

Three Local Aviation Students Receive 2018 SCAPA \$1,200 Scholarships

Contributed by Mark van Wyk
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Three local aviation students each received a \$1,200 scholarship sponsored by the South County Airport Pilots Association (SCAPA), a non-profit San Martin organization dedicated to preserving the San Martin Airport and providing disaster airlift relief in times of emergency.

Click here for a photo of winners. Photo caption: From left: Niki Britton, SCAPA Scholarship Coordinator; scholarship winner Vasilios Karapanos, scholarship winner Matthew Steele; scholarship winner Martin Mendez; and Mike Brogley, SCAPA President.

Martin Mendez of Salinas is enrolled in the FAA-certified AMT program at the Gavilan College aviation facility at San Martin Airport in San Martin, CA. Martin started his passion for aviation at Salinas Airport where he worked at an aircraft refinishing facility. Martin is working toward certification as an Airframe & Powerplant (A&P) mechanic. Martin is interested in a career as an aircraft A&P mechanic, and wants to obtain his private pilot certificate.

Matthew Steel lives in San Jose and majors in Aviation at San Jose State University. Matthew currently works at Palo Alto Airport as an Airport Operations Specialist, and volunteers for Angel Flight. Matthew obtained his private pilot certificate in 2017, and he continues his flight training while working towards his degree at SJSU, with a goal after graduation to be commissioned as an officer in the United States Marine Corps and to serve as a Marine Naval Aviator.

Vasilios Karapanos lives in Gilroy and is enrolled in the Gavilan College Aviation Maintenance Technology Program, where he is working on achieving his A&P certification. Vasilios intends to enroll at San Jose State University Aviation in pursuit of a B.S. in Aviation Maintenance Management. Vasilios is currently working to obtain his private pilot certificate with an instrument rating.

The three scholarship awardees were selected by the SCAPA Board of Directors from an impressive field of applicants, basing their selection on applications which demonstrated motivation, achievement, and financial need toward their future in aviation. Candidates currently enrolled in a flight training program or an aviation maintenance program in the Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey County areas were eligible to apply.

The SCAPA Scholarship program is an annual event made possible by the generous support of the individual members of SCAPA.

SCAPA is a non-profit organization involving pilots and aviation enthusiasts with the mission to preserve the San Martin Airport, improve community relations, and enhance flying safety. SCAPA has an active Disaster Airlift Response Team (DART) also based at the San Martin Airport, working to provide local general aviation support capabilities for the South Santa Clara County community.