

PRESS RELEASE – 17th May 2011

Smile High Club



L-R Pilot Robert Murch, Geoff Matthews, Emma Lloyd, Caryl Bearfoot, Annabelle Corbel, Suzanne Pollard, and Michelle Turner all of Star College.

Almost 90 disabled adults and children took to the skies on Sunday thanks to kind hearted pilots at Gloucestershire Airport.

Staverton-based Richard King, who organised the event, invited passengers from groups including Combat Stress, Down's Syndrome Group, Gloucester, First Battalion The Rifles; Pilgrim Bandits, Royal Marines Hasler Company and Star College.

A total of 28 aircraft, whose pilots are members of the Flyer Magazine internet forum, flew 50 sorties over the Gloucestershire scenery. Disabled flying charity, Aerobility, who teach disabled people and injured service personnel to fly brought in two of their specially adapted Piper aircraft flown by former soldiers who had been injured in Afghanistan.

Airport head of operations, Darren Lewington said: - "I am immensely humbled. In 18 years at Staverton, I don't recall ever seeing so many smiles! The passengers and their carers were some truly inspirational people and it was so tangibly apparent that their flights really made a difference."

Organiser Richard King said: - "If I learnt to fly for no other purpose than to be involved in today's event it was worth every single moment. I find it absolutely remarkable that in these difficult times so many people gave their time and money, lots of both, to brighten the lives of a group of total strangers."

For more details about Aerobility's work please visit www.aerobility.com



16-year old Piers Gilliver with Dad Dave from the Forest of Dean



Air smiles



L-R Airport business development manager Kim Davenport, Mike Miller-Smith of Aerobility. Dave Corcoran, Martyn Compton, Dave Rawlins and Mark Allen (servicemen all injured in Afghanistan and now learning to fly with Aerobility) Richard King, event organiser.