when Noe was promoted to

Marshall University **SELECTS CIRRUS**

The Bill Noe Flight School will use the Cirrus SR20 as its initial student training aircraft. The airplanes are built in Duluth, Minnesota, by the Cirrus Design Corporation. The airplane has been in continuous production since 1998 and is now one of the more popular single-engine airplanes.

It is also a near-perfect craft to train student pilots. We want our students to fly airplanes that are safe and will prepare them to fly commercial aircraft.

One feature is the plane's side-stick control yoke that also increases pilot safety and follows current trends in commercial aircraft cockpit design. Along with the yoke, the SR20 uses an advanced avionics (a.k.a. glass cockpit) arrangement, and a center-mounted flight management system keypad that is representative of commercial airplanes students will eventually fly. Along with airbags for the pilot and co-pilot, the airplane has a parachute that provides an extra measure of safety.

In addition to the airplane, the flight school will also purchase a Cirrus SR20 flight simulator. The simulator is an essential component of our training program. Students will learn instrument flight rules (IFR) first using the simulator before practicing in the airplane. The

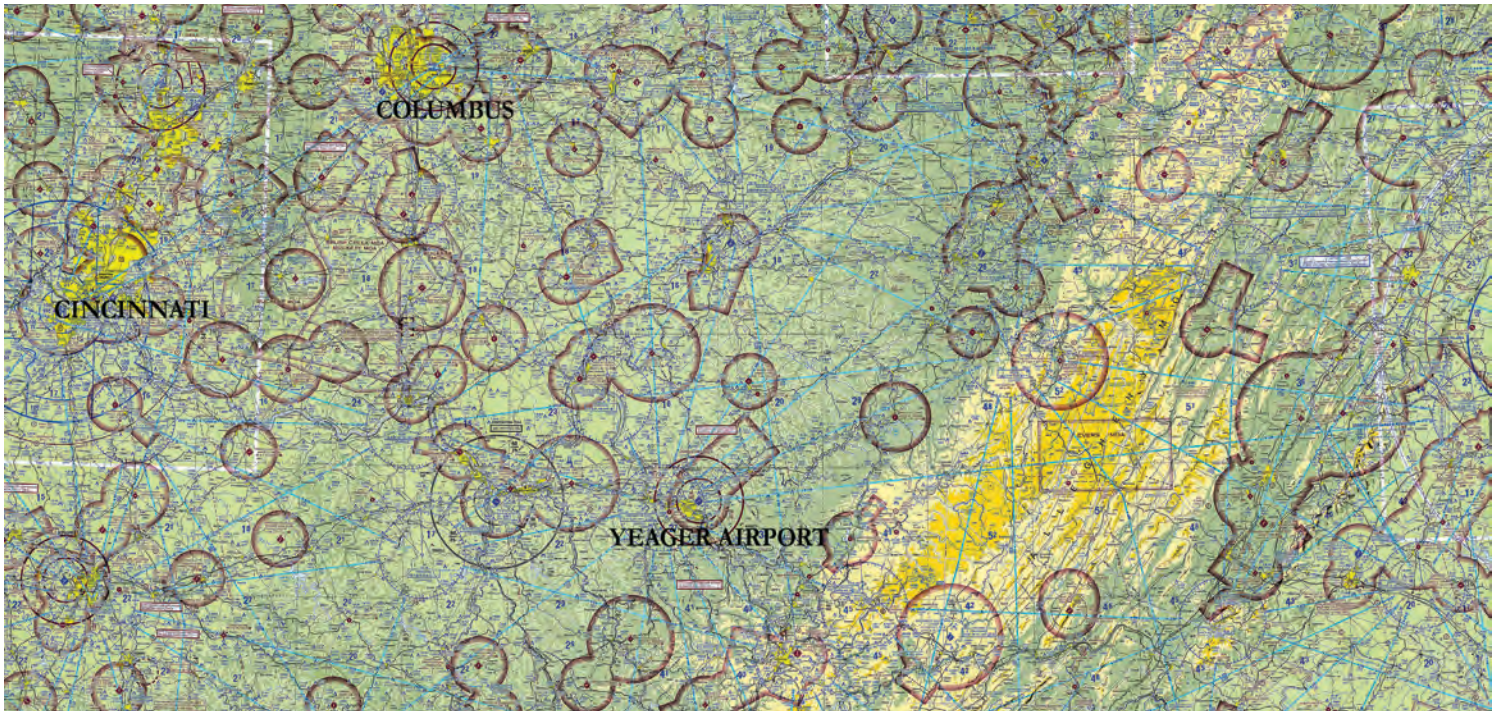


simulator will also allow students to practice different maneuvers in a safe and cost-effective laboratory.

As we continue to build our fleet, we will purchase a multi-engine airplane that students will fly as a part of their required training and an additional single-engine airplane for specialized training.



The **MARSHALL UNIVERSITY**
Division of **AVIATION**



New **CLASSROOM**

The Bill Noe Flight School at Marshall University is preparing to build a flight center and its first hangar at Yeager Airport. Students enrolled in the commercial pilot degree program will complete their flight- and ground-school courses in a new 10,500-square-foot classroom building. The airplanes will be stored in a 12,000-square-foot hangar.

The flight center will have offices for faculty and staff, two large classrooms, a flight training laboratory, a student lounge, and an operations dispatch desk. Students will have easy access to the airport's runway, since the school will be located at the southeast end of the Bravo Taxiway.

Yeager Airport is ideally located in the center of diverse terrain that includes flat land, rolling hills, and mountains. Yeager is also close to

small as well as large airports, including Cincinnati, Columbus, and Pittsburgh. In addition, this part of West Virginia enjoys four distinct but mild seasons. All this is to say that our students will be able to learn to fly in a wide range of conditions, thus better preparing them for work as commercial pilots..

The airport's air traffic control tower is open 24 hours a day all year long and can support hundreds of takeoffs and landings each day.

The map at the top of this page presents the Federal Aviation Administration's map of the Cincinnati Sectional Aeronautical Chart. Yeager Airport is in the center of the area and surrounded by many small, medium, and large airports. Students enrolled in the program will learn to read these maps as they provide essential information for planning a flight.



Medical EXAM

The FAA requires all pilots and student pilots to complete a comprehensive medical exam to ensure good physical and mental health. The first step is to complete a medical history, which you can complete using the MedXPress link at <https://medxpress.faa.gov>. Once you complete the form, you can then schedule an appointment for the exam. Only FAA-certified physicians, known as Aviation Medical Examiners (AMEs), can perform the review. You can find a local examiner at <https://designee.faa.gov/#/designeeLocator>. At your scheduled appointment, the AME will complete your medical examination and the remainder of the FAA application form. If you meet the required medical standards, the AME will issue you a medical certificate.

Several medical conditions may disqualify a person from being a pilot. The medical conditions the FAA lists as potentially disqualifying are:

- Angina pectoris
- Bipolar disease
- Cardiac valve replacement
- Coronary heart disease that has been treated or, if untreated, that has been symptomatic or clinically significant
- Diabetes mellitus requiring hypoglycemic medications
- Disturbance of consciousness without satisfactory explanation of cause
- Epilepsy
- Heart replacement
- Myocardial infarction
- Permanent cardiac pacemaker
- Personality disorder that is severe enough to have repeatedly manifested itself by overt acts
- Psychosis
- Substance abuse
- Substance dependence
- Transient loss of control of nervous system function(s) without satisfactory explanation of cause

If the condition is under control with proper medical treatment and supervision, the FAA may grant medical certification.

Bill Noe Continued.

director of operations of NetJets International. He continued to climb the corporate ladder landing more prestigious titles along the way.

Along the way Noe began acquiring the additional skills needed to succeed in the corporate world. He contacted Marshall and completed his final semester through online courses. He then enrolled in an accelerated finance course for executives at Columbia University.

In 2009, Noe was named president and chief operating officer, which meant he handled the day-to-day operations. Eighty percent of the company's 5,000 employees reported to him.

"People didn't work for me; I worked for them," Noe said. "Our organizational chart was upside down, which put me at the bottom. We were teammates. If you make decisions about what's right for your team, it will pay off in the long run. The first thing you're going to earn is their respect, then their trust, then their loyalty."

Starting out as a pilot and working his way up through the company provided Noe with a unique perspective on how to lead.

"I didn't fly after 2005. It wasn't something I really wanted, but it was something I needed to do to make the business better," he said.

His father's influence was apparent in how Noe interacted with customers and coworkers — he has the rare combination of strength and charm.

"My philosophy over the years has been to be honest, fair and consistent. If you have a hard decision to make, the answer is probably in one of those three little words," Noe said.

Sadly, neither of Noe's parents lived long enough to see him achieve success in the business world. He lost his father in 1997 and his mother in 2003.

It's a long journey from the deep end of the Olympic Pool to the upper echelon of corporate America, but Bill Noe made the trek utilizing a unique set of skills. When he started at NetJets in 1993, the company had 20 planes. Today it has more than 800, with offices around the world. It also boasts an

impeccable safety record. Noe said he is proud to have been a small part of the company's ascent and attributes his own success to his love of his work and a laser-like focus.

One of the many friends Noe made while at Marshall was Brad Smith, a fellow student from Kenova, West Virginia, who also went on to find success in the business world as the CEO of software giant Intuit.

"Bill and I go way back. We were at Marshall together, took martial arts classes together and became fast friends," Smith said. "I always admired Bill because he was constantly improving himself and he had a great deal of courage. He never backed down from anything and was always willing to take on the biggest challenge. What's more, he encouraged those around him to try things they didn't think were possible."

Smith said it doesn't surprise him at all that Noe rose so high in the corporate world.

"Bill is to be admired because he is a self-made man. He has a tremendous work ethic and possesses strong values. It's easy to see why the workers at NetJets admired him because he started out as a pilot and worked his way up through the organization. Because of that, he had empathy for every employee, he valued their contributions to the company and he cared about their well being. And that's what it takes to be a world-class leader."

This article is excerpted and updated from one that appeared in the Winter 2017 issue of Marshall Magazine.

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