Knowledge for growth

Employees who used Learning Together explain how this program can help your career

By Sean Aziz

Learning is considered a lifelong pursuit at Boeing. Each new lesson, whether it's on the job or in a classroom, opens new opportunities and reveals new insights.

At Boeing, this pursuit of learning is pivotal to shaping a business that reaches around the globe and across cultures, bringing generations and intellect together to hurdle challenges and deliver innovations that make Boeing a global leader in technology and aerospace.

"We are all on a journey of learning and growth," said Norma Clayton, vice president, Learning, Training and Development. "The strength and success of our company are driven by the knowledge, skills and ideas that come from our employees. Making a significant investment in our employees' career growth is a smart business decision, because it's the talent of our people that leads to the creative and innovative thinking at Boeing."

One resource Boeing employees use to pursue new skills is the Learning Together Program. Under this program, Boeing will pay for tuition and many related expenses—including application fees, entrance exams, books, and graduate fees—for employees enrolled in accredited colleges, universities or trade schools. Learning Together allows Boeing employees to choose education programs that enhance job performance, intellectual growth and professional development.

With this being the season for U.S. college graduations, *Boeing Frontiers* presents a look at several engineers who recently accelerated their growth through Learning Together. In these short profiles, these employees discuss the lessons that sparked their success. ■

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More about Learning Together

The Learning Together Program plays an instrumental role in maintaining a work force with cutting-edge skills, education and experience—which gives Boeing a competitive advantage. To learn more, visit the Learning Together site on the Boeing intranet at http://learningtogether.web.boeing.com and click on the "Getting Started" tab in the left column.

Terence St. Marie

To ensure Boeing's customers can accomplish their missions precisely and safely, Terence St. Marie taps into his extensive reservoir of knowledge. St. Marie began his career with Boeing in 1985 as a flight-line technician on the B-1B bomber program after serving as an avionic and inertial/radar navigation specialist in the U.S. Air Force. Now a test and evaluation specialist on the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program, St. Marie, based at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., is bringing new insights to his job as he pursues a master's degree in aeronautical science. Thanks to Learning Together, St. Marie recently completed his bachelor's degree in professional aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Florida. "While it can be demanding balancing both work and school, it has paid off," he said. "Since completing my bachelor's and demonstrating my commitment to personal growth, the level of responsibility in my job has increased and so have the opportunities."

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Shane Gillis

When Shane Gillis, engineer, 787 propulsion aerodynamics, graduated with a master's in engineering mechanics from the University of Wisconsin, he was prepared to take on new challenges. One challenge was integrating his insights in Computational Fluid Dynamics into the 787's innovative design. Gillis' experience in CFD and knowledge of gas turbine engines from his service in the U.S. Navy earned him a position on the propulsion aerodynamics team. "Understanding how the new composite airframe will perform in-flight provides the program a significant level of predictive ability," said Gillis, based in Everett, Wash. "Learning how CFD software is written during my graduate program has allowed me to generate results that have meaning and value."

GAIL HANUSA PHOTO

Scott Arbiv

If you're going to support the development of next-generation communications systems, you need the ability to integrate an array of experiences. That's something that Scott Arbiv, systems integrator at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Lincoln Laboratory in Lexington, Mass., is adept at doing. "Successful integration in any area requires the ability to draw upon and harmonize often diverse elements," Arbiv said. Using Learning Together, Arbiv recently completed a master's degree program in electrical engineering, with a focus on communications systems, from the University of Southern California. "Ultimately, knowledge confers freedom, and a master's degree, to me, is a key step in a never-ending process of learning," he said. Education has also given him real-time perspective in his role at Boeing. "Now having greater direct contact with management, a view of the big picture, and a stronger understanding of network systems, I see myself as well-placed for interesting and challenging work now and in the future."

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Neva Welch

Boeing has implemented aggressive targets for reducing its impact on the environment both for its operations and the life cycle of its products. Helping ensure this success is Neva Welch, an environmental scientist who specializes in hazardous waste management. Responsible for making sure that hazardous wastes generated at the Auburn, Wash., site are identified, managed and disposed of in a compliant manner, Welch plays an important role in Boeing's commitment to significantly reducing the effect its operations have on the environment. Earning a master's in engineering technology from Central Washington University—through Learning Together—Welch learned more about manufacturing techniques, materials, and the controls used in manufacturing a product. This knowledge allows Welch to support the company's environmental initiatives. "In addition to providing direction on how to dispose of waste, I am able to engage employees and work with them on developing new ideas on how we can reduce waste, conserve energy, and recycle more," she said.

MARIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

Jeremy Hare

Working on the 777 program has offered a breadth of understanding in innovative approaches that set the standard for developing airplanes and delivering value, said Jeremy Hare, a 777 liaison engineer. "I have had the opportunity to work with and learn from some of the brightest engineers in the industry," said Hare, who recently completed a master's degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Michigan. Hare, based in Everett, Wash., joined Boeing in 2005 as an intern and quickly decided that Boeing was the place to start his career, based on a number of key factors, including the Learning Together Program. "The Learning Together Program demonstrates that Boeing is not only committed to developing the professional growth of its employees, but also adds support to pursue an unlimited number of personal goals. The encouragement to enhance my skills as an engineer, while striving to achieve my personal life goals as well, has been substantial," he said.

GAIL HANUSA PHOTO

Jerry Gravitt

For Jerry Gravitt, an F-15 industrial engineer in St. Louis, efficiency is essential to keeping this military aircraft's program healthy, relevant and competitive as international opportunities increase. Gravitt is responsible for supporting the transition to a new 'pulse' manufacturing line and identifying and deploying best practices across the program. "As we implement processes to reduce costs on the F-15 production line and put the systems in place that create a culture of continuous improvement, we will be well-positioned to continue producing one of the finest military products and enter regions where we might not have been," he said. Gravitt used Learning Together to earn a master's in engineering management from Washington University. With this knowledge, Gravitt was able to focus on the people side of the equation and implement his lessons real-time. "I think one of the most significant things I have learned in my graduate program is that to get people on board with your ideas you must be able to effectively communicate and deliver on those ideas," he said.

PETER GEORGE PHOTO

James Blair

As test director and lead integration and test engineer for the Weapons Programs Compact Radar Program in Huntington Beach, Calif., James Blair is the ultimate systems integrator. He coordinates with systems engineers, mechanical engineers, radar systems engineers and software engineers to integrate each architecture into a functional system. Having used Learning Together to complete his master's degree in systems architecture and engineering from the University of Southern California, Blair said he has the information and background to recognize the weapons program's vision for its customers. "I am a firm believer in the benefits of continual education," said Blair, a 10-year Navy veteran before he joined Boeing in 2004. "The Navy is focused on continual education and I routinely received training, seeing the benefits in my work and capabilities. At Boeing it seemed only natural to pursue a master's degree that I was interested in—and that would help our program as we worked toward the future."

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