

David Betts: Living the Aviation Dream in Australia

David Betts, winner of a Helicopter Foundation International (HFI) 2017 Maintenance Technician Certificate Scholarship, has worked in the aviation industry in Queensland, Australia, for 20 years, holding jobs ranging from rescue swimmer, paramedic, and aircrew winch operator. But it wasn't until he was given a chance by Michael Yipp of Becker Helicopters to work as an apprentice maintenance technician that he reached his long-time goal of aviation maintenance.

Having already obtained his Diploma of Justice and Diploma of Health Science Paramedical Studies,

Betts is currently working to complete his Bachelor of Health Science. He believes "education is the cornerstone

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of success." It was perfect timing when he saw the advertisement for the HFI scholarship program in ROTOR. Betts plans to use the scholarship to pay for additional training for Australia's Civil Aviation Safety Authority licensed

aviation maintenance engineer examinations and registration.

Betts continues to work at Becker Helicopters in Queensland, which gives him great experience because of the number of hours they fly and the standardization of the fleet — the company operates 18 Bell 206 JetRangers to provide students with a consistent training environment.

"Becker has a rebuild program where we completely strip down the airframe, paint strip, replace the wiring, and rebuild the aircraft from the ground up," Betts says. "It's a fantastic program for an apprentice. We also carry out overhauls in addition to general servicing. This broad range of work is giving me a solid base and understanding of the maintenance industry. I feel as though I could not wish for a better start as an apprentice."

Once his apprenticeship is complete, Betts looks forward to continuing to grow and learn as an engineer. "As for the long term, we will see where I end up. Life has presented many opportunities to me as a result of my experience in the aviation industry, and I am forever amazed at the skills, knowledge, and mentors I have been fortunate enough to come across in the aviation industry. I hope to one day be in a position to be able to return this good fortune to the industry."

When asked about his advice to those considering a career in aviation, Betts says, "Go for it! Read widely and always be open to the many opportunities that this amazing industry presents." 

Allison McKay is vice president of Helicopter Foundation International.



Upcoming HFI Events

SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

All proceeds will fund scholarships for future pilots and mechanics

- ▶ Las Vegas National Golf Course
Las Vegas, NV • Sun., Feb. 25
Check-in 10 AM
Shotgun start at 12:00 PM
Register at rotor.org/golf

HERITAGE OF HELICOPTERS

Take a break from aviation's latest on the HAI HELI-EXPO show floor and visit this display of vintage rotorcraft

- ▶ Booth #C8131
Las Vegas Convention Center
Tue., Feb. 27 – Thu., Mar. 1

ONLINE SILENT AUCTION

Support HFI's missions of preserving the past, ensuring the future

- ▶ Bid 24/7 at
www.biddingforgood.com/HFI
Mon., Feb. 19, 12:00 PM PST
Thu., Mar. 1, 4:00 PM PST

CAREER ROUNDTABLE

Thinking about a career in the helicopter industry? Looking to take your rotorcraft career to the next level?

- ▶ Las Vegas Convention Center,
N111
Tue., Feb 27, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

HELICOPTER INDUSTRY CAREER FAIR

Find the job that will advance your career

- ▶ Las Vegas Convention Center,
N113/114
Tue., Feb. 27, 10:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Free for attendees but registration is required
Register at rotor.org/careerfair

