



Michael Castania

Lieutenant Colonel, Civil Air Patrol (CAP)



I promote aviation and aerospace education through CAP's NJ Wing, National AE Volunteer Staff, and the NJ Aviation Education Council.

How long have you been involved with aviation and aerospace?

A total of 28 years including 10 years in my current role as NJWG, CAP Director of Aerospace Education. I'm also the AE Outreach Coordinator for CAP National Headquarters and the Executive Director of the NJ Aviation Education Council (<https://aviationec.org/>).

Where do you work?

CAP: Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst; Aviation Education Council: Home Office

How do you spend most of your time at work?

- Guest Speaker for educational conferences and conventions
- Promoting aerospace education and aviation topics to school districts, youth groups, STEM camps, etc.
- Researching and publishing daily aerospace/aviation articles on social media
- Participating in multiple webinars each week promoting aerospace and aviation
- Serving on a number of aviation advisory boards across the state



Why did you choose this career?

It chose me! I am a retired educator (35 years) and pilot (powered aircraft and gliders) who loves everything aviation... just seemed like the logical choice.

MICHAEL'S FUN FACTS

I read anything by Richard Bach (aviation writer – Jonathan Livingston Seagull among others)
I was recently inducted into the NJ Aviation Hall of Fame.

What did you do to prepare for this career?

- College (educational degrees)
- Employment (acquiring a thorough knowledge of the educational system)
- Field Grade Officer (Lt Col) accumulating a wealth leadership skills along the way
- Having a passion for what I do
- Networking: Working alongside other aviation/aerospace professionals
- Making each day a new learning experience!

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Ability to travel, public speaking opportunities, teaching, meeting new and interesting people, and flying!

What do you find most challenging about your job?

Simply keeping up with the daily ever-changing technology... I need to know what I am talking about. There is a lot of constantly changing information to digest each day.

What was one of your first jobs and how did that experience influence your career path?

Washing airplanes at the local airports in exchange for free airplane rides. I was able to learn firsthand from owners, instructors, mechanics, mentors, etc. They made me the person I have become. Now I am paying it forward.

What is one piece of advice you would give to a young person who is interested in your profession?

"If you can dream it, you can do it" – Walt Disney
 Dreams do come true!

