

Team Member Spotlight: Chief Pilot, Ryan Morris



Pictured above: Chief Pilot, Ryan Morris gives a walkaround tour of one of CommutAir's ERJ-145 aircraft at Embry Riddle

There are a handful of critical roles that each airline must keep staffed at all times of operation according to the FAA, and 'Chief Pilot' is amongst them. We had a chance to sit down with our Chief Pilot, Ryan Morris, and asked him to share some of his story.

What was it that first interested you in Aviation?

"When I was a kid, my dad was an enlisted man in the air force for twenty years, and so we lived on-base. I could see the military aircraft doing different maneuvers from the window at my desk in school - and was just fascinated with watching what they were doing. It really interested me, and I started to think, "I would really love to do that!"

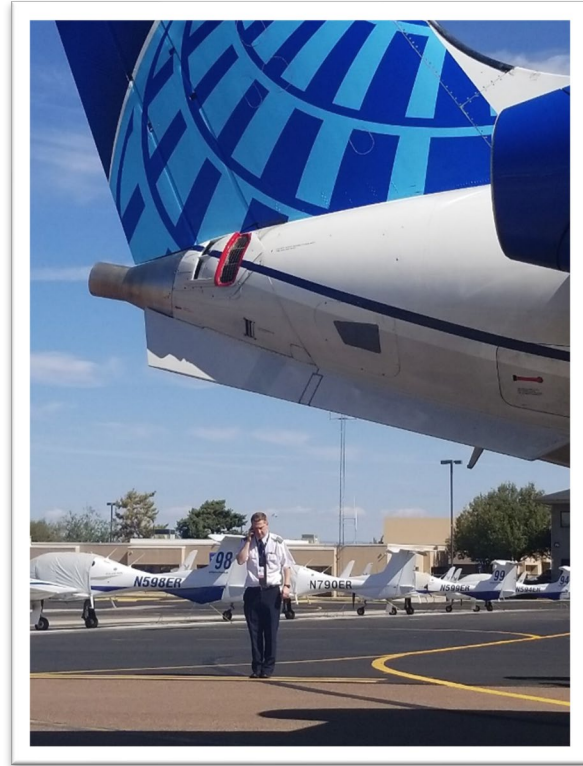


I really became inspired by my father's support: He told me, "Son, I never believed I was smart enough to become a pilot, but I believe you can."

What was your journey to becoming a pilot?

"Coming from a poor background in a family of five, at times it really felt like it might be impossible for me to become a pilot. Eventually I ended up working as a butcher after high school, the experiences I had doing that eventually led me to realize that that type of work wasn't for me – and it dawned on me that I had to achieve my personal mission of becoming a pilot. Working as a butcher, I was able to save up enough money to finance my path into the pilot program at ATP.

Being in the program you're expected to be in the seat every single day, and to complete this competitive program in just a couple of months. So, I essentially went from having no flying experience and cutting meat, to being a flight instructor within a six-month time period! I was immersed in the process and was constantly around my co-workers and flight students and delivered pizzas on the weekends during my free time to keep myself afloat.



After becoming a CFI, I had a few jobs as an instructor: first at Utah Valley University in my home state of Utah (where the cold weather wasn't so accommodating for getting flight hours), then down in Dallas at the US Aviation Academy - training international Chinese students on jet aircraft. I ended up getting a great offer from CommutAir to join as a full-time regional pilot and I took it!"

What piece of advice would you give to aspiring pilots as Chief?

"Every pilot has been taught by another pilot. And that pilot has taught another pilot. This process of mentorship makes the generations of aviators all part of the same fellowship, as well as the history of aviation. If you're willing to work hard, and stay focused, I believe that succeeding as a pilot is something that everyone can achieve. I want to inspire and train others to love and appreciate what we do – and to continue that process of passing on what I know."

"At CommutAir, we're one big team that often feels more like a family. As a United Express partner, we all share and employ the same Core4 values of being Safe, Caring, Dependable, and Efficient as an organization – but we also know that our shared success is directly due to the unique individuals that work so hard to make us better each day. We want to share the stories of the incredible people who make us a successful airline with the rest of the world!"