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BEYOND»

MAGAZINE SEPTEMBER 2017

INSPIRED EDUCATION:

Fostering a
lifetime of learning

AUTHENTIC SINGAPORE:

Discovering the city's
cultural treasures

CHASING DREAMS

SEATTLE QUARTERBACK
RUSSELL WILSON MOTIVATES
A NEW GENERATION





Russell Wilson joined other speakers in encouraging students to work hard to achieve their dreams. Fourteen of the students were rewarded with Alaska Airlines scholarships, presented by CEO Brad Tilden (below left).





PHOTOS BY INGRID BARENTINE

INSPIRED»

CHASING DREAMS

Russell Wilson and Alaska Airlines challenge graduates to be tireless in developing their talents

» **Recent high school graduates** in the south Seattle area have a lot to think about: university, trade school, entering a competitive job market. But they're encouraged. Enthusiastic even.

No matter what their dreams are, they have what it takes to succeed, Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson told them.

In June, some 1,500 seniors from the Highline and Tukwila school districts gathered at The Museum of Flight to not only celebrate achievements, but also to share their visions of what lies ahead. And amid their personal trepidations, they heard encouragement from Wilson as well as from the leaders of the event's sponsor, Alaska Airlines.

The messages: Be passionate about what you want, and pursue your dreams with conviction, one step at a time.

"I always knew what I was going to be," Wilson said of his career, which has included leading the Seattle Seahawks to their first Super Bowl championship. "I knew what I was going to do, and I knew how I was going to get there. It's all the times I woke up early; it's all the hard work. It's all the dedication, the passion and the love for what I'm doing."

Wilson has been a popular speaker among youths (for instance, he's hosted the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Sports Awards the past three years), and the airline, which calls Wilson its Chief Football Officer, partners with the Seattle celebrity to advance its special focus on education.

For Alaska CEO Brad Tilden, himself a graduate of Highline High School, that focus is about the future of the Seattle area, the aerospace industry and Alaska Airlines. "The world has a lot of needs—our industry, in particular, needs employees who will help our airline grow and serve more guests far into the future. That means opportunities for students such as yourselves."

Alaska will hire at least 3,000 employees in the next year, Tilden said, including pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, dispatchers, programmers, customer service agents, accountants and more. He told the students, gathered on the floor of the museum's massive collection of aircraft and spacecraft, "Nothing would make us happier than to hire people

from our backyard, from right here.”

Among the other speakers assembled to give the students a boost was Trevor Moawad, a mental-conditioning coach who worked with Wilson to prepare him for the NFL draft, and through the years since has been helping to guide his success on and off the football field. Moawad is also coaching Alaska executives in their quest to make the airline the premier West Coast carrier following its recent acquisition of Virgin America.

Moawad, who was born and raised just south of Seattle, followed in his father’s footsteps as a peak-performance educator. He worked with the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida—an academy designed to train the top young athletes in the country. That’s where he met Wilson, a young man who was considered by most in the NFL to be too small and too slow to be the star athlete and leader he became in just his first few seasons.

“We all measure ourselves against others,” Moawad told the group at The Museum of Flight. “As you take these steps, you have to understand that you have enough ability to get to the top of the mountain. You have enough ability to accomplish what you want, if you take one step at a time.”

Success, he emphasized following the event, “is not all about aptitude or education or socioeconomics. It’s the want and drive.” He cited the people on stage with him.

» **Trevor Moawad coaches executives as well as top athletes on mental conditioning.**



INGRID BARRENTINE

INVESTING IN EDUCATION

Alaska Airlines is a strong supporter of youths and education, focusing especially on providing opportunities to underrepresented youths from disadvantaged communities. Following are just a few of the organizations the airline supports:

■ The Road Map Project

Alaska has committed to a five-year investment in the Road Map Project, a communitywide education effort aimed at driving improvement in student achievement, from cradle to college and career, in South Seattle and South King County. The goal: 70 percent of the area’s youths earning a college or career credential by 2030.

■ Alaska Airlines Aerospace Education Center at The Museum of Flight

Alaska has committed to a 10-year investment at The Museum of Flight specific to the AAAEC. The hands-on center allows youths of all ages to explore aerospace inventions, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities and new technology. The AAAEC is also a place where kids can learn how to participate in programs and events, and it features resources for college and career planning. The AAAEC opened in March 2015 and has served more than 61,100 young people from disadvantaged communities.

■ CHOICES Educational Group

CHOICES is an interactive decision-making workshop that empowers teens to achieve academic success in pursuit of career and life aspirations. It takes students through real-world exercises in self-discipline, goal setting, and time and money management, and demonstrates the value of staying in school. Alaska’s employee volunteers have worked with every eighth-grader in the Highline school district over the last three years—nearly 3,900 students. Alaska recently launched this program in Portland, as well, with its Horizon Air employees.

■ United Negro College Fund

Alaska’s newest Charity Miles partner—United Negro College Fund—helps students achieve their dreams of going to college. Alaska’s Charity Miles program provides a meaningful way to support a cause through

the donation of miles. UNCF’s mission is to build a robust, nationally recognized pipeline toward underrepresented students becoming college graduates.



LARKIN STREET

■ Larkin Street Youth Services

Larkin Street provides homeless youths, ages 12 to 24, a safe place to rebuild their lives. In 2016, Larkin Street served 3,000 young people in the San Francisco Bay Area by offering housing, education and employment training, and health and wellness support. Alaska and Virgin America support Larkin Street through donated funds and employee giving programs.

■ Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program

In 2015, Alaska Airlines committed to a three-year, \$1 million grant to help transport Alaska students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades to Anchorage to attend ANSEP’s award-winning Middle School Academy program. Held at the University of Alaska Anchorage, the ANSEP Academy promotes STEM education and supports Alaska’s historically underserved students.

Academy students attend classes that include problem-solving, research and communication skills incorporated with biology, chemistry, physics, environmental sciences, Earth sciences, engineering and design concepts, and field excursions.

Since 2015, more than 1,700 students from more than 100 communities have attended the Middle School Academy.

More than 75 percent of Middle School Academy students complete Algebra 1 before graduating eighth grade, compared to 26 percent nationally.

Since the program’s inception in 1995, more than 70 percent of ANSEP students who began a STEM-oriented bachelor’s degree went on to graduate. ✕

» **INSPIRED
EDUCATION**

Tilden and Wilson both had a vision and a plan for what they wanted to do at a young age, he said. “Their achievements didn’t come easily, but they worked at things one step at a time.

“Do the simple things savagely well,” he said. “That’s what works.”

Alaska Airlines seeks to support students’ goals and achievements by providing education-related opportunities not only in the Seattle area, but in the states of Alaska, Oregon, California and throughout the West. The airline supports everything from K-12 programs focused on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to programs that recognize achievements in science, business and other academic areas and that encourage creative thinking. One such program is the Alaska Airlines Imagine Tomorrow Competition, created

by Washington State University in 2008 to challenge students in grades nine through 12 to develop enterprising solutions for renewable energy.

Last year, Alaska Air Group and its employees gave a record \$13.5 million in communities the airlines serve, with much of that giving directed toward disadvantaged youths and education. Financial contributions and volunteer efforts benefited more than 35,000 kids last year, and by 2020, the company expects to be benefiting more than 100,000 kids per year.

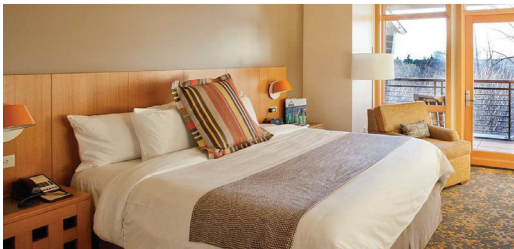
Much of that support comes from employees who volunteer in programs such as CHOICES, in which employees serve as role models for children in Highline district middle schools, helping the children understand how the decisions they make even at a young age can

“It’s not so much what talents you have. ... It’s how you persevere and do the hard work of cultivating the talents you have,” Enfield says.

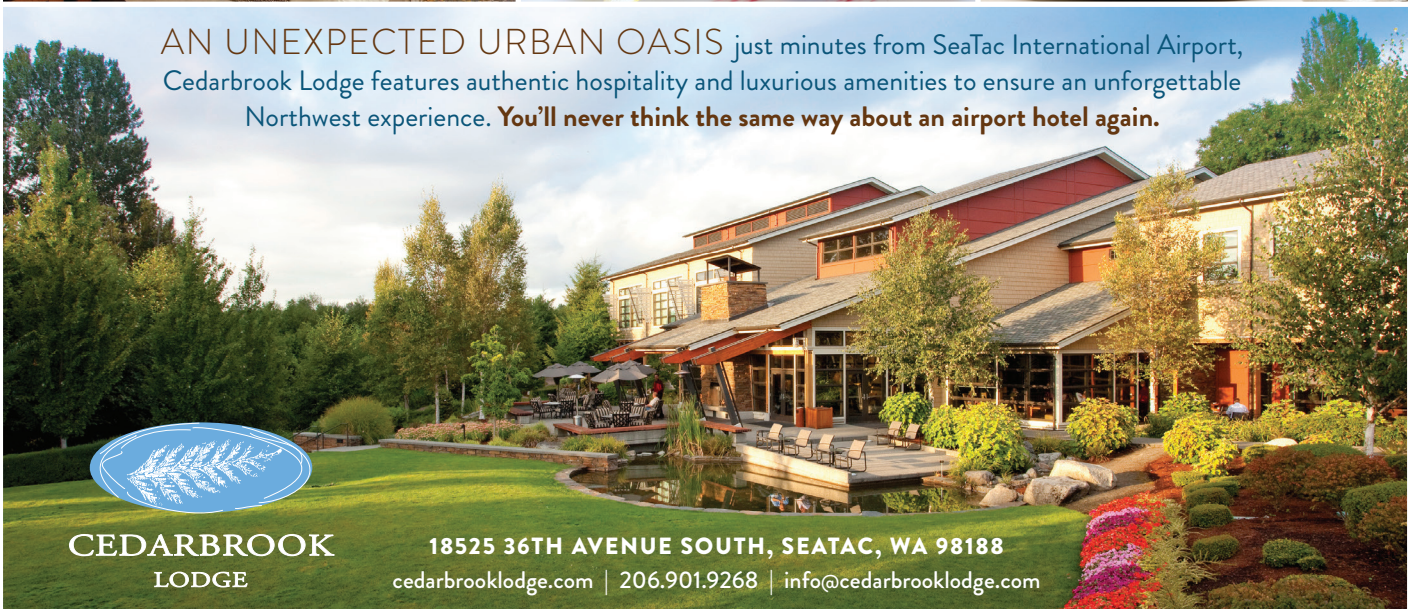
impact life dreams and career paths.

Susan Enfield, superintendent of the Highline district, appreciates Alaska Airlines’ support. She also notes the huge impact a personality such as Wilson can have on 17-year-old students in a district in which many kids deal with challenging circumstances. “It’s not so much what talents you have,” she says. “It’s what you do with your talents. It’s how you persevere and do the hard work of cultivating the talents you have. That’s a powerful message for these kids.” —*Paul Frichtl*

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