

Beat: Travel

United States Navy Blue Angels

Delight Fans

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USPA NEWS - The Blue Angels are the United States Navy's aerobatic demonstration squadron. Each year the Blue Angels perform in at least 30 venues in the United States and two performances in one venue in Canada.

Throughout the summer of 2019, Air Show fans in Atlantic Canada were treated to a performance by Canada's beloved Snowbirds and the Royal Air Force Red Arrows. The Blue Angels would be the perfect ending to a banner Air Show season. The Blue Angels would not disappoint.

The Blue Angels Squadron arrived at CFB Greenwood, Nova Scotia on the Monday prior to the Air Show weekend. Early arrival allowed for time to practice and for the team to engage with Media and other VIPs.

On Media Day, I had the opportunity to interview LT. Commander James Haley, the Pilot of Jet #2. The interview with LT. Commander Haley was both enthusiastic and inspiring. Here are some of the highlights.

Complete information on the Blue Angels, please visit <https://www.blueangels.navy.mil>

Question:

What is the mission statement of the Blue Angels Squadron?

Answer:

"The mission of the United States Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron is to showcase the pride and professionalism of the United States Navy and Marine Corps by inspiring a culture of excellence and service to country through flight demonstrations and community outreach. In the early days, the mission was directed more towards recruitment into the Navy and Marine Corps, but now it is also to inspire young people across North America to follow their dreams and pursue them with fervor and excellence."

Question:How does one become a Blue Angels pilot?

Answer:" The Blue Angels Squadron is unique as it is completely voluntary. All other squadrons or units within the Armed Forces are assigned. Every single member of the Blue Angels Squadron has volunteered for the assignment. Most perspective candidates apply numerous times before getting accepted. To qualify for a Blue Angels pilot position, candidates must be an active Navy or Marine Corps tactical pilot with at least 1250 jet hours experience.

Applicants will visit scheduled show sites early in the season in order to observe the Squadron first hand. Finalists are selected in mid season and will go to Pensacola, Florida to be interviewed by the current Blue Angels squadron members. The final decisions on the new pilots and support officers requires a unanimous decision vote."

Question:What do you find most rewarding about being a Blue Angels pilot?

Answer:"I realized when I was 6 years old after attending an air show that I wanted to be a pilot, so seeing that dream come true and flying is very rewarding. It goes beyond just the flying. It is having the privilege of traveling throughout North America speaking to students and other community groups telling the story of my childhood dream of becoming a pilot and hopefully inspiring others to pursue their dreams to become who they want to be in life. I find that one of the most rewarding parts of being a Blue Angels pilot."

Since the announcement was made that the Blue Angels would be performing in Greenwood on Labour Day weekend, the air show community has been buzzing with excitement and with good reason.

The two Blue Angels performances were nothing short of incredible. Every maneuver skillfully calculated by highly trained pilots who were focused on providing breathtaking displays and giving the audience the best possible air show experience.

It is clear that the Blue Angels Squadron take their team mission statement of excellence very seriously and it can be seen in each aerobatic display and each inspirational speaking engagement.

The Blue Angels, Goodwill Ambassadors of the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

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