

## Bill Ayres, CEO Alaska Airlines

### On time to make a difference

When most of us think of the lifestyles of CEOs for big, big companies, we imagine people with cram-packed schedules, sleep deprivation, Blackberries and an unending myriad of meetings... Who has time for anything else? Bill Ayres, chairman, president and CEO of Alaska Airlines.

Ayres also finds time to be a pilot, flying his Piper Malibu out of Boeing Field in Seattle, Wash., but admits he does stay rather busy leading the nation's ninth largest airline and its 10,000 employees. Still, he makes the time to fly missions for Angel Flight, the world's premier nonprofit that provides free air transportation in response to health care and other compelling human needs.

"Flying Angel Flight missions is the absolute best use of a general-aviation airplane," Ayres told Flying Adventures. "It's a great feeling to be able to help others."

Angel Flight began in 1983 in a drafty hangar at Santa Monica Airport. Since that time the group has flown thousands of kids and people on thousands of life-altering general-aviation flights. There are now 14 chapters across the western United States, establishing a presence in states as diverse as Wyoming and Hawaii.

Alaska CEO Bill Ayres has personally signed up to donate his time and airplane for 34 missions. What are some of his best memories?

"Taking a five-year old boy and his parents back home to eastern Washington after getting a clean bill of health following a tough diagnosis and multiple surgeries," remembers Ayres. Another poignant memory is flying kids with cancer to summer camp.

Ayres' commitment to Angel Flight comes in more ways than just donating his personal time. Alaska Airlines donates 750 tickers per year to kids and their families who need transportation, often for travel to and from Alaska to the Lower 48. The air carrier also allows customers to donate their frequent-flier miles to Angel Flight, and Alaska Airlines donates cash and services to Angel Flight fundraisers. There's little question that Alaska Airlines makes a difference with Angel Flight, but Ayres is quick to point out how much the charity has given back to him.

"I've been lucky enough to meet the patients who fight their disease with positive outlooks and smiles on their faces," says Ayres. "Their attitudes quickly put mundane business problems into perspective."

For more on Angel Flight, visit [angelflight.org](http://angelflight.org). To donate your Alaska Airlines miles, call 800.654.5669.

Alaska Airlines CEO Bill Ayres flies his personal aircraft, a Piper Malibu, for Angel Flight.

