

# VT-9 Tigers beat the heat and continue training

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The Tigers of Training Squadron Nine had a productive spring and summer.

Three carrier qualification detachments in June, July and August onboard the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) gave 24 student naval aviators their first experience with carrier operations. These new “quals” are well on their way to earning their “Wings of Gold.”

The students and instructors of VT-9 flew more than 4,100 hours this summer despite sweltering heat and violent thunderstorms that threatened to derail training.

Several students stood out from their peers this summer. Lt. j.g. Brandon Cook, Lt. j.g. Michael Smith and 1st Lt. Stanton Gardenhire received Student of the Month honors in May, June and July respectively. Instructor of the Month honors went to Lt. Mark Collins, Capt. Jared Snow and Capt. Robert Bradley.

In all VT-9 is on track to produce 36 newly designated Naval aviators this summer. This is an important milestone for these young Navy and Marine Corps officers, but even more important to the fleet replacement squadrons who need the new aircrew to meet the needs of the fleet.