

Students Take Flight - Career Day Raffle Winners See Yellowstone National Park From The Air

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Wednesday, Sept. 27, two students got to experience Yellowstone from a different angle - more than 2,000 feet in the air. Freshman Adin Brown and sophomore Jake Mann took to the skies to explore the area by plane for over an hour - an opportunity that may come around only once.

Yellowstone Airport Manager Jeff Kadlec attended career day at the West Yellowstone School last spring, and those who attended his presentation were eligible for the flight.

Guest speaker at the career fair had different prizes and Kadlec felt he could offer something special to the students. "We thought, 'We have a couple of airplanes, it would be really cool to expose some students to aviation and get them up in the air,'" he said "Anyone that attended my presentation was able to put their name in the hat and then we had a drawing."

Coordinating the flight proved difficult over the summer, trying to match airport availability with the students. "We had our first flight that was scheduled was canceled due to weather," Kadlec said. "It took a while for us to get coordinated over the summer and have it work with the student's schedule as well."

Both students admitted they had only flown a handful of times, but never like this. The small, four-person plane took them over Yellowstone to the Grand Prismatic Spring, Quake Lake and then over to Big Sky.

Mann was able to look out the window as he flew over the school, seeing his fellow football players at practice. Tim Conway, MDT Aeronautics Airports and Airways Bureau Chief, flew over the students' homes, allowing them to see town from the sky.

Kadlec hopes to give additional students the opportunity to see Yellowstone by plane at future career fairs. "I think we will try and do it again next year," he said. "We will try and participate in the career fair next year and raffle off another flight to a different batch of kids."

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Sophomore Jake Mann does his best to contain his joy while flying over Yellowstone National Park.

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Freshman Adin Brown does not have a pilot's license, but that did not stop him from taking control of the airplane for a few minutes.

