

GT AIAA: Delta TechOps Tour

Claire Keller¹ and Ethan Traub²

Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA, 30332

I. Summary

One of the many benefits for students joining AIAA is the opportunity to interact with aerospace professionals in settings they might not otherwise encounter. The AIAA branch at Georgia Tech has sought to strengthen the relationship between its students and the local Atlanta section through attending the Atlanta section meetings and connecting with local professionals. One particular event that arose out of this collaboration was a tour of the Delta TechOps facilities, which is the maintenance, repair, and overhaul division of Delta Air Lines. This tour not only provided an opportunity for students to explore hardware up-close, it also allowed for networking and connection with local aerospace professionals over a shared interest in flight.

With a tour capacity of 25 students, a sign up sheet for the event was created to register on a first come, first serve basis, with priority given to AIAA national members. We organized carpooling for all registered students to drive to Delta TechOps, located right outside of the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta Airport. The students were split up into two groups, each group led by two Delta engineers. The tour highlighted many of the tools needed to repair and maintain the Delta fleet, including the facilities for engine testing, maintenance, and even a vacuum chamber. The students had the unique opportunity to ask the engineers leading the tour about their experiences working at Delta and the many circumstances that can lead an airplane to require maintenance!

The highlight of the tour for many attendees was the result of the conjunction of the tour date with Delta's 11th Annual Veterans Appreciation Event. Aircraft including a Chinook helicopter, C-17 Globemaster, V-22 Osprey, F-16s, A-10s, and a pair of F-16 Eagles were scattered around one of Delta's hangars where the students were able to walk around and observe the aircraft up close. Periodically taxiing over to the nearby runway, these aircraft allowed the students to observe their takeoff with a front row view. There were Delta planes in the hangars as well: a Boeing 737 was undergoing maintenance and students were able to walk around the aircraft to observe and take pictures.

This unique event allowed for aerospace students to personally observe the very planes they study in a classroom environment. The students learned more about the crucial testing and maintenance procedures of one of the major airlines in the United States. They experienced the unique opportunity to watch both civilian and military aircraft takeoff while having aerospace engineers nearby to personally question about the various aircraft. This event was only possible due to the collaboration of Georgia Tech with the AIAA members of the Atlanta section, and we look forward to fostering that relationship to continue to provide educational and exciting events to all our members.

¹ Undergraduate Student, Aerospace Engineering Department, AIAA Student Member

² Undergraduate Student, Aerospace Engineering Department, AIAA Student Member