



# THRUSH AIRCRAFT AND THE GEORGIA CENTER OF INNOVATION FOR AEROSPACE

Case Study

Albany, Georgia-based **Thrush Aircraft** makes planes used in more than 80 countries in agriculture, forestry and firefighting industries, and is working on a model to help with border protection. **The Georgia Center of Innovation for Aerospace** brought Thrush and Middle Georgia State College’s Aviation Campus in Eastman together on a grant-funded project to support flight testing, flight training and FAA certification of a new aircraft – the 510G – which is one of the few planes in the world that can carry its own weight in fuel and people. The Center first introduced Thrush to contacts at GE Aviation, which led to a contract with GE that resulted in Thrush being the first manufacturer in the world to use the new GE H80 engine. As Thrush has continued to expand, averaging 35 to 45 percent growth per year for the past three years and 40 new employees, the Center also supported the company with workforce recruiting. Today, **Thrush** sells 50 percent of its planes outside of the United States and contributes to Georgia’s \$5.75 billion in annual aerospace product exports.

“The win for **Thrush Aircraft** is a win for the Center and the technical schools and colleges that are in the aerospace industry. The ultimate winner is the consumer; they are getting a better product than they ever had.”

Payne Hughes,  
*President, Thrush Aircraft*

