



Report for Don Hendrickson at KHLN

Region: Awards Consideration (includes report card)

Below is a summary of scores and feedback from all the usable evaluations which were submitted for you during the 2026 Flight Training Experience Award application period. Many flight training providers receive exceptionally high scores so we also share with you the distribution of the overall aggregate scores for comparison.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible for an award, you needed to receive at least 5 unique evaluations, each at least 80% complete

A survey response was considered 'usable' if the respondent answered at least 80% of the questions required for scoring.

A CFI was considered 'eligible' for an award if they received at least 5 unique, usable responses.

Average scores were based on all usable responses received and have been rounded where necessary.

Your percentile rank was calculated by comparing your score to scores of all other (nominated/eligible) CFIs. Percentile ranks were calculated at both national and regional levels and may have been rounded.

Your performance (percentile rank) compared to all other eligible CFIs in your region was one of many factors that informed award decisions.

You received 15 evaluations.

2. Free Responses

At the end of each evaluation, we ask the following open-ended question:

Why should or shouldn't your CFI win a Flight Training Experience Award?

3. Individual Overall Scores & Responses

Total Score	Student Review
90.00	Don is a great instructor!! He ensures he is available to provide instruction both in and out of the aircraft. Even when he's not flying with you or officially "on the clock," Don is more than willing to help answer questions, provide feedback, or guide you in the right direction to help you answer your own questions. He practices fair and practical pricing, remains knowledgeable in all his areas of instruction, and is able to provide excellent instruction in any method or medium.
89.00	Mr. Hendrickson provides excellent aerobatic and tailwheel instruction to the Montana community at a very generous price for his plane and time. The instruction is of professional quality and his syllabus and briefings allowed me as a student to understand exactly what was expected for success. Don's plane is meticulously maintained and a joy to fly. His enthusiasm for what he does is evident and I view him as an example of what I strive to provide my students as a developing CFI. I recommend him to anyone looking to train aerobatics or foundational instruction in the area.
83.00	This instructor should receive a flight training reward because of his wanting to teach his students. And spending lots of time making sure they are prepared, and learn the importance of the rules and being safe, while also having a good time doing it. His way of teaching is clear, and attentive.

90.00 I have watched Don's growth as a pilot, flight instructor and now a specialized flight instructor for tailwheel and emergency maneuver training. Don strives to be an exceptional flight instructor through training. He went through my emergency maneuver training course and Rich Stowell's EMT training program and he has now a program of his own endorsed by Rich Stowell. Hendrickson Aviation has a professional, clean, office and flight training Citabria Airplane. I have seen Rocky Mountain Aviation College students, young eager new pilots, older pilots all seeking to improve their flight skills fly with Don. Don is professional, enthusiastic and community leader, he participates in many aviation events; conferences and open houses spreading the aviation culture. We are fortunate to have Don at our airport and in the Montana Aviation Community.

To Whom It May Concern, I had the great pleasure of training and flying with Don Hendrickson this September (2025) to earn my Tailwheel Endorsement. From the very beginning, my experience with Don was nothing short of professional, gracious, and fun. As a Certified Flight Instructor myself, I am always looking for opportunities to grow as both a pilot and an instructor. Don aided me tremendously in doing just that. He provided excellent ground instruction, consistently checking in with me as a fellow CFI to hear my perspective and generously sharing his own techniques. He introduced me to new teaching methods that I am eager to bring into my own instruction. Don's ground training was both thorough and engaging, weaving a strong emphasis on safety throughout. His professionalism and preparation made me feel both valued and safe as a student. That same standard carried into our flight training. Don demonstrated precision, depth of knowledge, and an evident mastery of both his craft and his airplane. By the end of our very first flight together, I left not only as a more skilled pilot but also as a safer one. Flying tailwheel aircraft can be challenging, yet Don's ability to break down complex concepts into clear, digestible lessons made the process accessible and enjoyable. His teaching style boosted my confidence while providing constructive feedback that resulted in significant progress in a short amount of time. I highly recommend Don Hendrickson for the AOPA flight instructor award. His passion for aviation makes him an exceptional mentor, and any pilot fortunate enough to train with him will benefit greatly. Sincerely, Brenna Youmans
Assistant Chief Pilot | Glacier Flight Training

84.00 In July 2023, Don Hendrickson flew his Citabria from Helena, MT, to Nampa, ID, and spent five days of immersion training with me to learn how to teach the Emergency Maneuver Training (EMT) program. His goal: offer this type of training to pilots in Montana. Don successfully completed all three Modules of the EMT program. In addition, he added new advanced tailwheel training techniques to his instructional toolbox. He also experienced non-towered, narrow runway operations. Since then, Don has been providing structured spin, emergency maneuver, and aerobatic training to pilots in and around Helena. Don's commitment to improving as an instructor directly translates to improving the skills and level of safety of his trainees.

84.00 I think he should win the award because he balances learning specific techniques with passively learning flight and how much fun it can be

90.00 Date: September 14, 2025 To: AOPA From: Thoams Allen Subject: Don Hendrickson Certified Flight Instructor To whom it may concern, This letter is an account of my experience with my former flight student Don Hendrickson during his Commercial ASEL and ASES training at the end of June 2019 and his initial CFI training May of 2022. Our school specializes in Tailwheel training and Seaplane training. Don scheduled with us with his goal to complete his Commercial ASEL in his tailwheel airplane then complete his Commercial Pilot ASES using the school aircraft. What stood out was he wanted to complete his Commercial ASEL in his Citabria a tailwheel airplane and complete his Commercial ASES practical tests on the same day. As a former Designated Pilot Examiner, I did not recommend this from my experience. I thought this would be too much on one day. After working with Don, I soon realized he was a total professional in his work. He had a thorough knowledge and understanding of the material and a complete dedication to his goals. On July 15, 2019 Don passed his Commercial Pilot ASEL and ASES Practical Tests on the same day. In May 2022 Don then returned to us to complete his Initial CFI Airplane Rating using his tailwheel Citabria. With the same dedication, preparation and knowledge Don passed his Initial CFI test on May 21, 2022. Don is a mature, dedicated professional in his attitude in knowledge and flight skills. He has continued and developed a training program where I have referred pilots to him that had nothing but praise for him. Don is unique in that he is different from the average time building flight instructor. Don enjoys teaching and continues to learn and pass it on to his students. It has been a total pleasure to have worked with and to know Don. I look forward to seeing him and his school grow and continue in success If I can provide additional information, feel free to contact me Respectfully, Thomas Allen 406-209-9942 Cell email training@backcountryflyingexperience.com Backcountry Flying Experience Inc. 1835 Airport Rd Kalispell, Mt. 59901

	<p>Thoughts About Don Hendrickson as a Flight Instructor I've known Don for over five years. His hangar – with his beautiful Citabria – is right behind my hangar. We've flown together frequently. I was an Air Force fighter pilot for 29 years and an instructor for 24 of those years. I was an instructor at the USAF Fighter Weapons School (FWS), creating weapons and tactics instructors for USAF fighter squadrons. I was also the Commandant of the FWS, overseeing and flying with all the different aircraft divisions. After the Air Force, I entered the General Aviation world and am currently a CFI, CFMEI, and CFI-I. Overall, I have seen and worked with instructor pilots that range from the very worse to the very best. Don gave me my tailwheel endorsement, which means I know what he is like as a flight instructor. Based on my flying experiences, I can honestly say "There aren't any flight instructors better than Don Hendrickson." From pre-brief, through the flight, and then the de-brief, Don is exceptional. He has a unique ability to read his student and adjust his teaching to bring out the best in the student, both on the ground and in the air. His demeanor in the air is superb. He has the ability to teach flying in different ways such that, if a student has trouble learning one way, Don adjusts until the student learns. Don's sole purpose is to create competent pilots who know how to fly. I've flown with some of his students and can verify that students come away from Don as competent pilots. I also firmly believe new pilots need to experience unusual attitudes, spins, and light aerobatics so, when mother nature flips them to 90 degrees, they don't panic – they've been there and know how to recover. For students being trained locally, I tell them I'll buy them an hour with Don after they pass their check ride. Don, however, has the same belief and refuses to take my money. Like I said, they just don't get any better.</p> <p>John W. Lieberherr Col, USAF (Ret.)</p>
90.00	<p>To whom it may concern, I am writing to recommend Don Hendrickson for recognition as one of AOPA's Designated Certified Flight Instructors for the Western United States. I have known Don for over a year, and my experience with him as an instructor has helped shape the pilot I am today. Since recently becoming a CFI, I have a greater appreciation for the skills and techniques Don exhibits during each flight. He is extremely technically knowledgeable, and clearly explains maneuvers before we even get into the air. On our flights, I was always impressed by his patience and willingness to work through problems I encountered. I cannot think of many instructors who would be willing to redo a spin over twenty times until we were satisfied. As I continue forward in my own flight journey, I hope I can continue to fly with Don and gain more of his knowledge. I hope I can pass on to my own students the same dedication and passion for aviation which he displays. I can think of no CFI more deserving of this award, and I am honored to be recommending Mr. Hendrickson.</p>
90.00	<p>My time training with Don exceeded all of my expectations. He was able to articulate concepts more clearly than other instructors I have worked with in the past, and is one of few individuals that I have met that is truly meant to be a teacher. I look forward to further training with Don whenever possible, and believe that he should absolutely be recognized for his hard work and dedication to the betterment and safety of general aviation.</p>
90.00	<p>Don is a great instructor with a strong safety mindset. He is very meticulous and remains proficient and up to date on all aspects of aviation. I am excited to get some more time scheduled with him to take his emergency maneuvers training course.</p>
89.00	<p>I think my instructor, Don Hendrickson deserves the Flight Training Experience Award because he is really good at explaining things in a way that makes sense and never makes me feel rushed. Every lesson feels safe and well thought out, and he always takes the time to go through everything step by step so I actually understand what I'm doing instead of just trying to get through it. He's patient, encouraging, and makes flying both challenging and enjoyable, which has helped me build a lot of confidence.</p>
86.00	<p>My name is Tj Hogan, I live in Helena, MT as a student in a 147 A&P school. I am also pursuing advanced pilot ratings with aspirations of getting my CSEL CMEL and CFI rating before the new year. I flew with Donny Hendrickson in early September of this year. In our time together we spent several hours in the air and on the ground working towards a spin endorsement. And fortunately it was not just one spin to the left and one to the right, call it a day type of training. It started with in-depth ground training talking about what we would be doing in our training, his personal background and background in his spin experience. He talked highly of his mentors and his training with them. My experience with Donny in the backseat was great and the pleasant way he instructs is refreshing. Before flying we would talk about what we would do and would reinforce the major points of each maneuver before and after each time we did it. In the air the training was fun professional and efficient. My spin training took 3.6 hours and each tenth was fun and informative. For the experience and enjoyment factor he went about and beyond including loops, aileron rolls and more maneuvers that were beyond the basics required for the logbook endorsement. From this training with Donny and his Citabria "Dusty" I feel confident and competent in my ability to detect and recover from spins before they develop and in a full spin. I would recommend Donny for the AOPA flight instructor award on the grounds of my time and beneficial training I did with him!</p>

86.00

As a retired FAA Inspector/supervisor/examiner with the Helena, MT. FSDOI have watched Don Henderickson at Henderickson Aviation LLC and his operation. Starting with an immaculate Citabria and his also immaculate hangar and instruction area he stands out over an above the normal flight school. I managed the FAA's Flight Training Program with AFS 520 for five years, prior to coming to Montana, and had the pleasure of flying with some of the best young flight instructors at universities and large flight schools across the country. Unfortunately very few, if any, of those flight instructors were dedicated to flight instruction. They were on there way to airlines or corporate jobs. Don Henderickson is totally dedicated to quality flight instruction and not the usual "pass the test" flight school. I sent a timid young lady, that I was mentoring, to Don for his Spin/Upset training course and was amazed at the confident young lady that came out at the end. Her flying was so much improved after the course. Don is only interested in turning out fully trained and confident pilots as I have seen over the years. I cannot say enough about Don's high standards and only wish we could have more like him in the industry. I say this with 712yrs in the industry and all the CFI rating and also a Gold seal instructor. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any more. Brian Dunlop, CFI-CF!! 2224191.

4. Aggregate Overall Score (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the overall score you received from your customers in the 2026 Flight Training Experience Award application period:

Your Score: 89

4.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 87

Your national percentile ranking: 68%

Regional Average: 87

Your regional percentile ranking: 68%

4.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 88

Your national percentile ranking: 73%

Regional Average: 88

Your regional percentile ranking: 73%

5. SubScore Summary for at

Region: Awards Consideration (includes report card)

The remaining sections summarize your individual subscores (range: 0 to 100) as they apply to each of the four areas from our Flight Training Experience Research: Educational Quality, Customer Focus, Community, and Information Sharing. You will also find national and regional averages, for benchmarking.

Subscore Summary:

	Your Score	National Avg
Educational Quality	89	86
Customer Focus	88	86
Community	85	82
Information Sharing	84	83
NetPromoter Score	100	96
Overall Total	79	76

6. Educational Quality Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Educational Quality; offering effective training from professional instructors who are dedicated to students' success

Your Score: 89

6.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 86

Your national percentile ranking: 52%

Regional Average: 86

Your regional percentile ranking: 52%

6.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 86

Your national percentile ranking: 59%

Regional Average: 86

Your regional percentile ranking: 59%

6.3 Responses per Question

My CFI consistently used a training syllabus that I could consult.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	15	100%

My CFI tailored their lessons plans to accommodate my personal strengths and weaknesses.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	15	100%

I felt safe flying with my CFI.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	15	100%

My CFI helped me feel prepared for unexpected situations in flight.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	15	100%

7. Customer Focus Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Customer Focus; adding value by demonstrating professionalism and engagement with students

Your Score: 88

7.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 86

Your national percentile ranking: 54%

Regional Average: 86

Your regional percentile ranking: 54%

7.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 85

Your national percentile ranking: 61%

Regional Average: 85

Your regional percentile ranking: 61%

7.3 Responses per Question

My CFI patiently helped me understand difficult concepts.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	15	100%

I feel like my CFI made efficient use of my time.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	14	93.33%
Somewhat Agree	1	6.67%

My CFI was not invested in my success.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	15	100%

My CFI was reliable and on-time for scheduled lessons

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	15	100%

8. Community Focus Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Community; emphasizing social connections and accomplishments.

Your Score: 85

8.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 82

Your national percentile ranking: 55%

Regional Average: 82

Your regional percentile ranking: 55%

8.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 82

Your national percentile ranking: 62%

Regional Average: 82

Your regional percentile ranking: 62%

8.3 Responses per Question

After training with my CFI, I feel like a member of the general aviation community.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	14	93.33%
Somewhat Agree	1	6.67%

My instructor expressed that people like me should not fly.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	1	6.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	13.33%
Strongly Disagree	12	80%

My CFI introduced me to students, new pilots, and members of the local aviation community.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	13	86.67%
Somewhat Agree	1	6.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	6.67%

My CFI shared relevant information to help me continue flying after training (e.g. how to find flying clubs, purchase an aircraft, or start an aviation career)

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	14	93.33%
Somewhat Agree	1	6.67%

9. Information Sharing Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Information Sharing; educating and empowering students to make informed decisions about flight training investments.

Your Score: 84

9.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 83

Your national percentile ranking: 47%

Regional Average: 83

Your regional percentile ranking: 47%

9.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 83

Your national percentile ranking: 53%

Regional Average: 83

Your regional percentile ranking: 53%

9.3 Responses per Question

I always understood the steps required to reach my flight training goals with my CFI.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	13	86.67%
Somewhat Agree	1	6.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	6.67%

My flight training with my CFI has required more time and/or money than I expected.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	13.33%
Somewhat Disagree	1	6.67%
Strongly Disagree	12	80%

Sometimes I did not know what my flight lessons would cover.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Somewhat Disagree	2	13.33%
Strongly Disagree	13	86.67%

My CFI introduced me to online resources (like flight planning tools or weather sources) and showed how they can be used to aid my decision making.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	12	80%
Somewhat Agree	1	6.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	13.33%

10. Net Promoter Score

10.1 Questionnaire Responses

The Net Promoter Score is generated by asking customers how likely they would be to recommend a given product or service - in this case, your services as a flight instructor to another potential customer, on an 11 point scale.

How likely are you to recommend your CFI to someone interested in flight training?

Response Choice	Frequency	%
10	15	100%

10.2 NPS Grouping

Responses to this question are then used to sort customers into one of three groups:

Detractor: Less likely to use your services again and may not speak highly of your services to others.

Passive: Generally somewhat satisfied, passive respondents likely won't help or hurt your business in talking to other people.

Promoters: Ideally, all of your customers would be promoters. Promoters would fly with you again in the future and would tell others how great they think you are.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Promoter	15	100%

10.3 Standardized Score Calculation

The overall Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of your customers who are 'detractors' from the percentage of your customers you are 'promoters.' Thus, the overall Net Promoter Score can range from -100 to 100.

For more information on the Net Promoter Score and how to interpret it, check out: <https://www.medallia.com/net-promoter-score>

Your Score: 100

10.3.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 96

Your national percentile ranking: 60%

Regional Average: 96

Your regional percentile ranking: 60%

10.3.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 98

Your national percentile ranking: 63%

Regional Average: 98

Your regional percentile ranking: 63%