

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

USAF Supports Gender Diversity with Massive B-52 Bomber

Boeing B-52 Stratofortress and Crew from 307th Bomber Wing hoping to attract diverse talent at World's Largest Aviation, Aerospace, Marine & Defence Diversity Event



Vancouver, BC- February 1, 2017 –
The world's longest serving and most versatile combat aircraft in military history will be available for participants to explore at The Sky's No Limit – Girls Fly Too! free outreach event at the Abbotsford International Airport on March 11-12, 2017.

The Boeing B-52 Stratofortress is a long-range, subsonic, jet-powered strategic bomber. The B-52 entered active service with the United States Air Force (USAF) in 1955 and is scheduled to continue as part of the USAF inventory through 2040. Out of 744 aircraft built, 76 remain in service.

The B-52 has a massive, 185-foot wingspan, weighs about 185,000 pounds and an ability to reach high sub-sonic speeds and altitudes of 50,000 feet.

"The 307th Bomb Wing is looking forward to showcasing the Boeing B-52H Stratofortress aircraft and crew capabilities at such a unique, international diversity event" said Colonel Robert Burgess, Operations Group Commander, 307th Bomb Wing. "The primary mission of the 93rd Bomb Squadron that will be attending the event is to train B-52 aircrew to employ the B-52 in combat overseas." He also adds, "An inclusive culture serves the Air Force mission in many ways; it creates a positive work environment that cultivates innovation, it is a foundation upon which we build strategic relationships, and it attracts diverse talent to serve the Air Force and the nation."

"Boeing Vancouver, and the broader Boeing team in Canada are proud to support efforts like this that give females of all ages an opportunity to experience flight for the first time, and to see some of the world's greatest aircraft first-hand," said Kim Westenskow, general manager, Boeing Winnipeg. "Through these unique opportunities, we hope to inspire the next-generation to take to the skies and pursue careers in the aviation, aerospace or defence fields."

The Sky's No Limit - Girls Fly Too! is the world's largest outreach initiative to inspire female future leaders in Aviation, Aerospace, Marine and Defence, and the free events held annually during the Week of International Women's Day change lives. Events are fun, hands-on, and completely free to ensure there are no barriers to participation. This is thanks to the generous support of industry and community

partners such as Boeing, Abbotsford International Airport, Teck Construction, BCIT, Government of British Columbia; Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and the University of the Fraser Valley. Events are open to the public and everyone is welcome (any age, any gender, any ability) – no registration is required to attend.

Aside from the thrill of exploring unique aircraft and meeting the crews, participants will get to meet NASA Astronaut Heidi Stefanyshyn-Piper. Free flights are offered to female first-time fliers of all ages to draw the females to the airport and pique their interest in further exploring the hands-on ground activities. As well, all participants (male and female) are encouraged to try their hand at many Aviation, Aerospace, Marine and Defence activities. Participants can expect to see aircraft and tactical assets from The Royal Canadian Navy, Royal Canadian Air Force, Canadian Army, Canadian Coast Guard, RCMP, Cadets, US Military, Civil Air Search & Rescue, plus civilian and education partners from Aviation, Aerospace, Marine and Defence. Visit www.girlsfly2.ca for more information and event updates.

Previous events have been supported by the Canadian Coast Guard, RCMP, Canadian Forces, Cadets, Canadian Space Agency, US Air Force, US Navy and other agency, industry and education partners. The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia; The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Minister of National Defence, Canada; NASA Astronaut (Ret) Wendy Lawrence; Captain Joanne McNish, Director of Fleet Pacific Region CCG; Rear Admiral Gilles Couturier, RCN; US Consul General Lynne Platt and India Consul General Rajiv Chander were among the dignitaries present in 2016.

Purpose:

Out of 25,413 professional pilots in Canada, only 5.8% of them are women. Out of 17,278 aircraft engineers, only 2.3% of them are women. Women account for only 4% of the technical trades and less than 3% of the top command positions in the Canadian Forces.

From the numbers, it would be tempting to conclude that women are either uninterested or unwelcome in these fields. Instead, studies have shown that a common perception persists that Aviation, Aerospace, Marine and Defence are industries reserved for men. From an early age, males and females alike are affected by this perception message, which is continually reinforced by observation (lack of change), media, social media and advertising. The low numbers also mean that most women have no direct family or peer connection to these target industries. Therefore, it is unreasonable to expect gender and cultural diversity to resolve naturally in these fields.

The Sky's No Limit – Girls Fly Too! free outreach events and other initiatives aim to change this perception and awaken new interests by providing females of all ages with fun, interactive, and hands-on introductions into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) based fields.

The Sky's No Limit – Girls Fly Too! employs a unique hands-on approach to capture the interest and attention of the missing female demographic. *"From shop floor to top floor, we're inspiring future leaders!"* says Kirsten Brazier, Founder.

Brazier is a professional pilot from the Lower Mainland, BC and she holds Airline Transport Ratings for both aeroplanes and helicopters. With 24 years of flying experience, Brazier has enjoyed a diverse career flying across Canada, US and the Caribbean on wheels, floats, skis and skids as well as two-crew operations in both aeroplanes and helicopters.

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