

Good Afternoon,

Feb 28, 2024

I've been following along with the efforts made by people to try and close the airport and I hope my story can be a great example of how important the airport is.

I am currently a 737 pilot for United Airlines flying out of Denver International but I grew up, live, and learned to fly in Boulder. Since elementary school, I played soccer at the fields just west of the airport on final for runway 8. When the airport hosted airport day, I asked my parents if we could go over there so I could see the planes up close. While I didn't get to fly in anything, my parents noticed my excitement at getting to see the planes. Later, in middle school, my mom met a coworker who had a small biplane. After expressing how interested in planes I was he offered to take me for a ride. He picked me up at the Boulder Airport and I finally had my first chance to get in the air and I was absolutely hooked. Fast forward to high school, and after receiving numerous scholarships to attend the University of Colorado Boulder in the fall I realized I could afford to take flight lessons. So starting the summer before college, I would ride my bike out to the airport and take flight lessons any chance I could get. I eventually got my private, instrument, and commercial ratings from Journeys over the course of 3 years. While I did get a degree in aerospace engineering, I wanted to become a pilot professionally, and so I negotiated and internship with Scientific Aviation to fly their Mooney out of the Boulder Airport. Scientific Aviation provided countless amounts of data about pollution and air quality over many years and was only possible because of the airport. (I attached a picture below of me and fellow pilot Niall from the daily camera). My experience gained from flying out of Boulder earned me the opportunity to fly for the airlines. I've flown at Skywest under the United Express banner, Spirit, and now United. I'm sure when people board their plane at Denver International they don't realize that I had to get my experience from somewhere. More often than not, that experience comes from small airports like Boulder. If it wasn't for the Boulder Airport, I would likely never have even been inspired to get into aviation. And if it wasn't for the Boulder Airport, I would have never been able to act on that inspiration. I am only 25 years old but I have probably lived in Boulder for way longer than many of the people trying to close the airport.

Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to help with this matter. It will be a major loss for everyone if the people that don't understand the value of an airport succeed.

Regards,
Paolo Wilczak
United 737 First Officer

