



NEWS RELEASE

Drone Training Takes Place at OHS

June 14, 2022



The sky's the limit for O'Gorman High School's Shannon Johns, Lisa Romanowski, Andrew Schaer and Pamela Vincze. The four teachers have their sights set on bringing RPAS (remotely piloted aircraft systems) into their classrooms and the wider school community this fall. Much like personal computers and cellular devices before them, drones are a disruptive technology that has far-reaching applications. Delivery of goods to remote locations,

inspection of buildings and bridges, land surveys, and wildlife population tracking are just the tip of the iceberg. O'Gorman High School has entered into a partnership with Volatus Aerospace Corporation to get their drone program off the ground.

Volatus is a trailblazer in the \$58 billion global drone market. The company provides integrated drone solutions for commercial, industrial and defense applications, maximizing the potential of drone technologies around the world. Since 2017, Volatus has offered a Drones in the Classroom program that supports STEAM education through innovative ideas and technology. Volatus Aerospace educational programming provides a direct link between the drone industry and educators, and it enables teachers to effectively meet curriculum expectations through the safe, meaningful and legal use of drones.



In preparation for in-person training, the four OHS teachers completed Volatus Aerospace's forty-hour Advanced RPAS Ground School course. This intense online training is designed to successfully prepare RPAS pilots to write Transport Canada's Small Advanced RPAS exam (the first step in obtaining an Advanced Operations RPAS certificate in Canada). Under the guidance of Matthew Johnson, Education Director at Volatus, the OHS teachers then completed two days of in-person training in Timmins on June 6 and 7, 2022. The Advanced Educator RPAS Operations (AERO) training consisted of hands-on flight training with software instruction for indoor and outdoor group flight. Time was also spent discovering the myriad ways to effectively link the use of drones to curriculum areas including the implementation of coding with drones.



Shannon Johns (a Geography, Science and Drama teacher) is excited to combine the mapping capabilities of RPAS with GIS (Geography Information System) software with her students. Pamela Vincze (who teaches a variety of subjects including Geography and Computer Science) is eager to explore drone coding applications with her classes. Lisa Romanowski (Department Head of Math & Science and Yearbook Advisor) is looking forward to both aerial photography opportunities and incorporating drone activities into math lessons. Andrew Schaer (a Chemistry and Computer Science teacher) is committed to starting a Drone Club where students from all grades can hone their pilot skills and work towards obtaining their Basic or Advanced Operations certificates through Transport Canada. All four teachers are committed to collaborating with their colleagues to plan and conduct safe missions with students in order to truly bring the OHS Drone Program to life.



The areas of focus for the 2022-2023 school year will be getting the drone club running and integrating indoor applications using DJI Tello quadcopters across a variety of subject areas. It is anticipated that outdoor operations using DJI Mavic Mini quadcopters will be introduced as O’Gorman’s RPAS program grows and develops. Currently, each of the four teachers has obtained a *Pilot Certificate – Small Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS), Visual Line of Sight (VLOS) Basic Operations* with the intent of gaining flight time and experience before undergoing the official Flight Review required to secure an Advanced Operations certificate.

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