



News Photo by Tyler Winowiecki

Zach Tadajewski tests out a drone during a presentation Monday morning at Hillman High School. Students from Hillman's intro to physical science dual-enrollment class were given a special presentation by Brian Dawson of Alpena Community College on the history and future of unmanned aircraft systems.

Hillman students get glimpse of UAS

By TYLER WINOWIECKI
News Staff Writer

HILLMAN — Students at Hillman Junior Senior High School were given the opportunity see, learn and directly interact with the ever-growing drone industry.

Monday morning students from the introduction to physical science dual-enrollment class were given the presentation by Alpena Community College unmanned aircraft systems instructor Brian Dawson.

Dawson has made this presentation to other area schools such as Tawas Area Schools and Oscoda Area High School among others. The presentation looks to inform students about the emerging drone industry.

"We talked about drone history, basic drone technology, drone operations and usage and basic flight operations," Dawson said. "We don't want to get too complex."

The first portion of the presentation was a lecture about the different facets of the drones. Following this, students from the class were given the controls of their own drone inside the gym.

Dawson said drone applications are almost unlimited and have both public and private sector uses. He cited real estate, film shooting, law enforcement and even the agricultural sector as possible benefactors of the technology.

The numerous applications of drone technology rubbed off on 11th grade student Zach Tadajewski who thought of how he could use a drone for one of his hobbies.

"I have a friend who wants to start a fishing YouTube channel," Tadajewski

said. "I think it would be cool to get some aerial shots using these."

After the students had flown some of the smaller drones, Dawson presented a more sophisticated drone with an attached camera. Students were able to examine the drone inside before going outside.

Students then watched as the drone's camera got an aerial view of them and the school building.

Dawson said regulations for drone are different and based on the actual application, someone who is only looking to use the drone for personal reasons only needs to register with the Federal Aviation Administration online.

However, Dawson saw a larger usage in the commercial sector and cited Amazon's efforts to change drone regulations.

"Amazon really wants to use them for small package delivery," he said. "They have a vision and they're really committed to it. The only thing that has really held them back is not the technology but the regulatory environment."

Dawson said the regulations are changing and someone who wishes to use a drone for commercial operations just has to pass a test to receive their UAS license.

ACC has begun operational seminars for drones but looks to combine it with obtaining their license, Dawson said.

"If you want to get a license through the FAA for a regular pilot you have to show flight proficiency," he said. "With the drones you don't have to show an operational proficiency, you just have to pass the test."

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BRIAN DAWSON
ACC instructor

Funding for the drones and presentations is from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant ACC acquired. Funding also was supplemented by the state's Community College Skilled Trades Equipment Program.

Together the grant money has allowed ACC to have a large outreach to students on the importance of science, technology, engineering and the mathematics fields. ACC's grant Director Dawn Stone said this is a part of a coordinated effort to help interest students in these fields.

"(ACC has) been doing some K-12 outreach to help students understand STEM fields are not boring industries," Stone said. "We want to increase the people who go into the STEM industry and so we're showing them that they're cool."

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