OBAP Tampa

ACE ACADEMY 2026

DATE: JUNE 15TH – JUNE 19TH

Proudly Supported by

DREAMCENTER OF TAMPA

Southwest

U.S. AIR FORCE

CAE

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD 1790

About the OBAP TAMPA ACE Academy

The Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals ACE Academy is a nationally recognized program co-sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration. (FAA) and the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE).

The purpose of Aviation Career Education (ACE) is to offer first level exposure to the aviation industry by providing aviation career exploration for middle and high school students. Academy participants learn about aviation history, theory of flight, and other aviation related subjects. Students will have the opportunity to go on field trips to aviation facilities, museums and participate in other hands-on activities designed to give students a total aviation experience.

Overview

The Tampa ACE program is designed to expose youth to the wide variety of career opportunities in aviation. The goal is to provide an opportunity for students to receive hands-on experience of learning about the history of aviation, contributions made by minorities in aviation, fundamentals of aerodynamics, the role of government in aviation, and the many careers available in the aviation industry. It is also designed to help students understand the importance of education and how it relates to various aviation and aerospace careers. Students will also experience the joy of flight by flying in the right seat of an aircraft.

Students will meet Aviation Professionals and participate in field trips to a variety of aviation facilities and educational institutions.

Activities

As a member of Tampa ACE Academy, you will:

- Take an orientation flight in a Cessna or Piper aircraft
- Receive introductory aviation education
- Take field trips to different aviation-related facilities
- Be introduced to aviation history
- Fly a full-motion flight simulator, when available
- Learn the qualities of leadership
- Associate and work with other youth
- Meet professionals from the aviation community
- Operate unmanned aerial systems and remote-control vehicles, when available

Admission Requirements

Admission is offered to boys and girls from 13 to 18 years old who have an interest in learning about aviation and aerospace. Students must be physically capable of participating in all activities.

- High standards of behavior and self-discipline are expected, and students must abide by all academy regulations.
- Parents or guardians must attend an orientation before programs begin.

Location

The Dream Center of Tampa

2806 N. 15th Street

Tampa, FL 33605

Contact Information

Floyd Balentine
Tampa ACE Academy Director
fbalentine@obap.org
Ph: (612) 386-4396

Assistant Directors' Name
Rashad Shelton
rashad.shelton@obap.org
Ph: (404) 200-5487

Assistant Directors' Name
Jeanine Menze
jeanine.menze@obap.org
Ph: (954) 558-3962

ACE Academy Schedule

**Please note this is a sample schedule from a previous academy. The 2026 schedule will be finalized and communicated to parents closer to academy week.*

Monday, June 15th, 2026:

08:00 – 09:00 Breakfast & Welcome Aboard/Staff Introduction

09:00 - 09:30 Enroute to Southwest Airlines Technical Operations Center

09:30 – 10:45 Tour Southwest Airlines TOC

10:45 – 11:00 Enroute to SWA Gate

11:00 – 12:00 Tour SWA Ticket Counter

12:00 – 12:15 Enroute to SWA Dining Facility

12:15 – 14:00 Lunch in Sales room/round table discussion

- Leaders give presentation

14:00 – 14:15 Bus Ride to Signature Flight Support Tampa

14:15 – 15:15 Tour Signature Flight Support Facility

15:30 – 17:00 Bus Ride to Dream Center and Dismissal

Tuesday, June 16th, 2026:

08:00 – 09:00 Roll Call, Morning Briefing

09:00 – 09:30 Bus Ride to Coast Guard Air Station

09:30 - 12:30 Behind The Scenes Tour

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch at PF Changs TPA

14:00 - 16:30 United Airlines TechOps - TPA

16:45 - 17:00 Bus Ride to Dream Center and Dismissal

Wednesday, June 17th, 2026:

07:00 Roll Call, Morning Briefing

07:30 Travel to MacDill AFB Passenger Terminal

08:00-08:30 Process thru Passenger Terminal

09:00-10:00 – MacDill AFB Orientation Flight Takeoff based on mission timing/Lunch

12:00-13:00 – Lunch/Bus Ride to CAE

13:00- 16:00 – CAE Tour/Simulator Rides

16:00 Bus Ride to Dream Center and Dismissal

Thursday, June 18th, 2026:

09:00 – 09:30 Roll Call, Morning Briefing

09:30 - 10:00 Bus Ride to Tower

10:00 – 12:00 TPA Tower Tour

12:00 – 14:00 Lunch/Fun Activity

14:00 – 14:30 Travel to TPA

14:30 – 16:30 Guided Tour & Scavenger Hunt

16:30 – 17:00 Bus ride to Dream Center/Dismissal

Friday, June 19th, 2026: Flight Day and Graduation

08:00 – 08:30 Roll Call, Morning Briefing

08:30 – 09:30 Bus Ride to Tampa Executive Airport (VDF)

10:00 – 15:00 Flight day

12:00 – 13:30 Lunch (Upstairs classrooms/boardrooms)

15:30 – 16:30 Bus Ride to Dream Center

18:00 – 20:00 Graduation Ceremony