

"Our ceiling is their floor"

Nathan Harbstreit reflects on four generations of aviators

When I began to write an update on Cook Aircraft Leasing, I considered the various aspects of flight operations. Should it be from the perspective of the passenger, the patient, the mechanics, or the pilots? Or, how the flight department is used as a business tool? Pre-COVID, the flight department flew an average of one trip every day of the year in support of the patient in one way or another. This included meetings with the FDA, suppliers, physicians, researchers, engineers, and various other professionals.

It wasn't until a brief conversation that I had with President of Cook Research Incorporated (CRI) **Jennifer Kerr**, who is also a pilot, that it dawned on me—what we're doing is accumulating as much wisdom and knowledge in our area or field as possible in order to transfer that knowledge to the next generation.

On one of our frequent trips to West Lafayette, Indiana (home of CRI and several other Cook companies), as we were waiting for the final passengers to arrive, Jennifer and I were discussing my eldest son's recent 16th birthday. It was a very special day for a few reasons. First, this is only the 4th actual birthday we've been able to celebrate since



▲ Pictured are, from left: **Bob Harbstreit**, **Zed Harbstreit**, and **Nathan Harbstreit**. They are three of four generations of aviators.

he was born on Leap Day 2004. The second reason that this birthday was so special is because **Zed** soloed an airplane that day. For those who aren't familiar with this, he was at the controls while his instructor (**Micah Briner**, also a Cook pilot), his mother, his younger brother, and a few other family members, including me, watched him do his required takeoffs and landings. What an exciting moment for a dad, not to mention a white-knuckle experience for a mother!

Zed is the fourth generation in our family to become an aviator. My father, **Bob Harbstreit**, flew for **Mr. Cook** for many years before me. My father's father, **Carlton**, was a barnstormer in Southern Indiana before him. Now it is Zed's turn to take to the skies. Zed has two great passions: basketball and aviation. For a dad from Indiana who is also a pilot, can it get any better than that?

So, as I watch my son's dreams and plans come to fruition, I can't help

but see the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next and the parallels between this and the growth and development of our Cook family of companies in the same way. I believe that this is actually the heartbeat of all of our endeavors—to train the next generation and to give them a solid foundation of knowledge and wisdom to start their journey.

Our ceiling is their floor.

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What's on your mind? Let us know by sending us a message at Angiogram@CookMedical.com.