PIPER AIRCRAFT AWARDED ITS LARGEST DOMESTIC TRAINER ORDER IN COMPANY HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

News / Maintenance / Trainings, Manufacturer

Piper Aircraft announced a historic new fleet agreement for up to 188 aircraft, valued at approximately $155M, with the University of North Dakota's John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences (UND Aerospace). This contract solidifies a partnership of nearly four decades that will continue to shape the future of pilot training for the next eight-to-ten years, positioning both organizations at the forefront of aviation training and innovation.

The contract includes an initial order of 145 aircraft, comprised of both the Archer TX and Seminole, over an eight-year term beginning in 2027, with the potential for up to 188 total aircraft through an optional two-year extension into 2036. This agreement surpasses UND's 2016 order for 112 aircraft, concluding in 2026.Flight schools worldwide rely on robust, cost-effective aircraft and collaborative customer support to maximize fleet utilization. Piper credits much of its success in meeting these customer support demands through 24/7 technical support, parts availability, and a seamless customer experience.

Robert J. Kraus, PhD, PfMP, Dean of UND John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences

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commented: “Piper remains a vital collaborator in the continued success of flight training at UND. We look forward to strengthening our relationship as we prepare the next generation of pilots for careers in the airlines, business aviation, and the U.S. military. The entire Piper team has been outstanding—responsive to our needs and collaborative in enhancing the components and capabilities of the Archer TX and Seminole.”

Jeremy Roesler, Director of Flight Operations at UND Aerospace commented: “The Piper Archer TX and Seminole are a perfect fit for UND Aerospace. The Piper team is great to work with and continues to provide top-notch customer service for our students and aviation program. The aircraft are dependable and play a big part in keeping our students safe in all of their phases of pilot training. Without a doubt, Piper is the leading manufacturer for the commercial pilot training community.”

Ron Gunnarson, Vice President of Sales, Marketing, Customer Support, and Quality at Piper stated: “Piper values the relationship we share with UND at the highest level. The world-class flight training at UND sets the standard for the entire industry. To see them once again choose our aircraft and associated support systems is the ultimate point of pride for the 1,500 hard working men and women at Piper Aircraft.”

Chad Martin, Aircraft and Fleet Sales Manager, UND Aerospace said: “UND Aerospace is thrilled to deepen our collaboration with Piper Aircraft, a company that not only delivers reliable and advanced training platforms like the Archer TX and Seminole at a fair price, but also stays ahead of the curve with innovative safety and convenience features. Piper’s exceptional customer support and their downright fun-to-fly aircraft make them an ideal fit for our program—and the people behind the planes make the experience even better.”

For many years, Piper and UND Aerospace have maintained a strong working relationship, with UND consistently selecting Piper trainers for their dispatch reliability and ease of maintenance, innovative technology, and overall suitability for a high-use flight training environment.

UND Aerospace operates a training fleet that totals 176 aircraft and devices, including the 20 Archer TX and Seminole aircraft delivered in 2025. Between the 1,300 flight hours per airframe averaged annually per Archer TX, with approximately 900 hours per Seminole, UND’s choice of fleet aircraft must be able to withstand the rigors of a high-use flight training environment, while taking into account the unique needs of a program of UND’s size. “The teamwork between Piper and UND Aerospace is first rate,” said Dan Kasowski, UND Aerospace Director of Maintenance. “This partnership and willingness to work together has helped craft the Archer TX and Seminole into the preeminent training aircraft for UND and the rest of the flight training world.” UND Aerospace utilizes their Piper fleet to achieve 125,000 flight training hours each year at their flagship Grand Forks campus in North Dakota, and an additional 65,000 hours at its Phoenix, Arizona campus, demonstrating its scale and focus on producing skilled pilots.

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