

Pennsylvania College  
of Technology

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## What Is Avionics?

Aviation electronics, or “avionics,” as it is called in the aviation industry, is the application of electronics to aviation. Aviation maintenance technicians are responsible for a wide variety of electronic equipment in modern aircraft. Avionics can include everything from televisions to satellite navigation systems.

The bachelor’s degree aviation maintenance technology program at Penn College includes a significant amount of hands-on experience with communication, navigation and radar systems used in the industry.

The combination of mechanical and electronics skills possessed by Penn College graduates makes them highly sought after in the aviation industry.

## Six Students From Ireland Receive Aviation Instruction

During the summer, Penn College hosted six students and a faculty member from the Institute of Technology Carlow in Ireland. The group took a three-credit class, specifically the Lycoming Engine Service School and Disassembly/Reassembly course taught by associate professor Jim E. Doebler. The students were accompanied by Paul Gibbons, who visited in February 2009. The group stayed in The Village at Penn College, going to class at the Aviation Center in Montoursville and having some Susquehanna Valley-specific fun while here. They attended the Piper Fly-in in Lock Haven and the Crosscutters baseball home opener, rode the Hiawatha and visited Knoebel’s Grove. The International Programs Office is thrilled that a trip to their school in November and Gibbons’ visit to Penn College has yielded a successful experience for a group of IT Carlow students.

# Wildcat Flyer

## Aviation Program Adjusts for Strong Rotorcraft Industry



*The donated Boeing-Bölkow BO-105C arrives at Lumley Aviation Center*

Pennsylvania College of Technology is strategically located in the heart of the helicopter industry. Three major helicopter manufacturers operate within a four-hour drive of the college’s Lumley Aviation Center. Graduates of the program are employed by Keystone Helicopter, Boeing Helicopters and Switzer Helicopters. In addition, other helicopter-operating companies and service centers compete to hire Penn College graduates. The helicopter industry has weathered the recession well. As a result, the college has integrated more helicopter training into the course.

Three sophomores and two graduates in the aviation maintenance technology major at Penn College attended the 2009 Heli-Expo held Feb. 22–24 in Anaheim, Calif. Attending were students Nathaniel A. Seacat, Lititz; Joshua E. Swanger, Northumberland; and Miles H. Weston, Newport, Va.; and alumni Wesley C. Miller, Reading, and Daniel C.



*Faculty and staff finish unloading the Hughes UH1*

Fantoni, Nottingham. Miller and Fantoni are employed by Keystone Helicopter, a division of Sikorsky Global Helicopters, in Coatesville. They participated in manufacturers’ technical briefings and a job fair. William Stepp III, associate professor of aviation, also attended.

Stepp, who developed the Rotary Wing Systems & Maintenance course, worked with the American Helicopter Museum and Education Center in Chester to obtain a Boeing-Bölkow BO-105C twin-engine helicopter. The museum donated the aircraft, which arrived at Penn College’s Aviation Center in December. Stepp is looking forward to using the aircraft in the course because the Boeing is equipped with a state-of-the-art rotor-head assembly. The BO-105C is powered by two Allison 400-horsepower jet engines, and can carry more than a ton at speeds up to 144 mph. The aircraft type is all-weather capable, and has been used as executive transports and as air ambulances. Although the helicopter will compliment the Rotary Wing class, the aircraft can be used in other classes, such as Sheet Metal Aircraft Structures, Airframe Electronic and Instrument Systems, and Avionics Maintenance Applications.

A Bell UH-1H helicopter, owned by the American Helicopter Museum and Education Center, arrived by truck in December for the start of a long-term restoration project. The museum asked the Aviation Center to restore the aircraft to display status, which Stepp III – who arranged the project – said will take approximately five years to complete. The helicopter can be used in several aviation courses, in particular, the capstone in the aviation maintenance technology bachelor’s-degree major. The UH1H is powered by a Lycoming T53 jet engine, rated at 1,400 horsepower. Designated by the military as an Iroquois, but known by most as a “Huey,” the aircraft can carry more than a ton 300 miles at speeds greater than 100 mph. Founded in 1996, the museum is dedicated exclusively to rotorcraft. It boasts a display of more than 35 military and civilian helicopters, autogyros and convertiplanes, including the V-22 Osprey.

## FAA Seminar Attracts Scores to Lumley Aviation Center

Nearly 100 people attended a recent Inspection Authorization renewal seminar at Penn College's Aviation Center. Aviation maintenance technicians with an Airframe and Powerplant certificate and at least two years' experience can receive inspection authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration. To maintain IA certification, technicians must complete at least eight hours of instruction each year. Renewal seminars at the college's aviation facility in Montoursville have proved quite popular – November's attendees came from as far as Fairfax, Va. – and many technicians fly in. This year, some mechanics arrived by a Lancaster corporation's private Citation jet. Presenters were Thomas D. Inman, associate professor of

avionics, who discussed human factors and error reduction in aviation maintenance, and part-time aviation instructor Michael R. Robison, who closed the day with a presentation on glider maintenance. During the event, Jim Pool, principal maintenance inspector for the FAA's Harrisburg Flight Standards District Office, presented the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award to Dana Smith, who has been an active pilot for more than 50 years and has a perfect safety record. The FAA gives the award in appreciation of dedicated service, technical expertise, professionalism and outstanding contributions to aviation safety; Smith won the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award in 2006.



FAA principle maintenance inspector presents award to Dana Smith



Nearly 100 mechanics and Penn College students attended the FAA renewal seminar

Many mechanics flew in to Lumley Center



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## Impressive Corporate Aircraft Returns to Aviation Center for Career Fair

In April, Philip Morris International brought its 2007 Gulfstream G-550 to the Williamsport Regional Airport to attend Penn College's Aviation Career Fair. Students toured the aircraft, which first visited the Aviation Center in 2007, when it was brand-new. During the Career Fair, Jim Delamater and Brian F. Popeck (a 2007 aviation maintenance technology graduate of Penn College) interviewed candidates for a maintenance internship. Air Wisconsin, Duncan Aviation (Battle Creek) and Sterling Helicopters also attended the career fair. Although economic conditions prevented a large number of companies from recruiting at the career fair, the attendees' needs accounted for more openings than there are graduates.



Debra Miller, Penn College director of corporate relations, and alum Brian Popeck



Gulfstream G-550

## Take a Tour

The faculty and staff at Pennsylvania College of Technology's Lumley Aviation Center are proud of their facility and would like to share it with you. The Aviation Center was completed in 1993, replacing a structure that dated to pre-WWII days. The facility sits on a multi-acre site and boasts 50,000 square feet of space – 11,000 square feet of which is used in the main hangar. In addition, two small structures sit to the west of the Aviation Center and serve as engine-demonstration cells that the students may use to safely start and operate recently overhauled engines. If you would like a tour of the facility, contact the Admissions Office at (800) 367-9222. You also may e-mail tinman@pct.edu.

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Lumley Aviation Center