



The Balloon Training Academy

NAFI HEADQUARTERS KALAMAZOO MI: NAFI is proud to announce the hot air balloon Elite Balloon Instructor (EBI) program fueled by National Association of Flight Instructors (NAFI). The Balloon Training Academy, a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to hot air balloon education and training, approached NAFI with a unique idea. All hot air balloon commercial pilots can act as Certified Flight Instructors since the fundamentals of instruction are part of a balloon commercial rating, however there is no specific CFI rating and no re-currency/renewal training required to maintain flight instructor privileges.



Adam Magee, President of The Balloon Training Academy sought out NAFI support on the project, “Given NAFI’s success in its mission to promote a high level of professionalism among aviation educators and recognition for their contribution to aviation, safety, education and training, The Balloon Training Academy reached out to NAFI to partner in developing the Elite Balloon Instructor Program.”

The Elite Balloon Instructor Program designation represents a differentiation between a commercial balloon pilot acting as a CFI and one who demonstrates the highest level of instructional activity, educational experience, and professional service to the flight training community while acting as a CFI. The recognition program is modeled after the NAFI Master Certified Flight Instructor program.

John Niehaus, NAFI Director of Program Development played a key role in guiding BTA through the development of this program. “The EBI is a perfect way for us to help the lighter-than-air community and lend our expertise to further promote professionalism among **all** aviation educators,” said John. He added, “I believe NAFI members can also benefit from the unique perspectives brought by this group of aviators.”

The Balloon Training Academy is now accepting applications for review to become a Elite Balloon Instructor, interested aviators can find more information and application documents on the NAFI website www.nafinet.org/elite-balloon-instructor

About the Balloon Training Academy

Our Mission : To bring the launch field to students across the U.S.A.

We achieve this mission by Educate. Train. Develop.

Educate. Our online, self-paced, ground school allows students access to quality ground/knowledge training. Our online courses make learning easy and fun and also allow students to take courses on the go. Our courses not only prepare students to pass the FAA



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Knowledge Exam, but more importantly they prepare students for flight training and continuous learning after receiving their pilot certificate. We work with multiple FAA Designated Pilot Examiners to find areas where knowledge or training is lacking and we can improve the course.

Train. We provide training tools to flight instructors and students such as our one of a kind training syllabus, flight instructor refresher courses, posts on our Facebook page, etc. As we continue to grow, our goal is to bring the launch field to students across the U.S.A. by developing a balloon training program. We have created a network of highly qualified balloon flight instructors who are willing to volunteer their time to help us train students. Our goal is to have equipment available to these instructors, and connect the instructors with students. We will bring the launch field to students and in return, the number of hot air balloon pilots in the U.S.A. will increase.

Develop. Obtaining a pilot certificate is a "license to learn." We want balloon pilots to develop through lifelong learning and continuing education. We have developed and will continue to develop continuing education courses for current pilot to take to develop additional knowledge.

If we can Educate. Train. Develop., we can reach our mission to bring the launch field to students across the USA and thereby improve safety and increase the number of pilots in the USA.

About the National Association of Flight Instructors

National Association of Flight Instructors, the largest association representing aviation educators, dedicates itself to the single mission of raising and maintaining the professional standing of the flight instructor in the aviation community. Since 1967, no aviation organization does as much to advance the cause of flight instruction.

NAFI and its members instill a culture of safety and learning that affects pilots their entire lifetime.

By advocating for instructors with industry and government, NAFI serves as the voice for flight instruction. This combined with providing members outstanding benefits and product discounts and developing new educational content specific to flight instruction plus much more, NAFI helps shape the current and future direction of flight training.

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