



## Pilots take flight again

**By Chris Cobb**

The Herald-Zeitung

Published March 7, 2008

It's been over a month since students of Silver State Helicopters showed up at the hangar to find the doors locked and their flying careers on hold.

The sudden bankruptcy of the flight school left dozens of prospective pilots hours short of their certification and stuck with thousands in student loans for training they'll never receive from Silver State.

So a group of former instructors have banded together to give those students a chance to finish what they started.

Enter Veracity Aviation, a new helicopter training school crafted using lessons learned from the fallen Silver State.

"Our goal is just to provide quality flight training," said Veracity President and owner Derrick Smith. "We just believe in giving people what they pay for and shooting people straight."

Their slogan is simple — Helicopter Flight Training Done Right.

Smith and the rest of the small Veracity team know what the opposite looks like.

They taught students who paid sometimes over \$70,000 for their training up front. They noticed how enrolling too many students led to people not getting enough hours in the air. But more than anything, they knew students were being let down.

"Sometimes they got lost in the shuffle," said Veracity Vice President and Director of Marketing Jesse Perez. "We want it to be more one on one and really meet their needs."

So Veracity found some hangar space at the New Braunfels Municipal Airport and started accepting students, running their flight school with some noticeable changes from its bankrupt predecessor.

The school will have students pay for training as they receive it, give each instructor a maximum of 10 students and have them be responsible for each students' development.

"It's our goal to make sure we see people through all the way," Smith said.

The idea for the flight school was in the works long before Silver State closed its doors. But Smith admits, "I didn't plan on opening this soon."

Now the freshly opened Veracity has five students, with another 10 possibly on the horizon. And for instructor Mike Hoser, Smith's longtime friend and former Silver State co-worker, it's comforting to be able to count on the people, and the company, you work for.

"It's good to go into business with somebody you know you can trust."