

San Ramon Teen Becomes One of the Youngest U.S. Student Pilots

Dougherty Valley Sophomore One of America's Youngest Student Pilots



Livermore, California Nov 27, 2024 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - A San Ramon, CA teenager has reached an impressive milestone in aviation by becoming one of the youngest student pilots in the United States. Vanya Gupta, a sophomore at Dougherty Valley High School, earned her student pilot license on Sunday, 24 November—her 16th birthday.

The milestone aligns with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulation, which requires an individual to be at least 16 years old to obtain a student pilot certificate. Vanya's achievement exemplifies a perfect timing of determination.

Vanya, who has been captivated by planes since she was a child, has taken her passion for aviation to new heights. "I've always loved planes since I was a kid," she said. "This student pilot license gave me the wings to fly solo and brings me one step closer to becoming a commercial pilot."

Vanya's achievement is not only remarkable for her age but also reflects her dedication and ambition.

She trains at XL Aviation, located at Livermore Municipal Airport, where she received her student pilot license after rigorous preparation and commitment.

At Dougherty Valley High School, Vanya balances her academic excellence with extracurricular pursuits. She plays field hockey and serves as the Director of Education for Aerospace in a school club, where she inspires fellow students to explore the wonders of flight and space. Her passion for aviation extends beyond piloting; Vanya plans to pursue a degree in Physics and Aerospace Engineering and dreams of contributing to the next generation of planes and spacecraft.

"My goal is to get my commercial pilot license and instrument rating," Vanya said. "I also want to help build the next generation of planes and spaceships and be a part of the aviation industry."

Vanya's journey is inspired by her father, an Indian businessman, who has supported her dreams from the start. Her accomplishment at such a young age underscores the opportunities available to youth who are willing to work hard and dream big.

Vanya's instructors Anna Zavrazhnova at XL Aviation commended her commitment, noting her keen understanding of flight mechanics and safety protocols. "Vanya's determination and curiosity are remarkable" said an instructor at XL Aviation. "She's not just learning to fly; she's shaping her future in aviation"

As Vanya takes to the skies, she hopes her story will inspire other young girls to pursue their passions, whether in aviation or any other field. "I want to show others that age is just a number when it comes to chasing your dreams," she said.

Mike Henderson, owner of XL Aviation, also expressed his pride in Vanya's achievement, reflecting on the school's mission. "XL Aviation is a work of love. For as long as I can remember, I've dreamt of flight, and I'm fortunate to make that dream a reality—not just for myself, but for so many others," he said. "We're not a box-checking, hurry-up-and-get-your-license flight school. We're old-school aviators, and our CFIs are some of the best in the world. We teach people to fly—and fly well. I'm incredibly proud of that."

Vanya's journey adds to the rich aviation legacy of Livermore Municipal Airport, a hub for flight training and operations in the Bay Area. Her story serves as a beacon of inspiration, particularly for young girls with aspirations in aviation or other fields.

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Livermore Municipal Airport (KLVK) is a hub for aviation training and operations in the Bay Area. Vanya's milestone adds to its legacy of fostering the next generation of aviators.

About XL Aviation

XL Aviation, based in Livermore, CA, specializes in pilot training programs, helping aspiring pilots achieve their dreams. Known for its rigorous curriculum and supportive environment, the school has trained numerous pilots who have gone on to successful careers in aviation.

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