

1 March 2026

Lieutenant Colonel Sarah Bennett

141st Air Refueling Wing

230 Tanker Ave

Fairchild AFB, WA 12345

Dear Lieutenant Colonel Bennett:

I grew up on the north side of Spokane, close enough to Fairchild that KC-135s climbing out on a training mission were just part of the background noise of my childhood, same as the trains a few blocks further out. I didn't think much about it until I started flying myself and realized how much skill it actually takes to fly a jet that big, that precisely, close enough to another aircraft to transfer gas at 310 knots. These days, when I fly the airline home to visit family, I still find myself watching for the tankers on approach, and I've decided I'd rather be the one flying them than the one watching from the ground.

Nine years in aviation have given me plenty of chances to lead. As Chief Flight Instructor at Skyward Aviation Academy, I was responsible for a staff of five instructors and the training progress of every student moving through a six-aircraft fleet, and I built an instrument ground school curriculum the school still uses today. Now, as a First Officer flying the CRJ-900 for Endeavor Air, I sit next to a different captain almost every trip, which has taught me how to build trust and communicate clearly with people I've just met, fast, because the flight doesn't wait for a slow start. I don't think leadership in a two-person cockpit looks all that different from leadership in a boom pod or a formation. It's about clear communication, shared situational awareness, and making sure everyone on the crew trusts the decisions being made.

On the flying side, I've logged 1,500 hours, including more than 1,300 turbine hours and over 200 hours of actual instrument time, and I hold an ATP certificate with a CL-65 type rating. I've spent my whole career so far in structured, standardized flying environments, from Part 141 instruction to Part 121 airline operations, and I've never had a checkride or a line check I didn't pass on the first attempt. I understand that transitioning from an airline cockpit to UPT means starting over in a lot of ways, and I'm genuinely looking forward to that, both because I want to be pushed and because I know how to be coached. Nine years of taking checkrides, line checks, and instructor evaluations seriously has taught me exactly how to show up prepared and adjust quickly, which I think will serve me well in a training environment as demanding as UPT.

I know the tanker mission doesn't always get the same spotlight as the fighters it supports, but it's the mission that enables our warfighting capability, in the unit I grew up next to. I'd welcome the chance to visit the wing again and to formally interview with your board. Please feel free to contact me at (555) 555-5555 or richard.gordon@fake.com and discuss the way I would be the perfect fit with your squadron.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard F. Gordon