The Pegasus “Wings” Program (Wings) is an innovative 501(c)3 non-profit ‘pilot training’ scholarship fund initially targeting deprived youth in the Greater Hartford community. Wings was authored and developed under the auspices of Pegasus Air Charter - a progressive Air Charter company headquartered at Brainard Airport, in Hartford Connecticut. Pegasus also offers Air Ambulance services, Professional Flight Training services and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) aka Drone services.

The explicit mandate of the Wings program is Workforce Development - an effort organized in partnership with the City of Hartford - specific to the development and implementation of a radical and turnkey pilot training pipeline. The timing of Wings; its development and execution, as a sustainable jobs-producing program, is also germane given the current industry condition and forecasts relating to the chronic shortage of commercial pilots both at home and abroad.

Essentially, Wings was conceptualized on the merit of opportunity, catering specifically to the pilot shortage crisis plaguing the US and the rest of the world!

In response to this dilemma, Pegasus has developed a unique pilot training Concept Model that is narrowly tailored to target and inspire the career aspirations of youth at becoming airline pilots. The Wings program is a fully developed and well-distilled ‘jobs funnel’ initiative and is scheduled to debut in August 2017 at Hartford Brainard’s “downtown” Airport.

And in recognition of a successful development effort, Pegasus is pleased to announce its key partnerships in developing, molding and implementing Wings, further underscoring the impetus for this ground-breaking endeavor. Our current partnerships, sponsors and donors include:

1) The Hartford Rib-Off 501 (c) 3 non-profit;
2) The City of Hartford and allied stakeholders;
3) The Flying Monkey Restaurant (located at Brainard Airport) and;
4) The Business Community and other private sponsors and donors.

Selection Process:

A hallmark feature of Wings is its community-centric application and selection process. This process guarantees participation from the wider community ensuring input and insights from:

- Hartford’s Public Schools - Vocational; Charter; Magnet;
- Faith-based Civic youth groups;
- The wider Business Community and;
- Key Wings administrators.

Local schools and youth groups will be invited to participate in the recommendation of suitable candidates - and placed into a pool pending the availability of training slots - and will be guided through the standard Wings application process, a copy of which is appended below.

Upon establishment, Pegasus will employ a metered expansion plan to include deprived youth from neighboring townships. This phased expansion will reflect the mandates of Wings but, more importantly, will reflect the dictates and desires of the wider support community.

Pegasus affirms its commitment to recruiting, training, employing, and promoting young pilot applicants through its continuum of aviation services and to the establishment of the first “Pilot Training Pipeline - PTP” in the nation (right here in Hartford CT)!!!

Pegasus further envisions Wings becoming the Gold Standard in Public/Private Partnerships - within the ambit of Workforce Development - aspiring to challenge the system in ensuring total success of this ground-breaking endeavor.
Funding:

Initial funding for Wings is derived from the Hartford Rib-Off 501(c)3 non-profit; the Principals of the Hartford Jet Center and Pegasus Air Charter (Robert “Bob” Morande and Lindsey Rutka); The Flying Monkey Grill & Bar (located at Brainard Airport) and other private sponsors and donors for which Pegasus is truly thankful! Robert Morande and Lindsey Rutka will be chiefly responsible for fiscal oversight and control of the Wings endowment.

The Wings curriculum will be administered by: 1) Barry Alexander - Director of Operations (DOO) for Pegasus Air Charter, veteran Airline Pilot and Certified Flight Instructor; 2) Cyril Pham - General Manager for the Hartford Jet Center and Chief Pilot for Pegasus and 3) Tysha Wiggins - Business Administrator for Pegasus and the Hartford Jet Center, Pilot and Mentor.

Pegasus will also target other business citizens and will work with Hartford corporations through the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) to ensure business-wide support for Wings.

Sustaining Communities:

The Pegasus “Wings” Program was developed on the basis of true-life data relating to the global shortage of commercial pilots. This has inspired the development of Wings’, further solidifying its mission of seeking-out, engaging and training deprived teenagers to become Commercial Pilots. Once successfully trained and certified, Wings graduates will receive guaranteed job placements within Pegasus’ air charter operation - as First Officers, ultimately placing them on a progressive career track towards becoming successful airline pilots.

While the underlying objective of Wings is to bolster the rapport between Brainard Airport and the City of Hartford, Pegasus envisions Greater Hartford becoming the pilot training mecca of the entire nation!! Accordingly, Pegasus is making strategic investments relevant its ambitions, such as the addition of a third (and nationally recognized) flight training academy at Brainard.
The Facts:

The global aviation industry is facing a critical pilot shortage. This was initially thought to only be a threat in the rapidly expanding Middle East and Asian markets, but the shortage has spread to North America, Europe and Africa.

According to commercial aviation consultants, the global supply of commercial airline pilots is estimated at 281,000. Airbus and Boeing (industry leaders/aircraft manufacturers) both foresee strong traffic growth continuing, with Boeing projecting global demand for 558,000 pilots by 2034. Boeing has since increased its 20-year projection to 617,000 new commercial airline pilots, a 10.5% increase over its 2015 outlook. This unprecedented demand will be driven by record orders which will see the world’s airliner fleet almost double from 23,000 aircraft in 2014 to a 44,500 by 2033.

Other Noteworthy Particulars & Facts:

- You do not need 20/20 vision to become a commercial pilot;
- You do not need a four-year college degree to fly commercially for the airlines (it is simply a recommendation);
- You do not need perfect math scores, just an understanding of basic mathematical concepts and principles. Whatever you need to know will be taught at Wings;
- Second-year salary at most major airlines exceed $100,000

The Cost of Pilot Training

A major factor driving fewer people to consider the airline pilot career is the cost of training. In the past, many airline pilots have come from a steady source of retiring military cockpit crews, though as those numbers have gradually dwindled, the onus has shifted on to civilian-trained. Aspiring pilots, who can’t secure a place on the limited number of airline sponsored training schemes, need to find large sums of money to pay for their own ab-initio-to-ATPL training costs, and in many cases, a Type Rating too, before an airline will consider them employable.
Pegasus believes that the catalyst for change is two-fold: 1) the “efficiency problem” which reflects the concern of keeping training costs within controllable limits - hence Pegasus’ investment in an additional training apparatus and 2) the “equity problem” which refers to the problem of access to quality education and training especially with deprived teenagers. In that regard, Pegasus is absolutely resolute in enforcing the selection of its candidates based primarily on extenuating circumstances i.e. being disadvantaged and disenfranchised.

**The Solution:**

**The Pegasus “Wings” Pilot Training Fund:** an Aviation Pathway Program (APP) designed to ignite the career ambitions of less privileged teenagers in pursuing their commercial pilot’s license, coordinated through a collaborative and community-wide selection process and effort.

Pegasus affirms its suitability and capacity in implementing and bolstering this project and welcome the participation of the entire community in planning and defining its future!!!