

ATEC

OLIVER WYMAN
A MARSH BUSINESS

Pipeline Report & AMTS Directory

A full-page background image showing a male technician in a dark t-shirt and blue overalls working on the engine of a light aircraft. The technician is focused on a component of the engine, with his hands positioned to adjust or inspect it. The aircraft's propeller is visible in the upper left, and the engine's complex machinery, including various pipes and metal parts, is the central focus. The background is slightly blurred, showing the interior of an aircraft hangar.

Pipeline Report & AMTS Directory



OLIVER WYMAN
A MARSH BUSINESS

Photo courtesy of
Portland Community College

Contents

1	About the Report
2	Executive Summary
4	Industry Backdrop
5	The Current Workforce
5	Maintenance Personnel
5	Certificated Mechanics
6	Demographics
6	Employers
6	Supply
8	Demand
10	Aviation Maintenance Technician Schools
10	The AMTS Landscape
10	The Community
10	Demographics
12	Programs and Degrees Offered
12	Enrollment and Capacity
12	Enrollment
13	Barriers to Growth
13	Instructor Workforce
17	Graduate Outcomes
17	Graduates
17	Certifications
19	Testing Capacity
19	Employers
19	Salary and Wages
22	Return on Investment
23	AMTS Directory

About the Report

The Pipeline Report examines the people, schools, and employers that shape the aviation maintenance workforce in the United States. Produced jointly by the Aviation Technician Education Council (ATEC) and Oliver Wyman, the report brings together education, certification, workforce, and industry data to provide a shared evidence base for addressing the technician pipeline. Its findings are intended to help educators, employers, policymakers, and other stakeholders better understand emerging workforce needs and identify opportunities for coordinated action.

ATEC represents aviation maintenance technician schools (AMTS), the organizations that support them, and the employers that hire their graduates. The council works to advance and strengthen technician education through advocacy, research, communications, and opportunities for collaboration across the aviation maintenance community.

Oliver Wyman, a Marsh business, is a global management consulting firm with offices in more than 70 cities across 30 countries. The firm combines industry knowledge with expertise in strategy, operations, risk management, and organizational

transformation. Oliver Wyman Vector supports certification and maintenance programs for aviation clients worldwide.

The report focuses on Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-certificated mechanics holding airframe and/or powerplant ratings; AMTS, also known as part 147 programs or A&P schools, that prepare many of those individuals for aviation maintenance careers; and the employers that rely on their skills.

From April through June 2026, ATEC surveyed A&P schools. Of the 226 schools and additional training locations with independent enrollment that were certificated as of April 2026, 114 responded—a response rate of over 50%. Participating programs are identified in the AMTS directory at the end of this report.

The analysis also draws on information from the National Center for Education Statistics; the FAA Airmen Certification Branch; FAA maintenance school, civil airmen, regional active airmen, and downloadable datasets; Aviation Week Network; the FAA airmen certification database; and Oliver Wyman's proprietary data. Unless otherwise noted, information from these sources reflects data available as of January 1, 2026.

ATEC

OLIVER WYMAN
A MARSH BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The US certificated mechanic population is growing. It's also growing more diverse in its makeup and workforce development pathways—and growing older. This is mostly encouraging news, but it also underscores that the persistent shortage of skilled technical workers is not going away. Rather, it's getting more acute.

Positive developments

First, the good news. The FAA issued a record 11,103 new mechanic certificates in 2025—23.2% more than in 2024 and the highest annual total since the agency began publishing the data. The previous record was 2023's 9,202.

AMTS were the primary driver of the record-setting year. The number of mechanics certificated through the school pathway reached an all-time high of 7,496, increasing by 27% from 2024. A 13% increase in overall AMTS enrollment backed that growth, and the outlook for 2026 is even better, according to respondents to the survey that underpin this report. This despite persistent challenges attracting qualified instructors.

Also showing strong growth: the civilian experience pathway. The number of mechanics qualifying through programs such as apprenticeships increased by 21% in 2025, far exceeding the pathway's average annual growth rate of less than 3% over the previous decade. This acceleration points to greater engagement by employers to gain more control of their workforce pipelines.

Certificates earned based on military experience increased by 5% to 1,375, an encouraging turnaround from the 2025 Report's 14% decline. Still, the figure pales in comparison to the estimated 22,000 service members who leave the military each year with aviation maintenance experience.

Women are slowly helping fill the workforce pipeline. This year's report reveals women reached 3.0% of the certificated mechanic population for the first time (2025 Pipeline Report: 2.9%), continuing a steady but slow year-over-year increase.

Enduring challenges

Among the industry's largest challenges is the aging of its most skilled technical workers. The aviation mechanic population continues to grow older, with 44% over the age of 60 (2025: 41%). The average FAA mechanic is 55 years old (2025: 54). The aging workforce is expected to drive a significant retirement wave, with more than 46,000 mechanics projected to exit the industry over the next decade.

The gap of certificated mechanics in North America's aviation sector is expected to be 9,100 in 2026. This gap is projected to grow throughout the decade due to a combination of retirements and demand for new workers.

Global air passenger traffic is expected to continue its steady growth in the coming years. The International Air Transport Association's most conservative modeling in its most recent long-term-growth outlook shows average annual revenue passenger kilometer growth of 3.1% through 2044. Short-term growth will face macroeconomic headwinds driven by higher fuel prices and the Middle East conflict. This is expected to hold 2026 RPK growth to 3% or less.

What's working, what's ahead

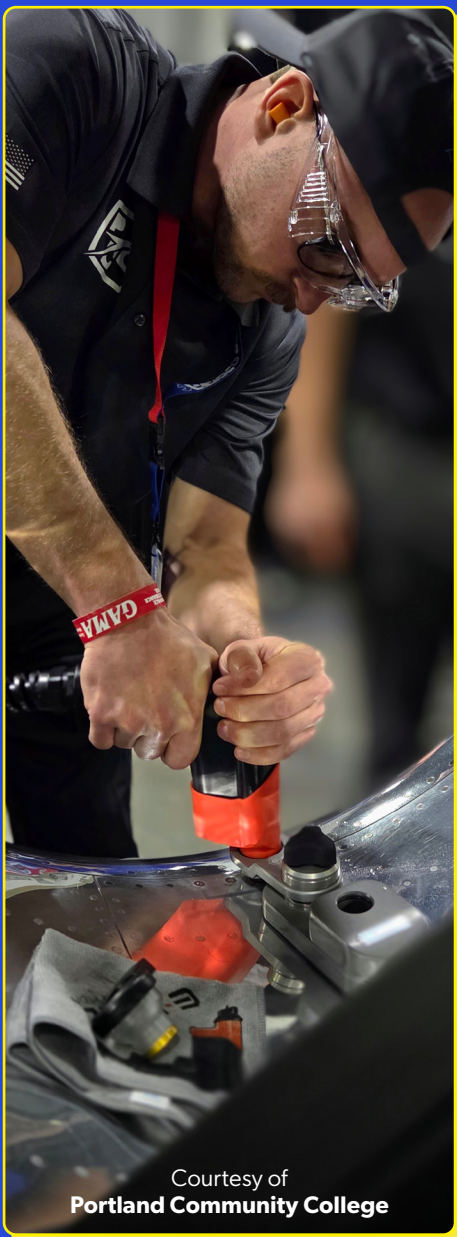
Upward trends in key metrics such as total mechanic certificates issued, AMTS performance, and company-backed development programs show industry is meeting its technical workforce development challenge head on. Continued support of these initiatives remains key.

ATEC is involved in several workforce development initiatives. Chief among them is Choose Aerospace, which provides instruction on the General subject areas of the FAA mechanic Airman Certification Standards in high schools and other non-part 147 settings. The program provides a pathway to part 147 schools for young students interested in aviation careers.

The council also created the ATEC Academy to help experienced mechanics transitioning from industry become much-needed AMTS instructors.

ATEC and its stakeholders will continue to support these workforce development initiatives and press federal officials for more robust grant programs and regulatory reforms aimed at helping close the skilled-worker gap.

A note about this year's Pipeline Report methodology: This year's analysis uses FAA employment data in place of Bureau of Labor Statistics data. It also expands the methodology to include business aviation, general aviation, and applicable military MRO work. The demand data still does not include OEM or civil rotorcraft personnel.



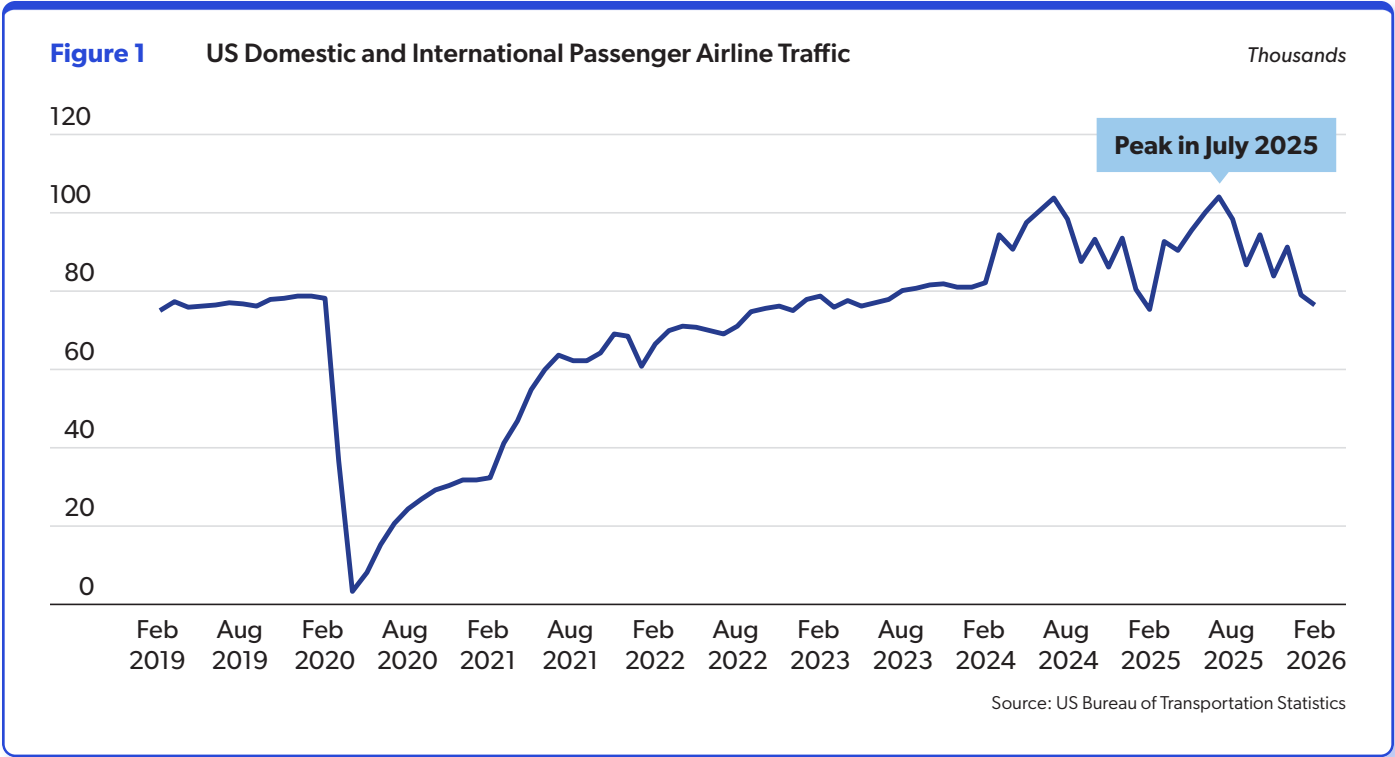
INDUSTRY BACKDROP

Air traffic growth slowed in mid-2026 due to the ramifications of the Middle East crisis, notably higher fuel prices and demand disruption. But even a long stretch of high fuel prices has not quashed global travel demand: Many airlines reported little to no decline in demand in mid-2026, as passengers absorbed rising fares.

The trends underscore that air travel continues to thrive. The International Air Transport Association’s most recent long-term-growth outlook shows three scenarios for the next two decades. The “high” scenario calculates average annual revenue per passenger-kilometer growth of 3.6% through 2044. The “low” scenario comes in at a 3.1% average annual growth rate.

The US market’s greater maturity compared to growing global sectors means its growth averages will be lower—perhaps 2.5-3.0% annually. But that is enough to drive demand for new aircraft and technical personnel.

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, US passenger traffic (as measured in scheduled-service passengers) reached a new high in July 2025 (Figure 1). As the year ended, US airlines were operating 115 more mainline aircraft than they were at the end of 2024.



The North American fleet is projected to increase by about 22% over the next 10 years, according to the [Oliver Wyman Global Fleet and MRO Forecast 2026-2036](#).

Airline maintenance workforces shrank following the 2020 downturn and in many ways are still recovering. Retirements and aviation growth remain major technical workforce demand drivers. Industry is responding with more pipeline development initiatives. New technology, such as artificial intelligence-backed inspection tools, is bolstering productivity.

Workforce pipelines continue to evolve. Companies are developing and often funding direct pathways from technical schools to their shop floors. Apprenticeships are increasingly popular as well.

The old big-airline strategy of hiring technicians from third-party shops and regional partners is out. What’s in: taking increased ownership and control of the talent development pipeline.

THE CURRENT WORKFORCE

Maintenance Personnel

According to Oliver Wyman analysis, the US civil aviation maintenance workforce—including both certificated mechanics and noncertificated technicians—includes more than 410,000 personnel. This includes employees in parts manufacturing and distribution, in-house airline maintenance organizations, and those working in part 145 repair stations.

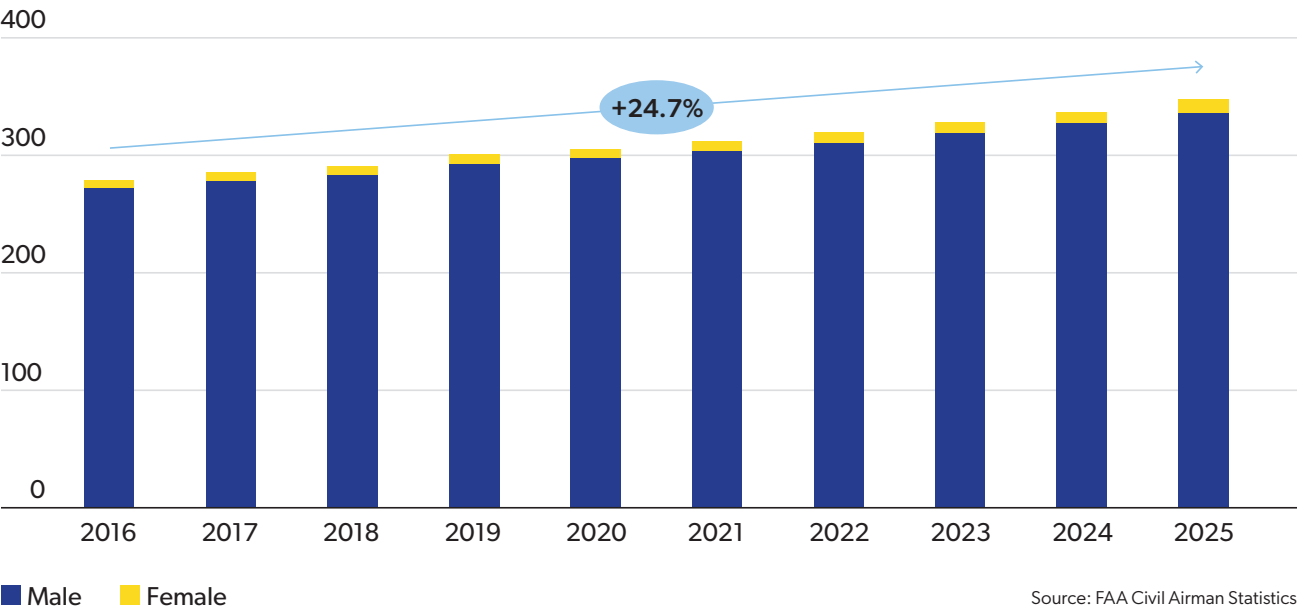
Certificated Mechanics

The FAA airmen certification database lists 348,426 certificated mechanics, an increase of 3.1% from the previous year. Since 2016, the certificated mechanic population has grown by 24.7%, a compound annual growth rate of 2.5% (Figure 2).

Because the FAA database does not distinguish between mechanics who are actively exercising their certificate privileges and those who are not, the certificated population exceeds the number of mechanics currently working in the industry. Oliver Wyman estimates that 152,494 certificated mechanics are actively employed in the aviation industry segments covered by this report.

Figure 2 **Certificated Aviation Mechanics**

Thousands



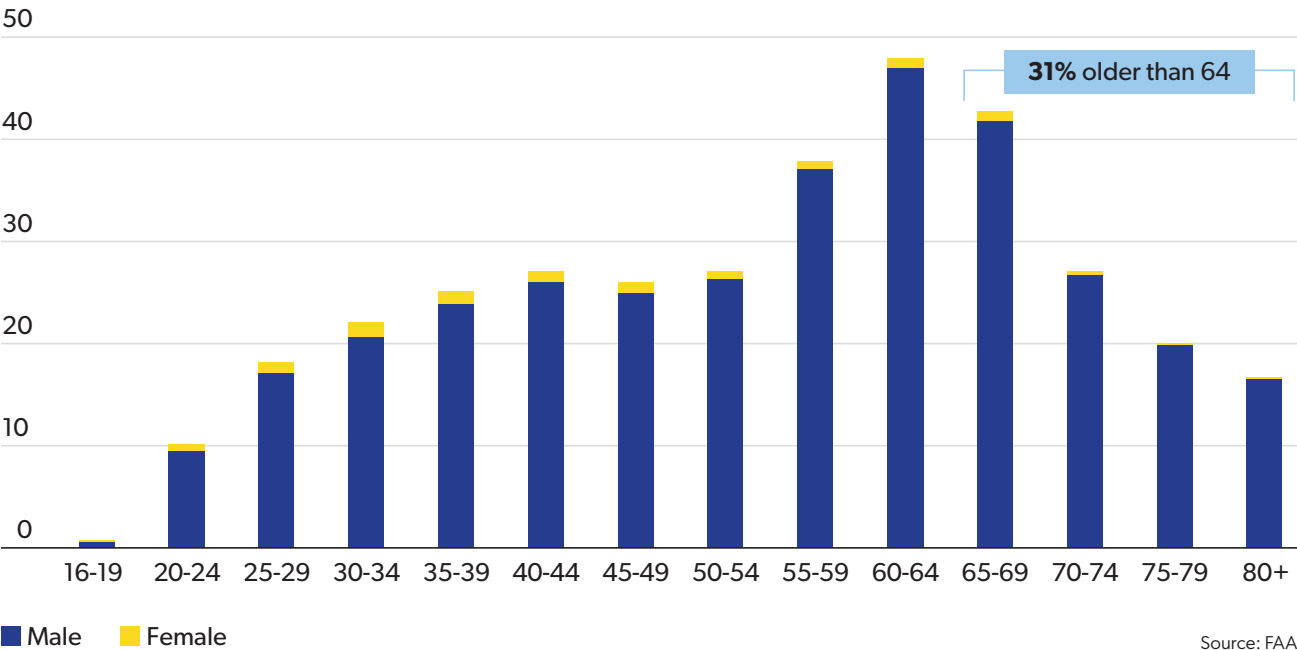
Demographics

Women make up 3.04% of the certificated mechanic population, a figure that has nominally climbed year-over-year during the past decade.

As shown in Figure 3, the aviation mechanic population continues to grow older, with 44% over the age of 60. Over the next 10 years, more than 46,000 mechanics will reach retirement age. The average FAA mechanic is 55, which is 13 years older than the average US worker, as reported by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Female mechanics comprise a somewhat younger demographic, with an average age of 45.

Figure 3 US Mechanic Age Distribution, 2025

Thousands



Source: FAA

Employers

In 2025, more than one-third of certificated mechanics were engaged in general aviation or working for repair stations, air carriers, or AMTS.¹ This group represents 66% of the air operator maintenance workforce, 20% of the repair station workforce, and 86% of the general aviation workforce (Figure 4). Repair stations employ about 73% of all technical personnel and almost half of all certificated mechanics. Just 1% of certificated mechanics work in A&P schools.

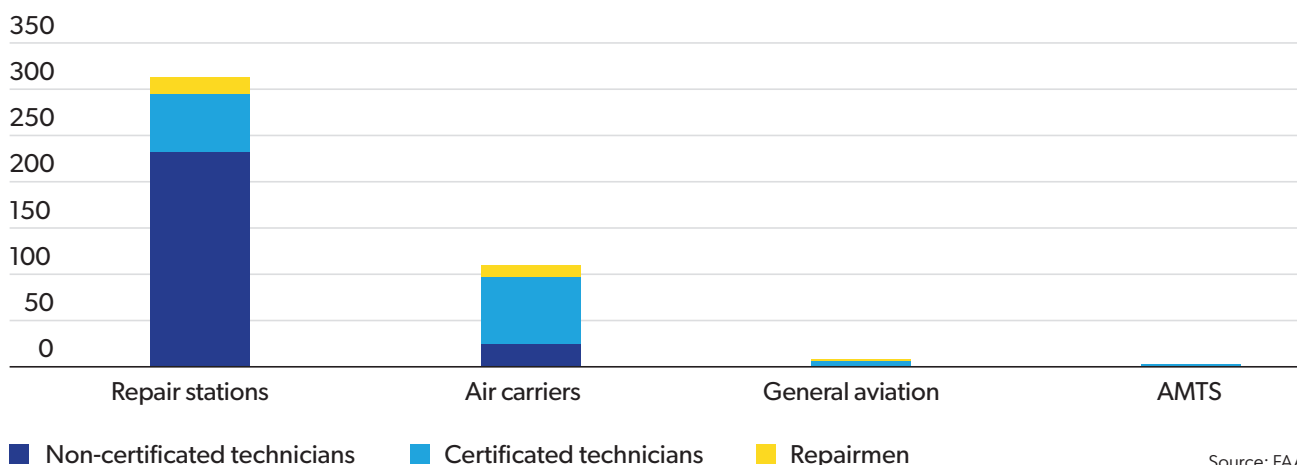
Supply

The FAA issued a record 11,103 new mechanic certificates in 2025—23.2% more than in 2024 and the highest annual total since the agency began publishing the data in 1999. This historic output represents a significant acceleration in the technician pipeline and compelling evidence that efforts to attract and prepare new entrants are gaining traction.

¹The information is based on an analysis of FAA repair station and air operator data for entities certificated under 14 CFR parts 91, 133, and 137 ("general aviation"); parts 121, 125, 129, and 135 ("air carriers"); and part 147. The dataset does not include certificated employee counts for design approval holders, those that work as maintenance contractors, or those employed elsewhere in the supply chain.

Figure 4 US Technical Personnel Aviation Employers, 2025

Thousands

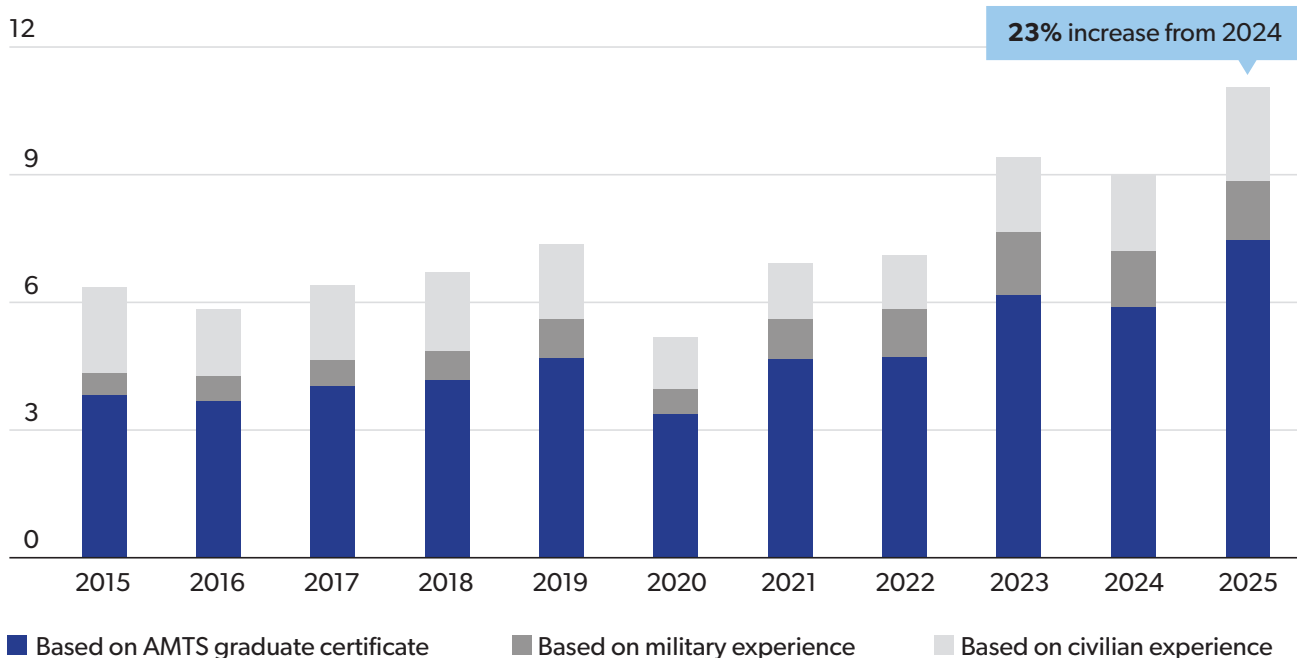


Source: FAA

In 2025, AMTS prepared more than two-thirds of newly certificated mechanics, while military and civilian experience accounted for 12% and 19%, respectively (Figure 5).

Figure 5 New Aviation Mechanic Certificates

Thousands



Source: FAA

A&P schools were the primary driver of the record-setting year. The number of mechanics certificated through the school pathway reached an all-time high, increasing by 27% from 2024. That growth was supported by a 13% increase in overall A&P school enrollment. Among survey respondents that provided 2026 projections, programs expect to produce 21% more graduates than in 2025—suggesting that the school-based pipeline is poised for continued growth.

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Unlocking the Military Maintenance Pipeline

Section 426 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 directed the FAA to streamline the civilian mechanic certification pathway for eligible military aviation maintenance technicians. The FAA assigned the initiative to the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC), but progress stalled after the agency dismissed the committee's membership in August 2025. As the industry awaits the appointment of new ARAC members, implementation of the Congressional directive remains pending.

Why it matters: A more efficient pathway could help experienced military maintainers transition into civilian aviation careers more quickly, adding qualified technicians to the workforce while maintaining FAA certification standards.

This pathway is also more diverse, as more than 8% of new AMTS-sourced certificated mechanics are women, compared to 3.9% and 4.6% of those sourced from military or civilian experience, respectively.

The civilian-experience pathway also recorded substantial growth. The number of mechanics qualifying through civilian experience increased by 21% in 2025, far exceeding the pathway's average annual growth rate of less than 3% over the previous decade. This acceleration may reflect the industry's increased emphasis on earn-to-learn models and apprenticeship programs.

The 1,375 individuals who qualified for FAA mechanic certificates based on military experience—5% more than in 2024—represent only a small share of the estimated 22,000² service members with aviation maintenance backgrounds who leave the military each year. ATEC estimates that civil aviation attracts fewer than one in 10 veterans with aviation maintenance experience, leaving a substantial pool of skilled talent untapped.

Demand

The certificated mechanic population is projected to see a steady increase in new entrants through the decade, as retirements slow and level off. Growth in the certificated mechanic population is expected to result in nearly 19,000 additional personnel by 2036. That growth, however, will not be fast enough to keep pace with continued increases in industry demand.

Oliver Wyman projects a North American shortfall of approximately 25,000 aviation technical personnel this year, including 9,100 certificated mechanics. By 2030, the certificated mechanic deficit is projected to reach approximately 20,000—equal to 12% of anticipated demand. By 2036, the shortfall is forecast to exceed 31,500 certificated mechanics, representing more than 15% of North American demand.

Non-certificated maintenance personnel face a similar trajectory, bringing the projected total maintenance workforce deficit to 54,500 in 2027 and more than 87,000 by 2036.

These estimates are not directly comparable with those published in previous editions of this report. This year's analysis uses FAA employment data in place of Bureau of Labor Statistics data and expands the methodology to include business aviation, general aviation, and applicable military MRO activity. The demand analysis does not

² The most recent publicly available federal estimate identified is from fiscal year 2018, when more than 22,000 Air Force and Navy service members with aviation maintenance backgrounds separated from military service, according to GAO-20-206. Although the figure continues to be cited as an estimate of the annual opportunity, no newer public DOD count by aviation maintenance occupation was identified.

Courtesy of
ACCS & Calhoun Community College

ATEC & OLIVER WYMAN

include OEM or civil rotorcraft employment, nor does it account for additional technical personnel needs created by emerging technologies.

Figure 6 New vs. Retiring Mechanics

Thousands

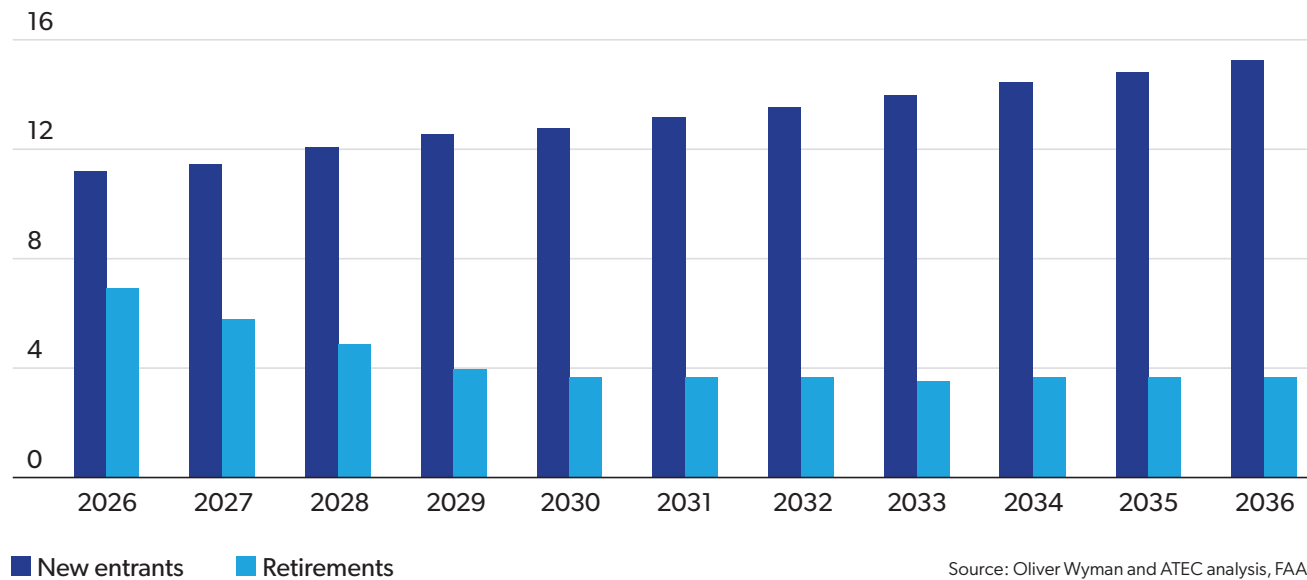


Figure 7 Supply and Demand for Mechanics

Thousands

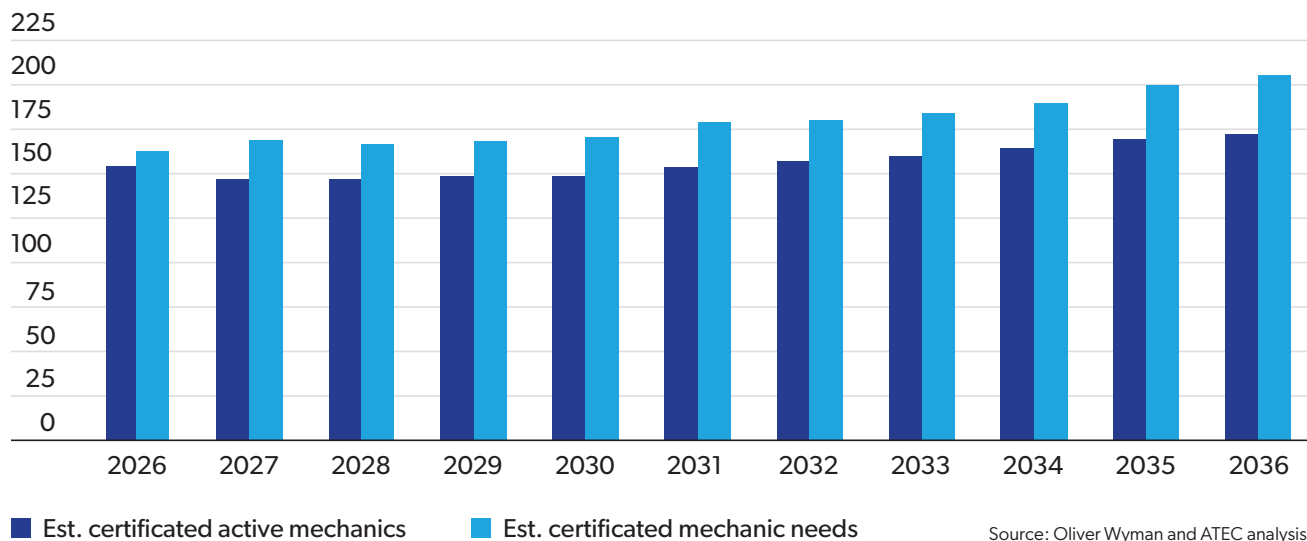
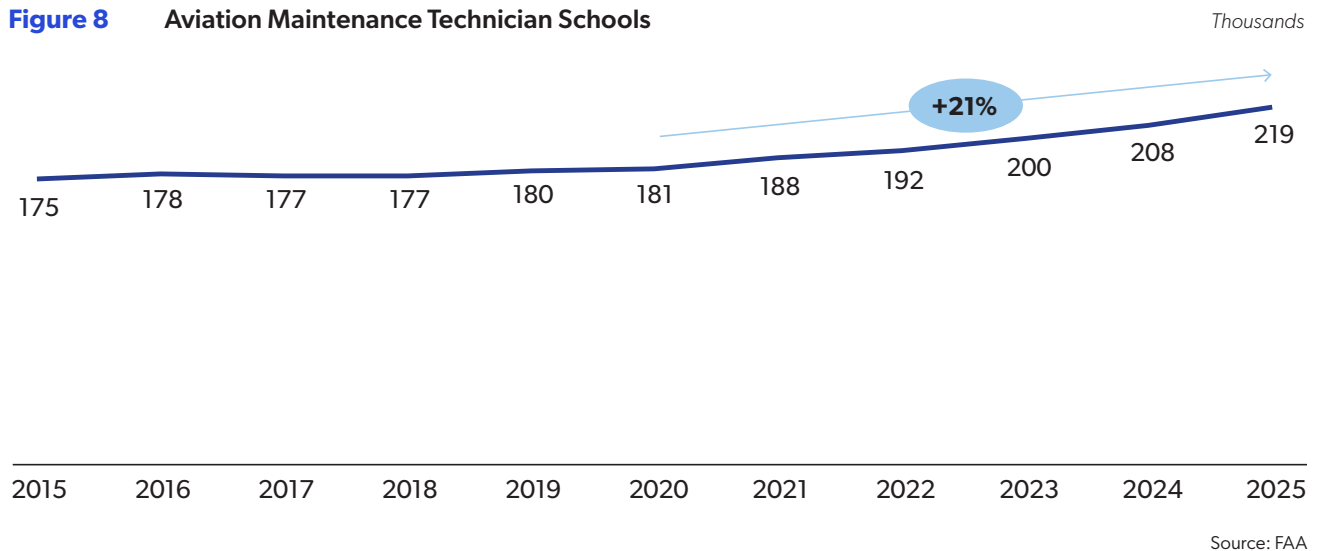


Figure 8 Aviation Maintenance Technician Schools



AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN SCHOOLS

The AMTS Landscape

The Community

Eleven AMTS were added in 2025, bringing total certificated programs last year to 219 (Figure 8)—an increase of 38 programs since 2020.

Three additional programs have been added so far in 2026, bringing the current number of part 147 programs to 222. The AMTS Directory included in this report provides a complete listing of all AMTS as of publication.

A&P schools are increasingly using additional training locations to expand their reach. Reforms to part 147 in 2022 allowed schools to extend operations beyond their primary campuses. Since then, 67 programs have added 88 locations to their FAA operations specifications. These locations bring training to industry partner facilities, high schools, and other campuses, creating new pathways into the profession and strengthening partnerships between educators and employers.

At least nine of the 88 additional training locations enroll distinct student cohorts rather than operating solely as extensions of an existing campus. Although these locations are not included in the AMTS count shown in Figure 8, they are listed in the AMTS Directory and accounted for approximately 26% of AMTS enrollment growth in 2025. Their contribution demonstrates how allowing schools to operate multiple locations under a common quality system—without requiring a separate FAA certificate for each facility—can expand access to aviation maintenance education nationwide.

Demographics

Seventy-seven percent of A&P programs (excluding additional training locations) are offered at public institutions, while 15% are housed at private proprietary schools and 8% at private nonprofit institutions. Most AMTS are relatively small, with nearly half enrolling 60 or fewer students at a time. At the same time, enrollment is concentrated among the largest providers: nearly one-third of all A&P students attend one of the nation's 10 largest programs.

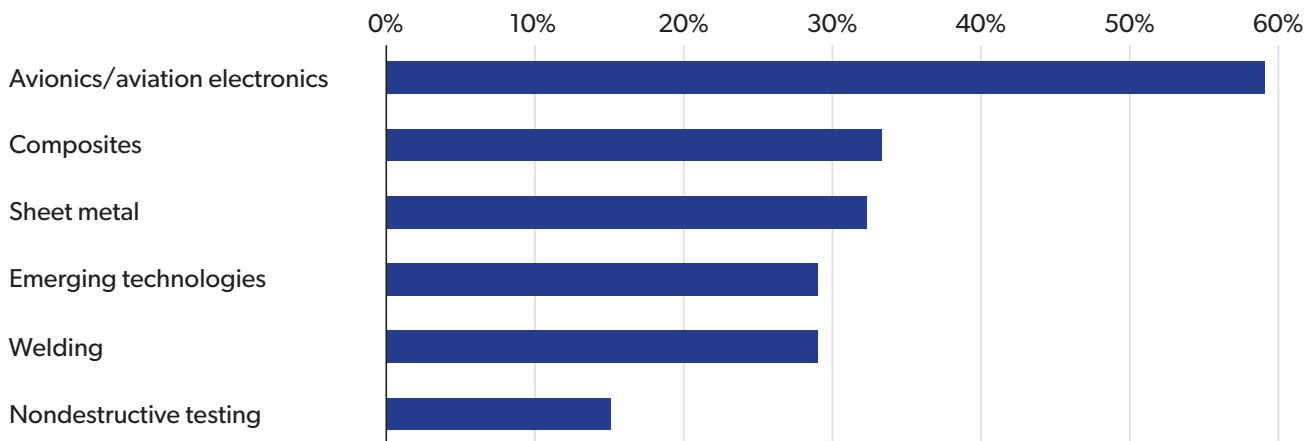
Figure 9 AMTS Enrollment State and District of Columbia Ranking

2025 Rank	State	2025 A&P Students	Percent Change (2024 to 2025)	2025 Rank	State	2025 A&P Students	Percent Change (2024 to 2025)
1	FL	3,293	11%	26	KY	243	71%
2	NY	3,010	7%	27	NJ	211	0%
3	TX	2,628	22%	28	OR	173	18%
4	CA	2,552	4%	29	WV	166	14%
5	MI	1,162	12%	30	MD	152	5%
6	AZ	1,119	120%	31	AR	133	17%
7	GA	1,071	34%	32	AK	125	26%
8	OK	1,059	14%	33	LA	123	10%
9	AL	947	4%	34	WI	122	16%
10	IL	928	-10%	35	CT	108	61%
11	VA	918	72%	36	IA	98	-23%
12	NC	858	15%	37	PR	77	-33%
13	OH	847	3%	38	MS	67	20%
14	CO	661	22%	39	NH	62	158%
15	IN	575	-3%	40	NM	53	6%
16	PA	528	-8%	41	HI	49	0%
17	TN	519	8%	42	DE	43	39%
18	WA	514	32%	43	ID	36	-25%
19	KS	441	7%	44	SD	30	20%
20	NV	394	0%	45	MT	27	-18%
21	SC	361	127%	46	VT	26	117%
22	MO	336	11%	47	ME	23	N/A
23	MA	294	-5%	48	ND	19	N/A
24	UT	285	12%	49	NE	11	-31%
25	MN	263	27%				

Source: ATEC survey

Figure 10 "Outside of the A&P program, what standalone technical aviation-related programs does your institution offer?"

Percent of survey respondents, selecting all that apply



Source: ATEC Survey

Nearly half of all A&P students reside in Florida, New York, Texas, California, or Michigan. Georgia rose three positions in the state enrollment rankings from last year, while Arizona moved ahead 10 positions. The fastest enrollment growth was reported in New Hampshire (158%), South Carolina (127%), and Arizona (120%).

According to Oliver Wyman’s analysis, Oklahoma, Kansas, Alaska, Georgia, and Arizona have the nation’s highest concentrations of aviation maintenance employment. These states may offer important opportunities to align AMTS capacity with regional workforce demand.

Programs and Degrees Offered

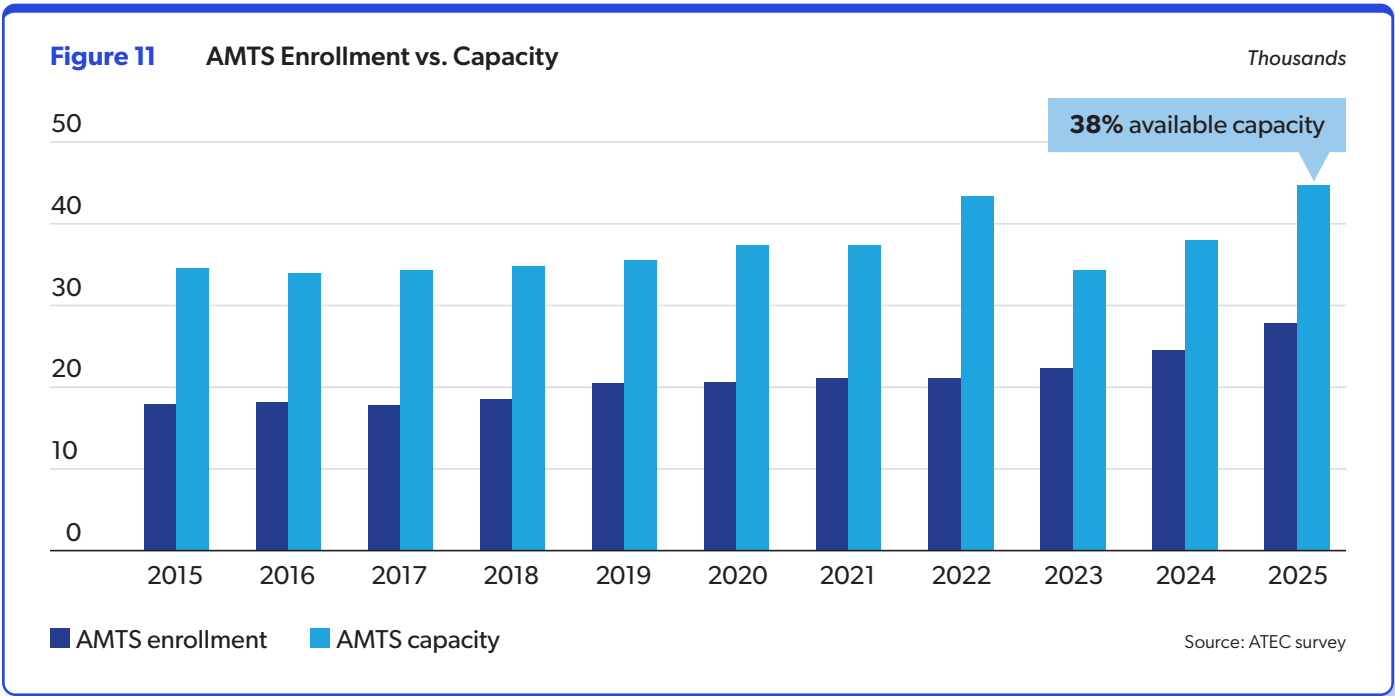
To meet the growing demand for specialized services, 40% of all AMTS provide standalone, aviation-related programs outside an A&P program, including composites, avionics, and emerging technologies (Figure 10).

Forty-one percent of AMTS offer an A&P program as part of an associate degree, while 7% offer an A&P program as part of a four-year degree. High schools hold 11 part 147 certificates.

Enrollment and Capacity

Enrollment

AMTS enrollment rose 13.5% in 2025 to 27,740—nearly three times the 10-year average annual growth rate of 4.6% (Figure 11).



Even with that growth, the AMTS student load factor—the share of available A&P program seats filled by enrolled students—stood at 62%. At the same time, 44% of survey respondents reported maintaining an enrollment waitlist.

This apparent disconnect largely reflects cohort-based program structures and student attrition. Programs can admit only a set number of students into each starting cohort. When students leave before completing the program, seats become available in later courses but generally cannot be filled by new students. As a result, overall capacity remains available even while entry-level seats are full and prospective students are waiting to enroll.



Choose Aerospace provides content and resources to support delivery of the General subject areas of the FAA mechanic Airman Certification Standards in high schools, community programs, and other non-part 147 settings.

Originally designed to market part 147 programs and build A&P school enrollment, Choose Aerospace also prepares students for internships, apprenticeships, military service, and direct employment in positions that do not require an FAA certificate. These off-ramps help employers address immediate technician needs while allowing participants to gain experience toward future certification.

For AMTS, Choose Aerospace programs are helping to improve retention and capacity utilization. Students enter A&P school with greater knowledge of the pro-

fession, and early results suggest they are more likely to persist. Schools that award credit for the completed General curriculum can place students in later Airframe or Powerplant coursework, filling seats opened through attrition.

To help facilitate credit-bearing opportunities, ATEC created the General Aviation Maintenance Credential to independently validate prior learning. The credential also supports ATEC's effort to expand early knowledge-test eligibility for students completing aviation maintenance curricula outside part 147 (see the "Expanding Early Knowledge Testing" policy spotlight).

Results from the 2025–26 academic year demonstrate the model's potential. Teachers reported that 37% of completers planned to attend a part 147 school and 34% were seeking immediate employment.

With more than 50 programs expected in its fifth academic year, Choose Aerospace is emerging as a scalable solution for strengthening recruitment, enrollment, retention, and the industry workforce pipeline.

Improving retention would help schools make fuller use of existing capacity and increase graduate output. Reducing waitlists may also require programs to add starting cohorts, expand entry-level capacity, or offer credit-bearing pathways that allow qualified students to enter with advanced standing and fill openings in later courses.

Barriers to Growth

Survey respondents identified insufficient funding—for facilities, tools, materials, and/or equipment—as the single largest barrier to program growth. The second largest driver was inability to hire and retain faculty, followed by insufficient marketing (Figure 12).

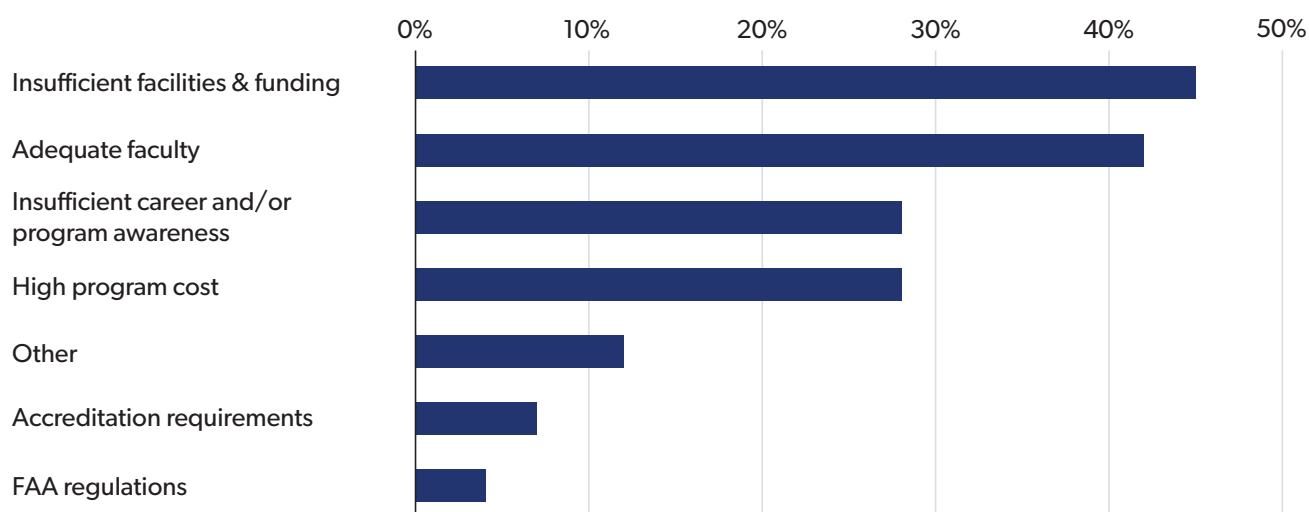
Addressing these barriers will require coordinated investment in the facilities, equipment, instructional capacity, and outreach needed to convert growing student demand into additional graduates. Federal workforce-development funding offers one mechanism for helping schools make those investments.

Instructor Workforce

While total student enrollment grew by more than 13%, the instructor workforce expanded by only 5%. This imbalance underscores the widening gap between instructor supply and demand—and the mounting difficulty programs face in recruiting and retaining instructors.

Figure 12 “What are the most significant barriers to growth for your AMTS?”

Percent of survey respondents, selecting up to three choices



Note: “Other” includes student interest, class time, and student capacity requirements

Source: ATEC 2025 survey

THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE GRANT

The FAA Aviation Maintenance Technical Workers Workforce Development Grant provides schools and industry partners with a federal resource for addressing many of the capacity constraints identified in this year’s survey.

Since Congress established the program in 2018, the FAA has awarded \$19 million through three maintenance grant rounds, the most recent announced on March 5, 2024.

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 increased the authorized amount to \$20 million annually for maintenance workforce grants through fiscal year 2028. Congress has appropriated funding for two of the four authorized years, although neither appropriation reached the full authorized level.

The FAA announced a fourth round offering \$13 million and opened application periods in January 2025 and again in May 2026. As this report went to print, however, no additional awards had been announced. The FAA expects to issue the current awards by the end of fiscal year 2026.

FAA officials have indicated that the grant program was heavily oversubscribed, demonstrating demand that exceeds available funding. Through its legislative advocacy, ATEC will continue to support sustained funding and appropriations for the program, along with a more predictable grant cycle that gives applicants greater certainty about when funding will be solicited, awarded, and available.



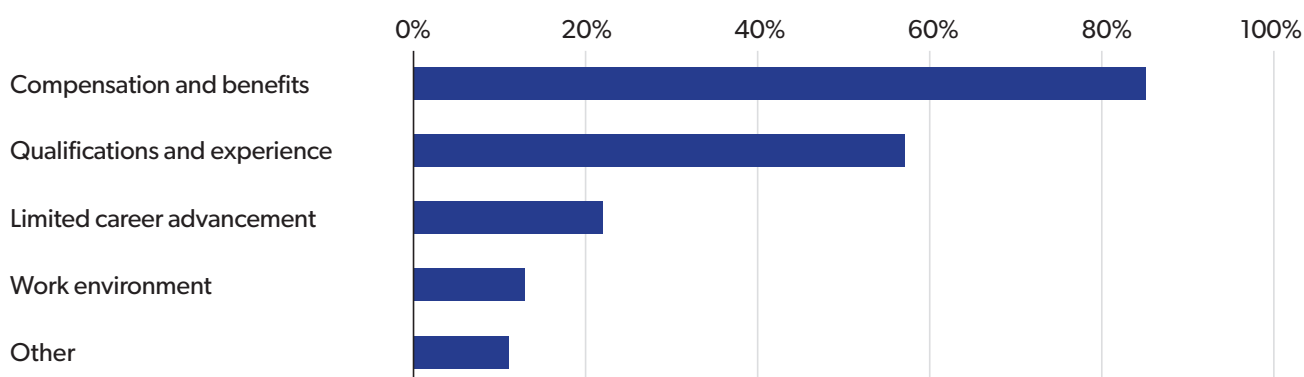
Courtesy of
Spartan College

This year's survey respondents again reported significant and persistent difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified AMTS instructors, creating a bottleneck that constrains program capacity, growth, and educational quality.

Programs identified compensation as the primary challenge to recruiting and retaining instructors. Respondents also reported difficulty finding sufficiently qualified candidates (Figure 13).

Figure 13 "What are the most significant barriers to recruiting and retaining instructors?"

Percent of survey respondents, selecting up to three choices



Source: ATEC survey

Across all reported responses, the average base hourly wage for newly hired certificated instructors was \$37.77, excluding additions for experience, education, or overload. The average hourly wage across the full certificated instructor workforce, including applicable adjustments, was \$42.09. These figures describe a largely full-time workforce: certificated instructors reported an average tenure of six years and worked an average of 37 hours per week.

The reported averages equate to approximately \$78,561 annually for newly hired instructors and \$87,553 annually across the certificated instructor workforce. About 29% of respondents reported average certificated instructor pay above \$91,000 annually.

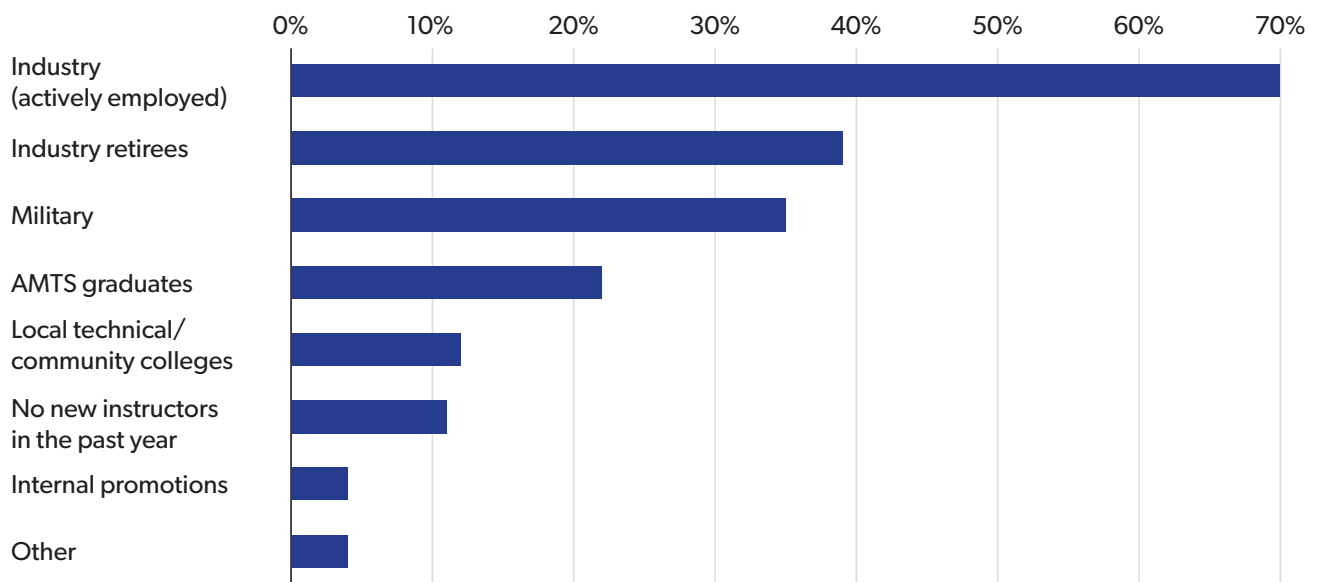
AMTS programs rely primarily on the aviation industry to supply new certificated instructors (Figure 14). Seven in 10 respondents identified directly employed industry personnel as a source of new hires, making it by far the most common recruitment channel. Industry retirees and military personnel were also important sources, identified by roughly 40% and 35% of respondents, respectively.

By comparison, education-based and internal pipelines are less common. About 22% of respondents hire AMTS graduates, while just 12% recruit from local technical or community colleges.

Together, these factors create a difficult environment for AMTS programs: they must compete with industry for experienced personnel while also finding candidates prepared to transition from technical work into effective classroom instruction. To aid that effort, ATEC is advancing the ATEC Academy, an initiative designed to help experienced industry professionals build the instructional skills needed to enter and succeed in AMTS classrooms, while expanding a more sustainable pathway into the instructor workforce.

Figure 14 “Where are your new certificated instructors coming from?”

Percent of survey respondents, selecting up to three choices



Note: “Other” includes non-retirees from the industry or no new instructors

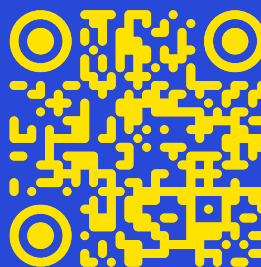
Source: ATEC survey

ATEC ACADEMY

The ATEC Academy is a three-month professional-development pathway designed to help new and transitioning aviation maintenance instructors—particularly experienced technicians moving from industry—develop the skills needed for effective classroom and hangar instruction. The program begins with a two-day, in-person “Take-Off” session and continues with virtual learning, applied assignments, individualized mentorship, and feedback from experienced aviation maintenance educators.

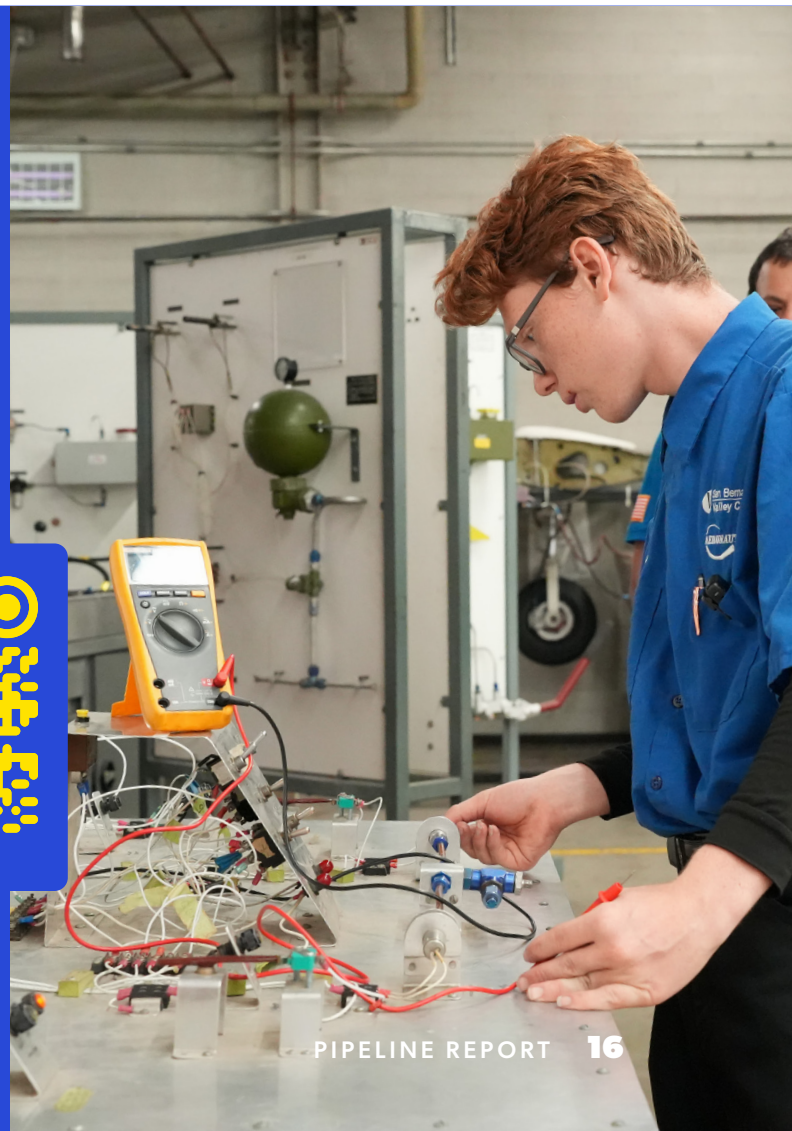
Since its inception in 2024, ATEC has recognized six graduating cohorts representing AMTS, technical schools, colleges, and corporate training organizations nationwide.

For current course offerings and additional information, visit the ATEC Academy landing page.



SCAN HERE

Courtesy of
San Bernadino Valley College



Graduate Outcomes

Graduates

In 2025, AMTS graduated an estimated 12,365 A&P students, an increase of more than 30% from the year previous. The average graduation rate for an A&P program was 66%. The average age of an A&P graduate is 23.

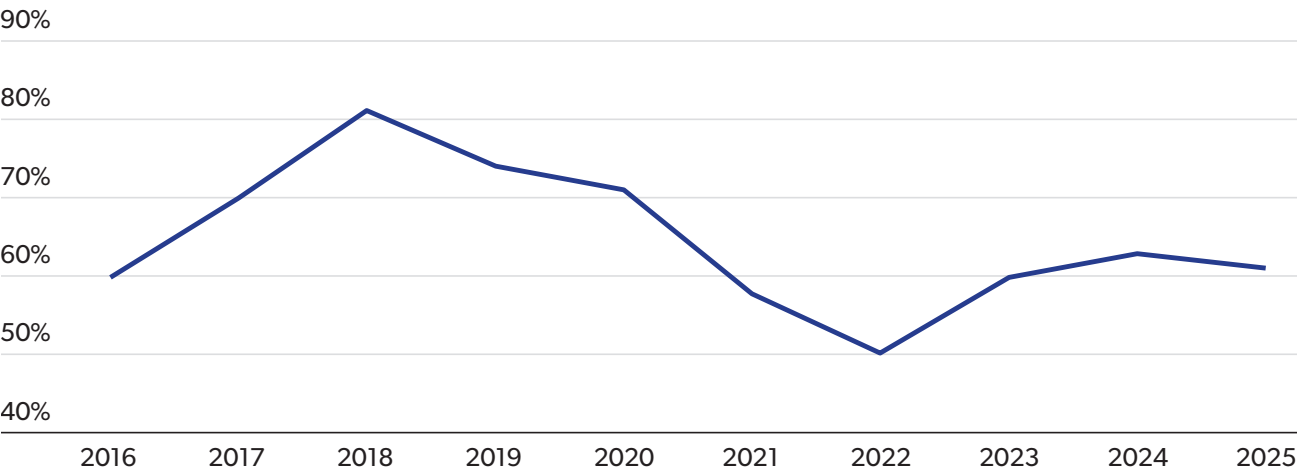
Veterans accounted for approximately 24% of 2025 graduates, while 61% identified as members of a racial or ethnic minority. Both groups represented a larger share of the graduating class than in 2024. The share of foreign nationals declined from 4% in 2024 to 3% in 2025. Women made up 13% of AMTS graduates in 2025, a three-percent-age-point increase from the previous year.

Certifications

Sixty-one percent of A&P graduates obtained FAA mechanic certification (Figure 15), a datapoint that has held relatively steady the past three years.

Figure 15 AMTS Graduates Obtaining Mechanic Certification

Percent



Source: ATEC survey

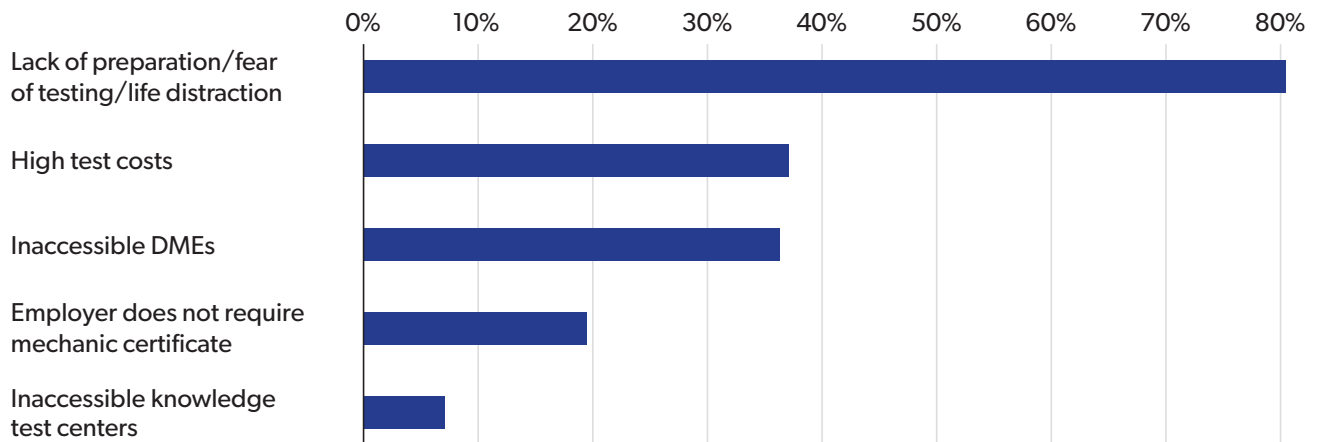
Survey respondents identified lack of preparation and fear of testing, high test costs, and limited access to designated mechanic examiners (DMEs) as the primary barriers to mechanic certification (Figure 16).

Progressive testing is one important response to the preparation barrier: students take eligible portions of the FAA mechanic tests soon after completing the corresponding curriculum, rather than treating testing as a final or elective step. More than 83% of AMTS report using progressive testing (Figure 17). Its adoption has expanded following changes to part 147 that gave schools greater flexibility to align testing with the training cycle. In addition, about one-third of A&P schools use early testing under 14 CFR § 65.80, providing a flexible option for students whose readiness varies.

The objective is to increase the mechanic certification rate by integrating testing throughout training and reducing the number of would-be mechanics lost at the final step of the pathway. ATEC will continue to promote progressive and early testing as best practices for making FAA certification an expected outcome of AMTS completion.

Figure 16 “What are the most significant barriers to obtaining a mechanic certificate for AMTS program graduates?”

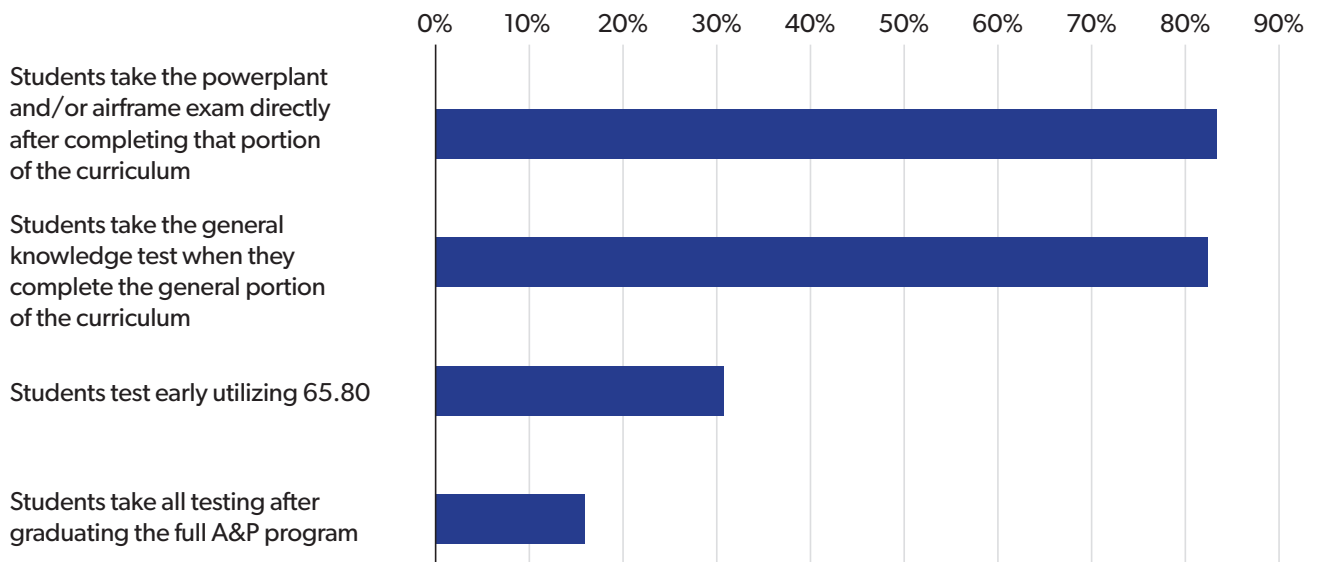
Percent of survey respondents, selecting up to three choices



Source: ATEC survey

Figure 17 “How does your AMTS approach mechanic testing?”

Percent of survey respondents, selecting all that apply



Source: ATEC survey

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Expanding Early Knowledge Testing

ATEC advocacy helped secure two related provisions in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024. Section 414 directed the Government Accountability Office to examine high school aviation maintenance programs and barriers facing their graduates. Section 405 directed the FAA to establish an Airman Knowledge Testing Working Group to assess whether students who successfully complete an aviation maintenance curriculum should be eligible to take the FAA mechanic General written knowledge test.

The resulting September 2026 report identified at least 43 high schools offering aviation maintenance programs outside part 147, including 37 using the Choose Aerospace curriculum. In its report, GAO recognized that students completing these programs outside a part 147 school cannot take the General knowledge test and are often required to repeat coursework when entering a part 147 school.

GAO recommended that the FAA convene industry stakeholders and aviation experts to assess expanding test eligibility.

The report also recognized ATEC's related filing of an August 2026 petition for exemption that would allow Choose Aerospace students that have received the ATEC General Aviation Maintenance Credential to take the FAA Mechanic General written knowledge test. As of publication, the petition remained pending under FAA Docket No. FAA-2026-9274.

³U.S. Government Accountability Office, High School Aviation Maintenance Programs: FAA Should Assess Expanding Access to the Mechanic Knowledge Test, GAO-26-108303 (September 2026).

Testing Capacity

Limited access to designated mechanic examiners (DMEs) is a growing problem, cited by 36% of AMTS and continuing to drive ATEC initiatives focused on expanding access to FAA airman testing. Although the number of active DMEs increased slightly over the past year—from 254 to 275—these examiners administered a record 14,838 original-issuance mechanic tests. This was an increase of more than 3,200 tests from the previous year and resulted in an 18% rise in the average annual testing workload per DME. The growing workload underscores the urgent need to expand examiner capacity to keep pace with demand.

Employers

Seventy percent of 2025 AMTS graduates received a job offer within 90 days of graduation. Of those, more than half received multiple offers and 89% accepted a position in aviation. Both the job-offer and aviation-employment rates increased from 2024.

Survey respondents identified student employment opportunities, internships, and apprenticeships as the most effective industry-supported recruitment tools (Figure 18). The findings suggest that successful recruitment pairs financial support with clear opportunities for hands-on experience and early connections to employers.

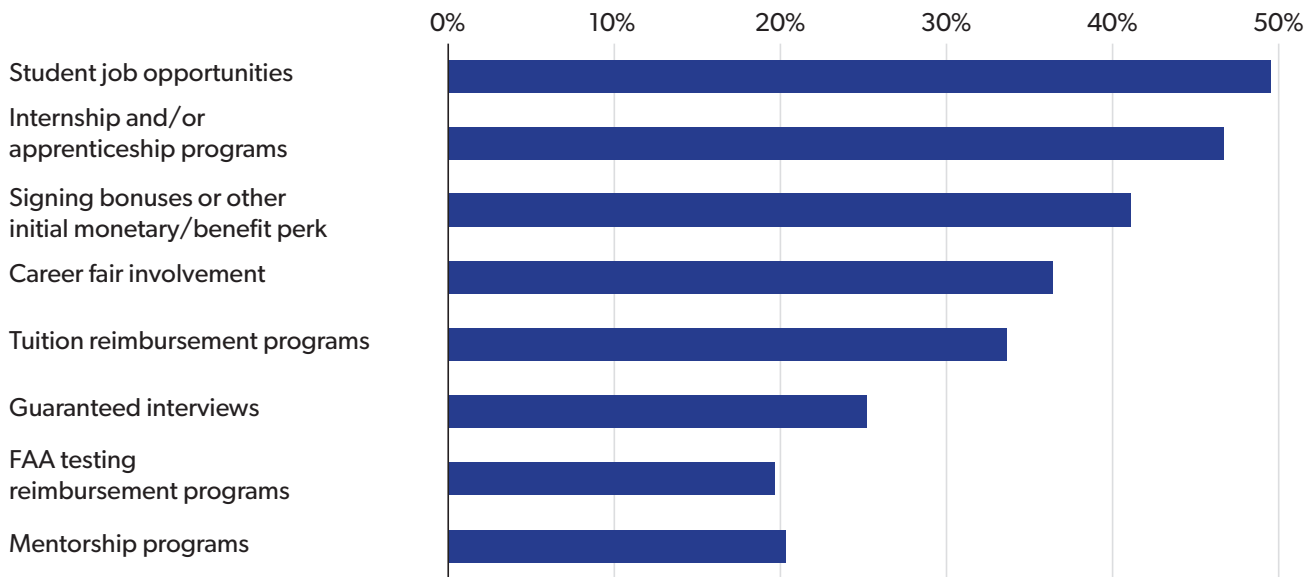
Nearly 20% of graduates placed in aviation accepted jobs outside their local geographic area, suggesting that a meaningful share of new entrants are relocating to areas of higher demand. Among aviation sectors actively hiring, general aviation, MROs, and operators account for most new-graduate hires (Figure 19).

Graduates who accepted jobs outside aviation entered a wide range of fields, with automotive most frequently identified (Figure 20). Schools cited more desirable work locations and schedules, interest in other fields, and higher salary opportunities as the leading reasons graduates pursued non-aviation employment (Figure 21). These results underscore the role that geographic and lifestyle preferences play in career decisions.

Salary and Wages

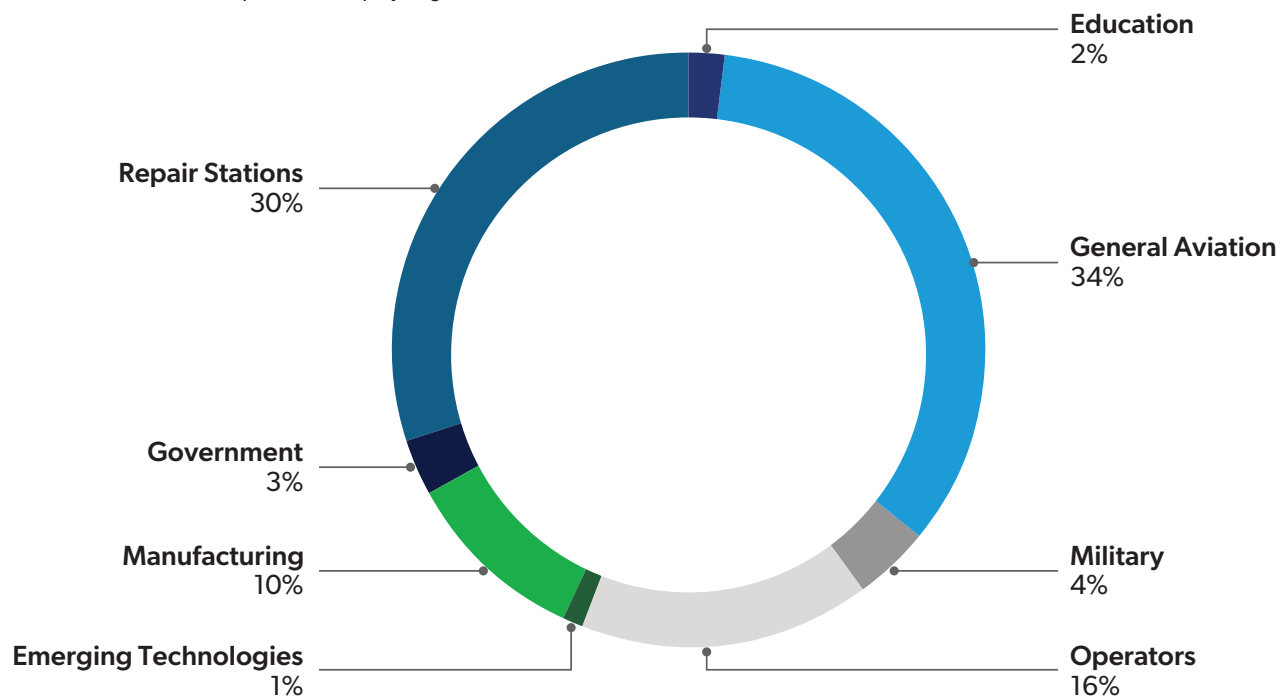
Survey respondents reported an average starting wage of \$30.70 per hour for AMTS graduates who earned an FAA mechanic certificate—equivalent to approximately \$63,859 annually. This represents a 4% increase from last year and a 9%

Figure 18 “What type of involvement by industry appears to be most successful for recruiters?”
Percent of survey respondents, selecting up to three choices



Source: ATEC survey

Figure 19 “Of the 2025 graduates employed by an aviation-related employer, how many were placed in each of the following sectors?”
Percent of aviation-employed graduates



Source: ATEC survey

increase from the starting wage reported three years ago.

AMTS graduates who did not obtain a mechanic certificate earned an average starting wage of \$21.97 per hour, a 3% increase from last year. The \$8.73 hourly difference between an AMTS graduate with a mechanic certificate and one without equates to approximately \$18,168 annually, underscoring the immediate economic value of certification.

These figures track broadly with US Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Across aircraft mechanics and service technicians, median pay is approximately \$38.40 per hour, or \$79,872 annually. Among those employed in air transportation, median pay is \$46.24 per hour, or \$96,170 annually.

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

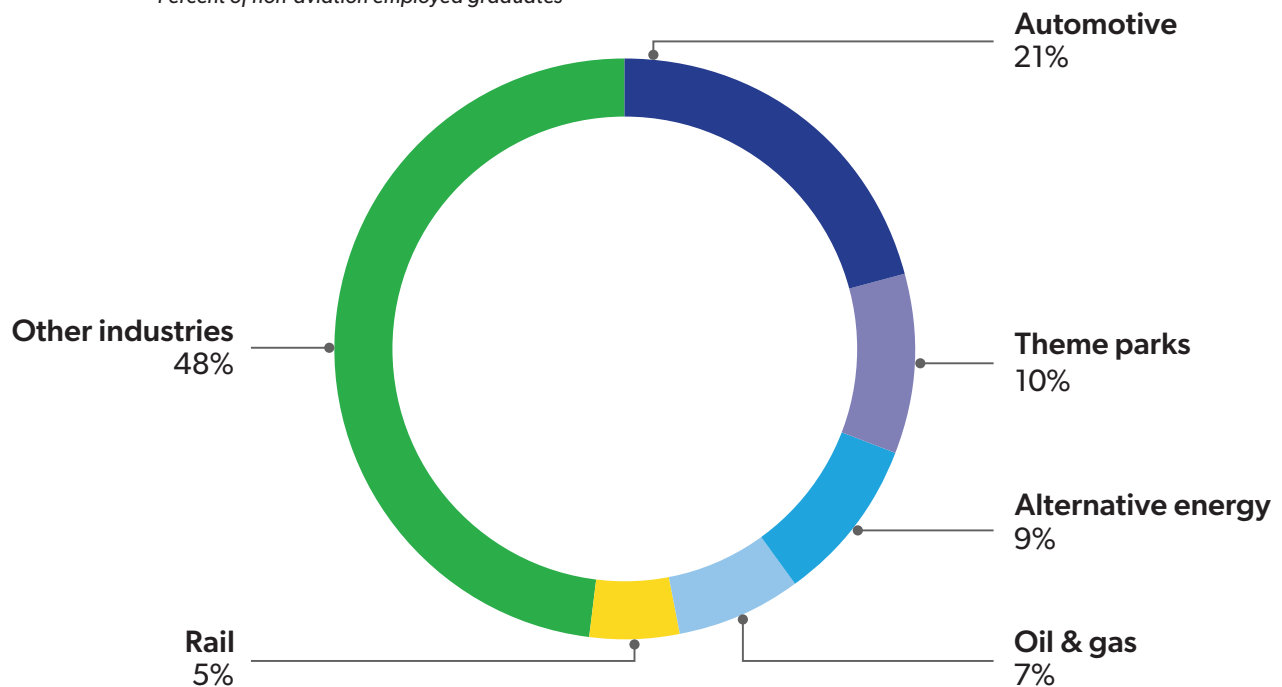
Expanding Oral and Practical Testing Capacity

The FAA's new AC ODA program allows qualified air agency certificate holders—including part 147 schools—to apply for authority to manage FAA-approved mechanic oral and practical testing. The program is intended to supplement, not replace, the existing DME network.

As of this report's publication, the FAA had not approved an AC ODA application, although several part 147 programs had applied. ATEC is facilitating focus-group meetings to help applicants share information and emerging best practices.

Why it matters: A part 147 AC ODA may test eligible mechanic applicants beyond its own graduates. That broader reach could add capacity across the testing network and meaningfully expand access to airman certification.

Figure 20 "Of graduates that took a job outside of the aviation industry, how many were placed in each of these industries?"
Percent of non-aviation employed graduates



Source: ATEC survey

Return on Investment

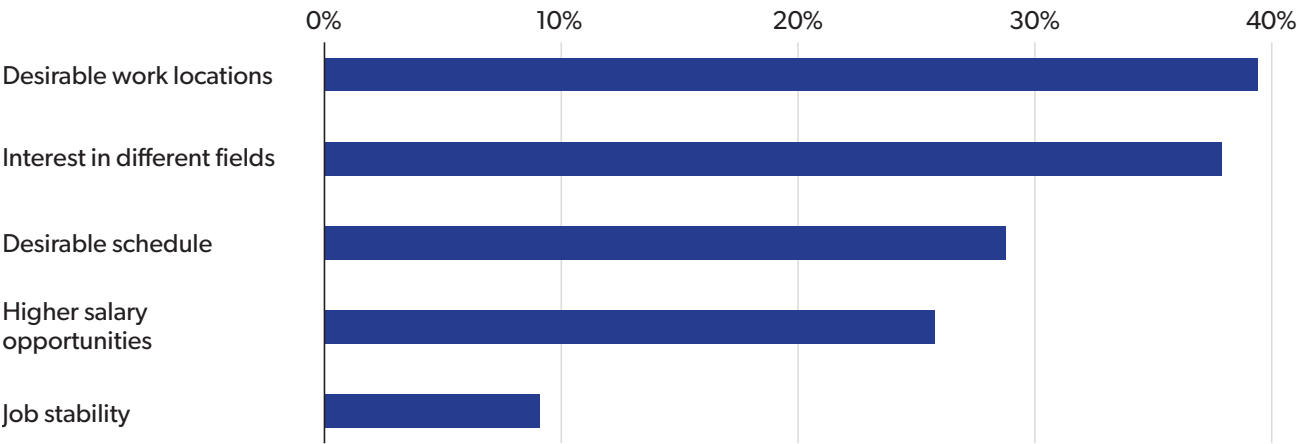
Tuition is not generally viewed as a significant barrier to entering an aviation technical career, given the relatively low cost of A&P programs compared with graduates’ earning potential. ATEC’s analysis of published tuition data for all AMTS, regardless of the credential awarded, found that the average cost of an A&P program is \$20,425.

Public community colleges offer the lowest cost pathway, with average tuition of \$13,371 and an average completion time of 22 months. Private programs cost an average of \$39,706 but have a shorter average completion time of 18 months.

Across all A&P programs, the average completion time is 21 months, with 19 programs offering a pathway that can be completed in 12 months or less.

Figure 21 “What are the reasons graduates took a job outside of the aviation industry?”

Percent of survey respondents, selecting all that apply



Source: ATEC survey

Figure 22 Hourly and annual wages for AMTS graduates and aircraft mechanics

	Hourly	Annual
AMTS graduate without mechanic certificate, average starting wage	\$21.97	\$45,691
AMTS graduate with FAA mechanic certificate, average starting wage	\$30.70	\$63,859
Aircraft mechanics and service technicians, median wage	\$38.40	\$79,872
Aircraft mechanics and service technicians in Air Transportation, median wage	\$46.24	\$96,170

Source: ATEC survey, BLS

AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Full programmatic and contact information for all
part 147 programs is available on the ATEC website.



ATEC member

ATEC survey respondent •

Additional Training Location +

Alabama

Alabama Aviation College - Albertville •

Alabama Aviation College - Mobile •

Alabama Aviation College - Ozark •

John C. Calhoun State Community College

Southern Union State Community College •

Alaska

University of Alaska Anchorage

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Yuut Elitnaurviat Regional AMT School

Arizona

American Leadership Academy Ap-
plied Technologies High School

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Phoenix •+

Chandler Gilbert Community College

Pima Community College •

Universal Technical Institute - Avondale •+

Western Maricopa Education Center

Arkansas

Arkansas Northeastern College

Arkansas State University Mid-South

Southern Arkansas University Tech - Camden

University of Arkansas - Pulaski Technical College

California

Antelope Valley College

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Fremont •

California Aeronautical University •

Chaffey College •

College of Alameda •

Cuesta College

Gavilan College •

MT San Antonio College

North Valley Occupational Center

Orange Coast College

Reedley College

Sacramento City College

San Bernardino Valley College

San Diego Miramar College

San Joaquin Valley College

Solano Community College

Spartan College of Aeronautics and
Technology - Los Angeles •

Spartan College of Aeronautics and
Technology - Riverside •

Universal Technical Institute - Long Beach •+

Victor Valley College

West Los Angeles College

Colorado

Aims Community College •

Cherry Creek Innovation Campus •

Colorado Northwestern Community College •

Spartan College of Aeronautics
and Technology - Denver •

Warren Tech

Connecticut

Connecticut Aero Tech School

Stratford School for Aviation Maintenance Technicians

Delaware

Delaware Technical Community College •

Florida

A&P Mechanic Institute •

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Orlando •

Broward College •

Central Florida Aerospace Academy

Charlotte County Public Schools •

Eastern Florida State College

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University •

Epic Aviation

Epic Flight Academy - CVG •

Florida State College at Jacksonville •

George Stone Technical College

George T. Baker Aviation Technical College

Lively Technical College

Lorenzo Walker Technical College

National Aviation Academy Inc - Clearwater •

Northwest Florida State College

Pensacola State College

Tom P. Haney Technical College

U.S. Aviation Academy - Kissimmee

Universal Technical Institute - Miramar •

Georgia

Atlanta Technical College

Augusta Technical College •

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Atlanta •

Central Georgia Technical College

Chattahoochee Technical College

Georgia Northwestern Technical College

Middle Georgia State University •

Savannah Technical College •

South Georgia Technical College

U.S. Aviation Academy - Atlanta •+

Hawaii

Honolulu Community College

Idaho

Idaho State University

Illinois

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Chicago •

Lewis University

Lincoln Land Community College •

Rock Valley College

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Southwestern Illinois College

Indiana

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Indianapolis

Ivy Tech Community College •

Purdue University

Vincennes University Aviation Technology Center

Iowa

Indian Hills Community College •

Iowa Western Community College •

Kirkwood Community College

Kansas

Kansas State University Salina •

WSU Tech •

Kentucky

Jefferson Community and Technical College

Madisonville Community College

Maysville Community and Technical College

Somerset Community College

Louisiana

Baton Rouge Community College

South Louisiana Community College •

Southern University at Shreveport •

Sowela Technical Community College •

Maine

University of Maine - Augusta •

Maryland

Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics – Hagerstown •

University of Maryland Eastern Shore •

Massachusetts

Cape Cod Community College •

Franklin County Technical School •

Greater Lawrence Technical School

National Aviation Academy Inc - New England •

Westfield Technical Academy

Michigan

Andrews University

Lansing Community College •

Legacy Aviation Learning Center •

School of Missionary Aviation Technology •

Universal Technical Institute - Canton •

Western Michigan University - College of Aviation

Minnesota

Lake Superior College

Minneapolis College

Northland Community and Technical College •

St. Cloud Technical & Community College •

U.S. Aviation Academy - Minneapolis •+

Mississippi

Hinds Community College

Northwest Mississippi Community College •

Pearl River Community College •

Missouri

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Kansas City •

Ozarks Technical Community College •

State Technical College of Missouri •

Montana

Helena College University of Montana •

Nebraska

Western Nebraska Community College •

Nevada

Aviation Institute of Maintenance – Las Vegas •

New Hampshire

Nashua Community College •

New Jersey

Aviation Institute of Maintenance – Teterboro •

New Mexico

Central New Mexico Community College •

Eastern New Mexico University – Roswell

New York

Aviation High School

Aviation Training Institute at Vaughn College

Dutchess Community College

Hudson Valley Community College

Lewis Wilson Technology Center

Mohawk Valley Community College

North Carolina

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Charlotte •

College of the Albemarle

Craven Community College

Forsyth Technical Community College

Guilford Technical Community College

Lenoir Community College

Wayne Community College •

North Dakota

North Dakota State College of Science •

Ohio

Butler Tech +

Cincinnati State Technical and Community College •

Columbus State Community College

Federal Aerospace Institute •

Great Oaks Joint Vocational School •

Greene County Career Center

Mahoning County Career & Technical Center •

Miami Valley Career Technology Center

Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics - Youngstown •

Sinclair Community College

Toledo Public Schools - Aerospace Center •

Oklahoma

Canadian Valley Technology Center

Gordon Cooper Technology Center

Metro Technology Center

Moore Norman Technology Center

Southwest Technology Center •

Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology - Tulsa

Tulsa Technology Center •

Oregon

Columbia Gorge Community College •

Hillsboro Aero Academy •

Lane Community College

Portland Community College •

Pennsylvania

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Philadelphia •

Johnson College •

Pennsylvania College of Technology •

Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics - Pittsburgh •

Saint Francis University •

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Aviation Maintenance Institute

South Carolina

Greenville Technical College

Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics – Myrtle Beach •

Trident Technical College

South Dakota

Lake Area Technical Institute

Tennessee

Middle Tennessee State University •

North Central Institute

Northeast State Community College

Pellissippi State Community College •

Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Memphis

Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Morristown

Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Nashville •

Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Northwest

Texas

Amarillo College •

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Dallas •

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Houston •

Chennault Aviation Maintenance Academy •

Crowley Academy of Aviation

Dallas College

Del Mar College •

Hallmark University

LeTourneau University

Midland College •

Skyline Career Development Center

Southwest Texas College

St. Philips College

Tarrant County College •

Texarkana College

Texas State Technical College - Abilene

Texas State Technical College - Harlingen

Texas State Technical College - Waco

Thrust Institute of Maintenance

U.S. Aviation Academy - Denton •

U.S. Aviation Academy - San Marcos •+

Universal Technical Institute - Dallas •+

Universal Technical Institute - Houston •

Universal Technical Institute - San Antonio •+

Utah

Salt Lake Community College

Southern Utah University

Utah State University

Vermont

Burlington Technical Center •

Virginia

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Manassas •

Aviation Institute of Maintenance - Norfolk •

Blue Ridge Community College

Liberty University •

University of the District of Columbia Community College •

Washington

Big Bend Community College

Clover Park Technical College •

Everett Community College

Moody Bible Institute, Moody Aviation •

South Seattle College

Spokane Community College

West Virginia

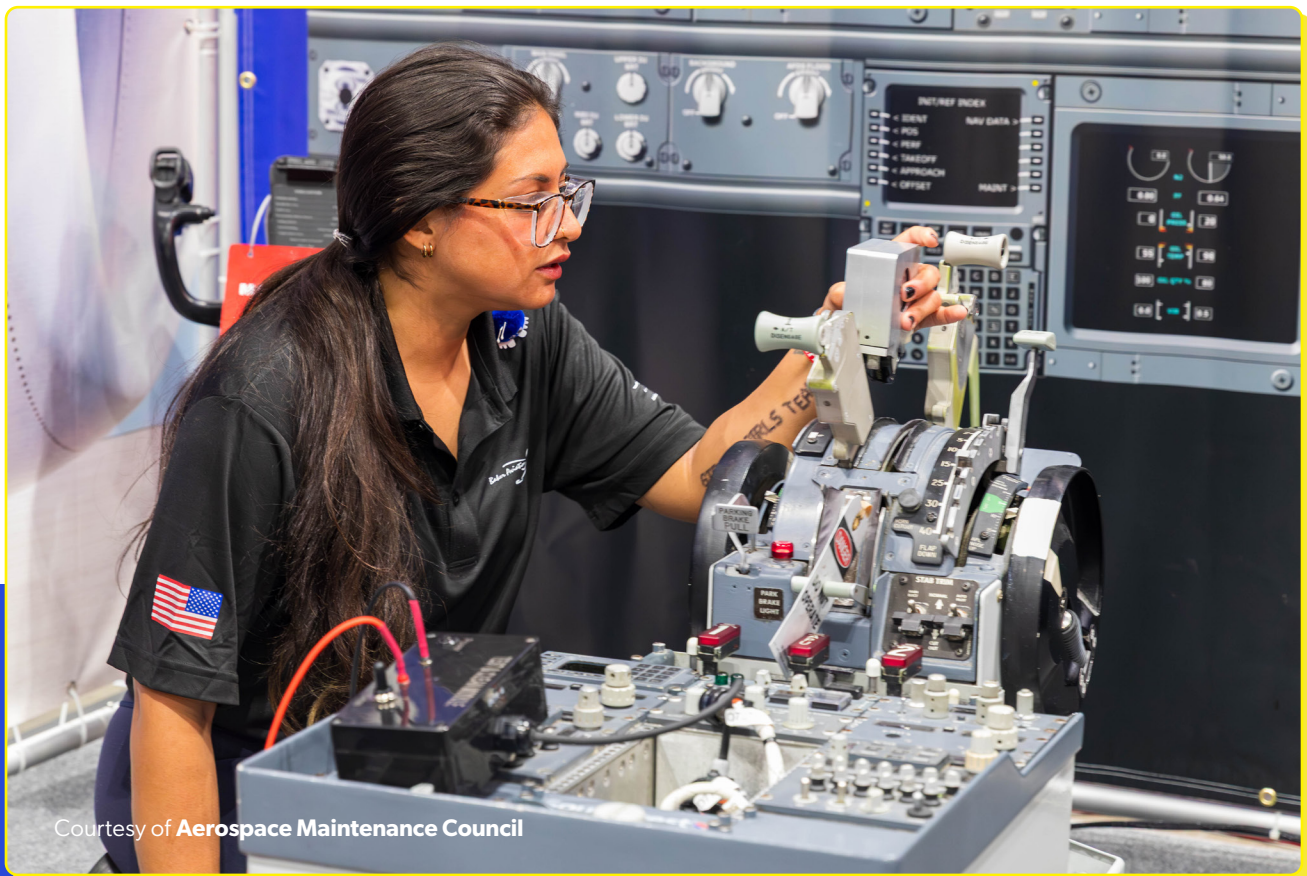
Marshall University

Pierpont Community and Technical College

Wisconsin

Fox Valley Technical College •

Milwaukee Area Technical College



Courtesy of Aerospace Maintenance Council



Photo courtesy of UTI



OLIVER WYMAN
A MARSH BUSINESS

Building Tomorrow's Technical Workforce.

ATEC-AMT.ORG/PIPELINE-REPORT