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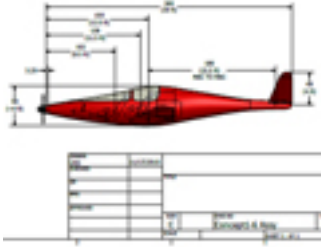
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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)

## Inaugural Aircraft Design Competition



**04.12.2011 | Engineering, Students** Brian Cranston has never traveled to the U.K. before. Based on his knowledge of aircraft design, however, that fact is about to change.

A total of six University of Dayton students will compete June 16 in the annual Merlin Flight Simulation Group's IT FLIES competition at Coventry University, U.K.

The students recently took part in the inaugural IT FLIES U.S. competition, held Saturday, April 2, at the University of Dayton. The competition was held in conjunction with the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Region III regional student conference.

The conference drew approximately 110 students, and 16 of the 40 University of Dayton students who attended placed in the competition. Cranston was the only student to place in two separate categories; the Team Paper and Presentation Category (second) and the individual Undergraduate Presentation Only Category (third). Joining Cranston for his team presentation were classmates John Puttmann, Logan Doster and Eric Hegedus. Cranston credits the University's School of Engineering for the University of Dayton students' success.

"The School of Engineering has improved the experience of its students by providing unique experiences with student research and senior design projects," Cranston said. "UD has put itself apart from the rest of the country in being the only school to have a flight simulator for educational purposes."

The flight simulator Cranston is referring to is the MP521 the University purchased from the Merlin Flight Simulation Group last November. It is used to test the accuracy of an aircraft design in a safer environment and is the only one in the U.S. and just one of 15 in the world.

"This machine enabled real test pilots to safely test the designs of the students in the competition," said Aaron Altman, University of Dayton associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering. "Because we are the only University in the United States to have a flight simulator on campus, it ensures that UD will continue to host the event, which says a lot about where the School of Engineering is headed."

University of Dayton students Andrew McClinton, Eric Fuerst, James Agans and Brian Walsh took particular advantage of having the simulator on campus, earning first place in the Flight Handling Competition for their design of a C-130H. These four students will join Cranston and Puttmann at the U.K. competition June 16.

The IT FLIES U.K. competition has been in existence since 2006 and the inaugural U.S. competition had several students from the U.K. represented by teams from Swansea and Coventry Universities. Cranston and his peers hope their participation this summer helps to "get UD's name out in the aerospace field and internationally."

"The students who came to UD from the U.K. said they had a remarkable time and would really be interested in creating a scholarly competition or rivalry between our schools," Cranston said. "I think this relationship could evolve into a research partnership in the future."

In addition to holding an annual aircraft design and handling competition, the Merlin Flight Simulation Group is the manufacturer of the world's most advanced engineering flight simulators. They were originally designed to teach subjective aspects of flight but have evolved to examine all aspects of aircraft design related principles.

***For more information about the event or the aircraft simulator, contact Aaron Altman at 937-229-5353 or [Aaron.Altman@notes.udayton.edu](mailto:Aaron.Altman@notes.udayton.edu).***