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National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees



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Federal Aviation  
Administration

## Benefits Operations Center (BOC)

### Contact Us!

**9-ACE-FAA-BENE@faa.gov**

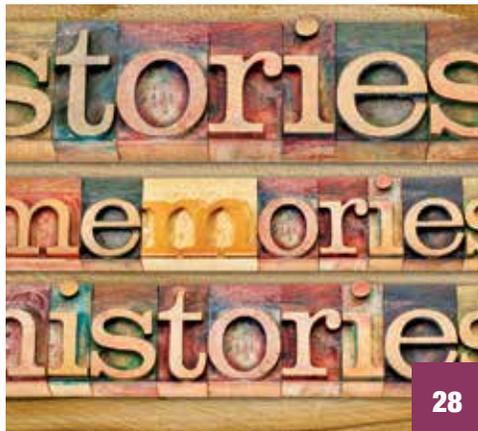
**1-855-FAA-BENE**

**(1-855-322-2363)**

**[my.faa.gov/go/boc](http://my.faa.gov/go/boc)**

The newly improved Benefits and Retirement website makes it easier to find and access federal health, life, dental, vision, and other insurance information and services. It also includes additional guidance and answers on the retirement process to assist employees as they prepare for retirement. The Benefits Operations Center (BOC) was restructured to provide more efficient and consistent service to FAA employees. Employees with questions about their benefits may use new information resources, including an FAA-wide toll-free number, recently announced by the Benefits Operations Center (BOC).

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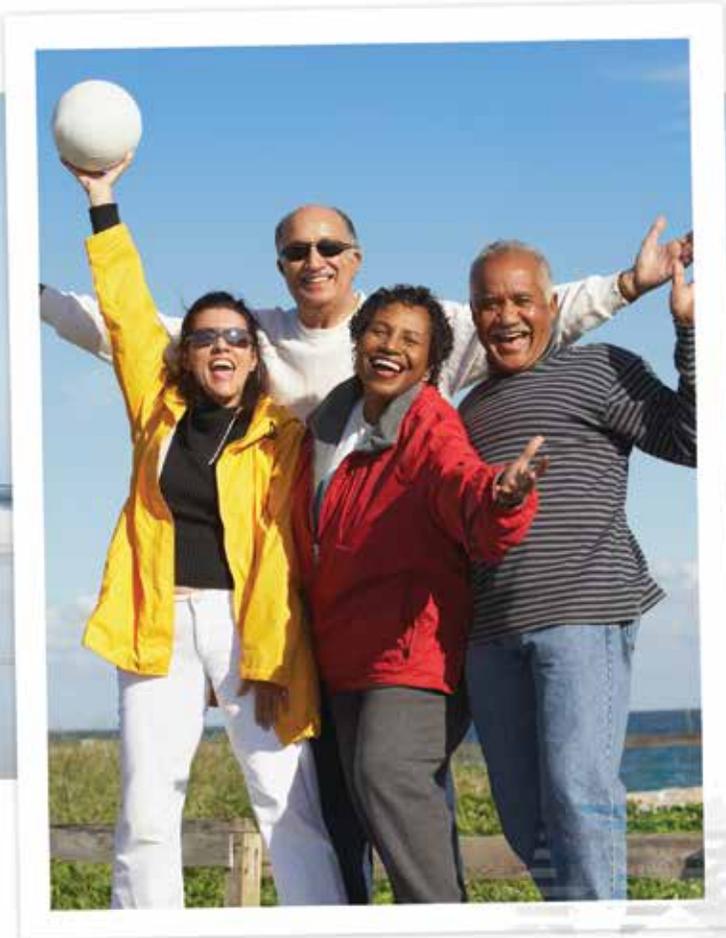
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### National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees

**"Con Orgullo en Nuestra Hispanidad"**

NHCFAE  
PO Box 23276  
Washington, DC 20026-3276  
[www.nhcfae.org](http://www.nhcfae.org)

#### Mission

The National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees is a professional, diverse organization that focuses on advocating career placement and advancement through support, education and alliances.

#### History

Established in 1978 in an effort to provide a network for Hispanic employees of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Aviation Industry. It became a national organization in 1983. Today, the Coalition is the chief advocate for issues affecting Hispanics in the FAA. The Coalition derives its support from membership dues, corporate sponsorship and private donations.

#### Officers

President, David Dominguez  
Vice-President, Ida Marrero  
Special Assistant, Yadira Lacot  
President's Representative Central, Raul Garza  
President's Representative East, Oscar Torres  
President's Representative West, Kim Crofton Nolan  
Director of Administration, Misty Pena  
Director of Education, Cynthia Garcia-Torres  
Director of Public Affairs, Susie Diaz  
Director of Resources, Erik Salazar

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Corporate Relations, Raquel Ysasi-Huerta  
Membership, Melinda Moreno  
National Elections, David Gonzalez  
Communications, Susie Diaz  
Outreach, Raquel Ysasi-Huerta

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SkyOne

#### Editors

Susie Diaz, Yadira Lacot, Misty Peña

#### Design

Chris Atkin

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# Message from the President

Saludos NHCFAE Members, Friends and Colleagues,

The holiday season is a time for family gatherings, holiday celebrations, religious services, good food (my grandmother's homemade tamales) and an excuse to gain 10 pounds. While I'm sure we can do without the weight gain, we all can appreciate the many memories this season creates. This is also a time for reflection. As the 2014 year draws to a close, let's recall some significant events that occurred throughout the year, some that brought joy and others causing sorrow. The One World Trade Center opened in New York City replacing the Twin Towers destroyed on September 11, 2001. Malaysia Airlines flight mysteriously disappeared. Russia hosted the Winter Olympics amid threats of terrorist attacks. Republicans took control of Senate in midterm elections for the first time since 2006. The San Francisco Giants won their third World Series in five years beating the Kansas City Royals. One of America's most popular comedians, Robin Williams, tragically dies. Germany beat Brazil to win the 2014 World Cup and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Miami Heat to become the 2014 NBA Champions. Popes John XXIII and John Paul II were canonized to sainthood by the Catholic Church. While there were many other significant events throughout 2014, it is important to remember the past to help shape our future.

While there have been many national events, our Coalition has also had some significant events over the past year. In August, we hosted our "comeback" conference in Washington, D.C., which was very successful. This conference received astounding commendations from our enthusiastic membership, FAA senior executives, and because of the relationships built with outside agencies, our organization and conference is memorialized in executive speeches. This year, we recruited over 65 new members. One of our founding fathers and former President, David Medina, retired from the FAA. On October 1, 2014, you elected three new members to the Executive Board: Cynthia Garcia, Director of Education; Erik Salazar, Director of Resources; and Ida Marrero, Vice-President. The Executive Board bid a fond farewell to Don Espinosa and Raquel Ysasi-Huerta, two exceptional people who devoted countless hours of contributions to our organization over many years. However, rest assured, Don and Raquel will continue to support and advocate for our organization. Don has been appointed as the National Conference Chair and Raquel is our Corporate Sponsor Chair.



We say "muchas gracias!" to all who have served, especially Don and Raquel, and to those of you who only recently begin your service to our valued organization.

So, what is your Coalition doing to keep us strong, relevant and growing?

- We are collaborating with the Offices of Civil Rights and Human Resources to incorporate meaningful language into the executives' and managers' performance standards regarding diversity and inclusion to foster greater accountability from our leadership--something that has been elusive in the past.
- We are working with the Air Traffic Organization Leadership and Career Development team (ATO LCD) to make continued improvements to the Career Progression Tool that provides a venue for employees to build a career path and find resources on how to progress through the various levels within the ATO. To date, there have been over 5,600 plans created using this tool. Our involvement has made a difference for Hispanics and minorities.

- Our organization was selected to serve as a Leadership Career Development Observer on the ATO Succession Planning Programs (SPP) namely, the “Succession Planning Board”, for the leadership development program for aspiring Air Traffic Managers (ATM Level 10/11/12). The ATO Succession Planning Program is a voluntary ATO-wide leadership development program designed to identify and develop employees with a high potential to apply for mission-critical leadership positions. The program aims to help participants, including qualified Hispanics and minorities, further develop specific competencies required for success in those targeted mission-critical leadership positions. In early December, the SPP Board met to review approximately 60 application packages and select applicants for pool participation who have the highest potential to succeed at the ATM level 10-12 roles.
- If you recall from my last article, I introduced the creation of “Hispanics in Government” or “HiGov”. This organization is comprised of other Employee Association Presidents and their members from various federal agencies. In March 2014, a group of inspired individuals convened for a meeting to begin conversations on establishing the first ever, multi-agency, Hispanic association. This type of association will gain the attention and respect of senior leadership across the United States Federal Government. Four committees were formed to initiate the development of the fundamental documents necessary to establish this association.

As I relayed in our last edition of La Palabra, there were four committees formed that included the Governance Committee; Recruitment Committee; Mission and Vision Committee; and Structure Committee.

To date, this new organization has established its name and website address, created Mission and Vision statements, and identified core values. The most difficult task of writing our Constitution and ByLaws is almost complete. We will hold a formal presentation to announce all the final information once the job is complete. This organization has many pioneers, who have dedicated numerous hours of time and effort to create an organization that can speak with one voice in all of federal government—not an easy task to do!

Your Coalition is involved with much more, from the field level to headquarters. We will continue to update you as we progress. Many of the initiatives that we are working on are documented in our Executive Committee minutes that are

distributed to all members by our National Director of Administration, Misty Peña.

In closing, I want to share with you how much of a privilege it is for me to represent you, and it is an honor to have the opportunity to work with all the other agency leaders in the creation of this new national organization. What I have found is that our organization, the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE), is one of the largest, most organized, and fiscally balanced Hispanic employee associations in all of the Federal Government. I’ve been invited to speak to many new and established employee associations to share our best practices and experiences. Federal executive leaders consider NHCFAE the premier employee association and direct their employees and colleagues to us for information and leadership. As with any newly created, complex organization, we share challenges such as member recruitment but, I am confident that, as word about this organization permeates throughout each Federal agency, Hispanics and minorities will see its unique value and join!

I feel blessed that our founding fathers and subsequent leaders and members created a strong foundation that has lasted over 30 years as we proceed into the future.

Remember it’s all about you!

Wishing you and your families a safe and joyful Holiday season!



David

# Editor's Message

## Saludos familia!

We made it to the Fall edition; how exciting! Although here in sunny California, we don't see all the seasons, is where the sun keeps on shining. Yes, of course we get rain and wind but the next morning the rainbow is out.

I would like to begin my message by thanking Yadira Lacot, former Director of Public affairs. She did an awesome job putting our conference program together and for continuing guiding me through my journey as DOPA.

In this edition, you will read about this year's conference in Washington D.C. David Dominguez, did an outstanding job as his first conference as our National President. Thanks Capital Chapter for hosting this conference. We all had the opportunity to enjoy one another, as we got to meet new friends and catch up with old ones. Lastly, I want to thank all the Regional Directors for their strong motivation towards their chapters! They are the ones that keep your Chapters together, so if you have not, please offer a "Thank You" to your RCDs.

You will also read a few articles about Ace Camps that took place during the summer throughout different Regions. Also, we have included Hispanic Heritage Month events and "Our Stories" section that has a few great articles from our members.

## Next Year's Conference

Atlanta! Are you ready? The conference will take place the week of July 27, 2015. If you missed this year's conference, start thinking about attending next year, and begin requesting/bidding your leave now! We will have another successful conference for you.

I'm very proud to be part of this wonderful organization. I love my NHCFAE familia! Thank you for your continuous support. I appreciate all your wonderful articles you have submitted; keep them coming as I always enjoy reading all of them. I hope you enjoy this edition. Do not forget you can always reach out to me at [dopa@nhcfae.org](mailto:dopa@nhcfae.org). Are we friends on Facebook yet? Just type NHCFAE on the search bar and you will find us.

Un Abrazo y Felices Fiestas,

Susie Diaz  
National Director of Public Affairs



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# National Membership Chair Bulletin

By: Mindy Moreno, National Membership Chair

For the time period of May-November 2014, we have had several new members to NHCFAE. Please join me in welcoming our New Members: May 2014—Nov 2014

**Do you know who is your Regional Chapter Director (RCD)?  
Feel free to contact them.**

## **Eastern/New England Region**

Barbara Lindsay: ea.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Southern Region**

Edward Cardenas: so.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Central Region**

Laurie Ortiz: ce.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Southwest Region**

Angel Cases: sw.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Northwest Mountain Region**

Sara Wibmer: nm.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Western-Pacific Region**

Dolores Leyva: wp.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Alaska Region**

Sylvia Villa: al.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **WJH Technical Center**

Roberto Villa: ct.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Capital Region**

Jacqueline Pino: wa.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Mike Monroney Aeronational Center (MMAC)**

John Espinosa: ac.rcd@nhcfae.org

## **Great Lakes Region**

Brendan Villegas: gl.rcd@nhcfae.org

## New Members! Welcome to NHCFAE

**Frank Lias**  
WA, HQ

**Latoyia Holt**  
SO, KPDK

**Miriam Gonzalez**  
WA, HQ

**Jason Cornish**  
SO, Atlanta ARTCC

**John Harvath**  
AL, Alaskan Regional Office

**Brandon Esquer**  
WP, Phoenix ATCT

**Karol Archer**  
SW, Southwest Regional Office

**Xavier Coronel**  
SO, MIA-IFO-23

**Melinda Mercado**  
SW, Southwest Regional Office

**Erik Carroll**  
SO, Orlando SSC

**Nicole Pool**  
SO, Southern Regional Office

**Karen Fleming**  
AC, MMAC

**Kendra Jacobs**  
SW, Southwest Regional Office

**Mauricio Valcarcel**  
EA, New York TRACON

**Marcos Lopez**  
WP, Western Pacific Regional Office

**Luis Villanueva**  
SO, Southern Regional Office

**Ivan Whaley**  
WP, Western Pacific Regional Office

**Ernest Ortiz**  
SW, San Antonio Terminal

**Edith Bowdish**  
WP, Western Pacific Regional Office

**Veronica Jimenez**  
WP, Western Pacific Regional Office

**Leslie Baker**  
SW, Southwest Regional Office

**Alex Rodriguez**  
SO, Miami ARTCC

**Luis Buevas**  
SO, Miami ARTCC

**Gerardo Martinez**  
SO, Miami ATCT/TRACON



# 2014 NHCFAE TRAINING CONFERENCE



By: Roberto Villa, Technical Center Regional Chapter Director

Hi everyone! I hope all of you are doing well and were able to enjoy the summer! Here's a synopsis of the NHCFAE's 36th Annual Training Conference, hosted by the Capital Chapter in Washington, D.C. The NHCFAE Executive Board and the Training Conference Committee really exceeded the expectations in providing a successful week of panelists and sessions that were beneficial to all. Below are some highlights from guest speakers and training sessions.

We started with a video message from FAA Administrator, Michael Huerta. He acknowledged our conference theme for this year: "Embrace, Inspire, Empower" which was inspired by the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and encouraged the workforce to connect to a larger audience, and encourage yourself to continue stretching your skills. He also mentioned what our National President, David Dominguez, has mentioned to him many times - "We don't want a guarantee, we just want the chance to compete!"

We had the presence of great executives like Katherine Archuleta, first Hispanic female to be the Director of Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Ms. Archuleta acknowledged the collaboration NHCFAE has developed with OPM, and how OPM is working on increasing diversity in the workforce, making cross country college tours to encourage young people in the federal service, posting job openings in Spanish, making job descriptions more clear and improving the USAJobs website to make it relevant and user friendly. Reaching out to audience via social media for diverse applicants (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook), using plain language, graphics and humor. And last, she said we have the responsibility to be mentors and these conferences were a great place to connect.

Victor Méndez, Acting Deputy Secretary of Transportation, said he believes in the "every day counts" initiative; to always carry innovations and ideas throughout. It is important to have the right people and one thing that Michael Huerta, Anthony Foxx and Mr. Mendez emphasized was their commitment to ensure proper training is available to the workforce. He acknowledged that DOT has benefited from a diverse background workforce.

Michael Whitaker, FAA Deputy Administrator, spoke about NextGen and to build credibility and confidence, keep the momentum and program on track, and have the right resources. He spoke of the agency's new hiring process, looking into a tool used by best companies in the world; to be fair, efficient and have a less expensive system. A Q&A session followed.

Rick Ducharme, working now at Metron Aviation after retiring from the agency, said: "You don't know what you are in, until you get out." In looking back, he reflected that it's not the accomplishments in your career, but the things you could have done better. Rick inspired us to not forget where we come from, to feel fortunate to work for the FAA and to "walk the walk" - people may remember 3 percent of what you tell them, but they will remember 97 percent of how you approach them and conduct yourself.

VIP Panel: Hiring Strategy and Succession Planning with Teri Bristol, Air Traffic Organization Chief Operating Officer; Peggy Gillian, Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety; Rickie Cannon, Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Human Resource Management; and Mamie Mallory, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Civil Rights.

- Current ATO employees @ 31,550 with a demographic of 7.5 percent of Hispanic employees
- Current AVS employees @ 7,049 with a demographic of 6 percent Hispanic employees





A barrier analysis performed on the 2152s job series revealed a barrier existed for a diverse workforce. The agency is making recommendations for a new process and is incorporating strategies for improvements. The ATO Career Planning Tool currently has more than 4,600 career plans created since it launched. The tool assists on development needs and it is currently in the process to expand to include other job series.

All speakers presentations are available on the NHCFAE website [www.nhcfae.org](http://www.nhcfae.org). Here is a synopsis of the other training sessions:

### “Project Management Professional (PMP)” Session by Celeste Flemming

- Certification as PMP is an external credential; agency may not fund the exam
- Requirements: High School diploma or Associate’s degree with at least 5 years of experience in project management; or a bachelor’s degree with at least 3 years of experience in project management
- Website: [www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org)

Project Domains: Initiating (define scope & outcome), Planning (breakdown structure), Executing (task assignments to include give and take), Monitoring and Controlling (report distribution and communication), Closing (celebrate milestones and gather lessons learned).

### Corporate Training and Events Committee (CTEC) Presentation by Kristina Harris, Office of Communications

- CTEC initiative is for NHCFAE members
- Committee to identify training subjects according to agency’s competencies
- Provide training opportunities year round
- Goals are to be low cost or free, have variety, and provide development opportunities
- Gather feedback from conferences via evaluation forms
- Training opportunities available via webinars, PowerPoint, YouTube, eLMS, etc.

### “10 Steps in Becoming a Competent Communicator” by Gloria Van Brake, FAA Speechmasters

- Ice breaker: discover speaking skills you have and skills needing development
- Organize your speech: select appropriate outlines and make the message clear
- Get to the point: select speech topic
- How to say it: use right words and communicate clearly
- Your body speaks: use stance, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact to achieve speech purpose
- Vocal variety: voice volume & quality to add meaning and interest; use pauses to enhance message
- Research your topic: collect information and use specific facts
- Using visual aids: appropriate visual aids for your message and audience
- Persuade with power: appeal to audience interest; use logic and emotions to support your decision
- Inspire your audience: appeal to audience’s needs and emotions

### “The New IQ” by Bruce Stewart, OPM’s Deputy Director of Diversity and Inclusion

This session was very interactive and energetic, focusing that to be successful is not about how smart you are, but how smart you make the team (others). Rule #1: get out of your comfort zone, and rule #2: respect other perspectives. Social biases that limit our potential: 1. “like me” bias (appearance), 2. “confirmation” bias, 3. “broken windows” (the way we act affects people’s performance). To be effective in the workplace we need to practice 5 inclusive habits: empowerment, supportive, cooperative, open, and fair.





## “How to Build Generational Synergy” by Jeff Vargas, Chief Learning Officer, Commodity Futures Trading Commissions

Generational issues have been around for years and Jeff offered a look at what our world looks like through a perspective on demographics:

- Traditionalist (1922-1945) – Knowledge is their currency (linear & logical/sequential)
- Baby Boomers (1946-1964) – Lead by “group consensus” (competitive)
- Generation X (1965-1979) – Independent workers (results over process)
- Generation Y (1980-2000) – Driven, entrepreneurial & impatient (most educated)

Three truths about this issue: 1) building generational synergy is challenging; 2) all generations will be impacted by retirements; and 3) boomers dominate the Federal Government. Jeffrey presented strategies on building synergy according to demographics and discussed tips for employees and managers in creating generational synergy. Reading recommendation: “From Ladder to Lattice.”

## Insights Training by Celeste Flemming

This training focused on learning style profiles and knowing ourselves. Perception is your reality until reality changes your perception. Steps to personal effectiveness: 1. discover more about yourself, 2. recognize & appreciate others’ differences, 3. adapt your behavior to interact effectively with others, and 4. take action and put learning into practice. Everyone has different level insights color energies and learning them allows you to see the world differently from the way other people see it.

### Color energies:

- Fiery Red: Positive, Bold, Assertive
- Sunshine Yellow: Cheerful, Spirited
- Earth Green: Calming, Soothing
- Cool Blue: Cautious, Objective, non-bias

We each have all 4 colors within us; it is the combination of the 4 that creates the unique YOU!

Each day of the conference, attendees were requested to complete a survey critique to provide the National Executive Board with feedback regarding the training sessions for the day. We have reviewed the critiques and all of the comments that the members provided. For the 2015 National Training Conference, we will incorporate some of the information that our members provided us. We appreciate the feedback and look forward to seeing you in Atlanta, Georgia.

I am grateful to have been part of this training thanks to my managers, Frank Jones and Martin Suech, who have been very supportive in my role as Regional Chapter Director for the Technical Center Chapter of the NHCFAE! I want to encourage you to keep supporting the NHCFAE and all efforts done at the National level. I hope to connect with many of you in future events. Thank you Capital Chapter for such OUTSTANDING job with this year’s training conference!

## Embrace, Inspire, Empower

Source: FAA Focus

The FAA is anxious to expand, fill critical positions and dive into the agency’s diverse pool of talent as the agency introduces improved hiring strategies and succession planning resources.

In a welcome video for this year’s National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE) training conference, FAA Administrator Michael Huerta discussed focusing on today while preparing for tomorrow, “We need to have a workforce in place, a NextGen workforce, to handle what the second century of aviation throws our way.”





Deputy Administrator Michael Whittaker was in attendance for the first day of events. As the agency's Chief NextGen Officer, he reported progress on ERAM, TAMR, ADS-B, and gave conference participants a glimpse into how successful collaboration with a variety of aviation stakeholders has led to continued forward momentum for NextGen programs in places like Houston and Atlanta.

While stakeholder communication is critical to the success of a twenty-year and twenty billion dollar project like NextGen, it's also key to resolving some of the misconceptions surrounding air traffic controller hiring. "We're very happy with the result of receiving 1600 well-qualified applicants through a less costly recruitment and testing effort," Whittaker remarked. "Our primary focus is to attract the best and brightest talent through the most effective and fair processes."

Whittaker's comments were backed up by some of the highest ranking officials in the agency, who all noted the need for "more outreach and more recruitment" of minorities.

Peggy Gilligan, associate administrator for aviation safety, said her organization is "going to be looking at ourselves in the mirror" to see the "warts and all." Echoing the agency's new culture of anticipating aviation accidents before they happen, Gilligan said her focus is not on past problems with attracting and retaining talent, but on the current process. "We want to understand how the process works and improve it."

Sharing Gilligan's commitment was Teri Bristol, ATO chief operating officer, who said, "We want to continue our conversations with employee associations. ATO is committed to inclusion and diversity."

Bristol encouraged employees to take advantage of the FAA's career planning tools and share ownership over individual development plans, "this is your plan, with your ideas for mid, near and long-term goals."

Gilligan and Bristol lauded the NHCFAE for its proactive stance in advertising FAA job opportunities to its membership and other aviation employees in private industry, as well as with career planning – Bristol noted that more than 4,600 employee career plans have been developed across the agency -- and other employee-oriented programs.

A recently concluded controller hiring effort resulted in nearly 17 percent of tendered offers made to Hispanic individuals. David Dominguez, NHCFAE president, said his association's success in increasing diversity is attributable to its relationship with FAA management, as well as enlisting outside organizations, including the Office of Personnel Management, Congressional committees, and the Department of Transportation.

The day before at the conference, Katherine Archuleta director of the Office of Personnel Management lauded the FAA's air traffic control hiring initiative, placing the job description in Spanish for the first time ever.

"I believe what we did together is a model that should be followed across government," Archuleta said.

She discussed OPM's cross-country recruitment campaign at colleges and universities as well as the agency's testing of social media like LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook, and using plain language and humor to attract a diverse workforce.

The high-wattage hiring panel also featured Mamie Mallory, assistant administrator for civil rights, and Rickie Cannon, deputy assistant administrator for human resource management.

Cannon said his office is planning a number of strategic hiring initiatives to attract talent. Among them is a course to educate managers about the importance of diversity hiring and how best to accomplish it.

The panel fielded questions from engaged attendees regarding upward mobility programs, the need to clarify job announcements, building job descriptions to encourage advancement, and the need to look beyond one's line of business to find job opportunities across the agency.





“Very few career paths are straight lines,” noted Bristol.

Breakout sessions were aimed at improving employees’ interpersonal skills, knowledge management, resume writing, developing individual development plans, and interviewing.

Collaboration was a recurring theme throughout the sessions. As one presenter stated, “It’s not how smart you are. It’s how smart you make your team.”

This is the fourth training conference for Steve Villanueva, deputy director for flight services, who finds it reassuring – and educational – when he hears from other employees who are experiencing similar issues. In the process, he said, he sometimes learns to improve his own managing techniques.



# National Award Recipients

By: Misty Peña, National Director of Administration

On August 7, 2014, our annual banquet was held at the Ritz Carlton Pentagon City Hotel. We all had a wonderful and joyful evening. As you know, each year we solicit nominations for our Annual Awards Program. I am delighted to share with you the 2014 National Award Recipients..



Member of the Year  
Oscar Torres, President's Representative East



Thank You Award, Roberto Villa, William J. Hughes  
Technical Center Region/Chapter Director

## Not Pictured

Presidential Award, Veronica Villalobos,  
Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion,  
Office of Personnel Management

Manager of the Year  
Jeffrey Yost, Supervisor, Las Vegas TRACON

Non-Member of the Year, Matthew  
Ash, Program Manager Office of  
Communications, AOC-500



Officer of the Year  
Misty Peña, National Director of Administration



Service Award  
Don Espinosa, National Vice-President

## Corporate Partners

- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- First Command
- Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program
- SkyOne Federal Credit Union
- Livingston Financial Group
- Metron Aviation



Executive of the Year  
Teri Bristol, Chief Operating Officer, ATO



Service Award  
Raquel Ysasi-Huerta, National Director of Education

Please join me in congratulating all our recipients for their hard work, determination, and commitment to the NHCFAE mission. We look forward to next year's nominations.



Chapter of the Year: Southwest Region



## My First NHCFAE Conference

By: Celeste Flemming, Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center (MMAC) Member

The first thing I noticed was the professionalism. Professionalism in how the meeting was conducted, how topics were discussed and how decisions were made. The level of cooperation with honesty; valuing each other's opinions toward the best interest of the organization. But as I listened more deeply I became impressed as I realized how many of the attendees had been working for equality and opportunity over their careers. I met people who put their heart and soul into making NHCFAE a supportive and career-enhancing family. People who worked very hard to create a world with more justice and a government with more diversity that can serve the FAA and the taxpayer interest better than a non-diverse workforce. I became moved by the sacrifices they had made personally for the goal of equality over the years. I felt a lot of acceptance and I felt welcomed to the "team" to lend a hand, a shoulder to the work that continues to improve diversity. As the conference continued, I saw that the presentations added a lot of value. I learned about many new things. I was most impressed by the "mock interview" session. I thought I was a good interviewer but I learned so much by watching and listening to the VIP mock interviewers

and the courageous mock interviewee. The LULAC speaker gave another set of useful information about leadership training. When presenting training myself, I noticed that the members were curious and



wanted to improve themselves. They were involved and asked a lot of great questions. But what happened that I didn't expect is that many of the attendees pursued the training to bring it back to their workplaces to people who did not get a chance to receive the information and enrichment at the conference. They were indeed motivated to give back and I continued receiving emails after the event from people who wanted to share and spread the value they had received. They wanted to contribute to their workplaces. I am proud to be a part of this group. I was inspired by the conference. Thank you NHCFAE.



## A LOT OF FIRST'S

By: Rhonda Bandy, Central Region Director of Resources

This past August, I attended my FIRST National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employee Conference, in Washington, DC. As I entered the hotel conference room on my first day, I was somewhat overwhelmed with the dedication and loyalty that was in that room! I joined NHCFAE in March of 2013, and shortly thereafter I became Central Region's Director of Resources so I was eager to meet other members of the coalition. I enjoyed the mock-interview session, guest speakers, and the Toastmasters program. I learned a lot from this training and hope to learn even more and to meet more awesome people!

At the same time, I was preparing myself for my FIRST 5K Susan G. Komen race in downtown Kansas City, MO. On August 10, 2014, the day after I came home from the NHCFAE Conference, I was surrounded by thousands of people in PINK everywhere.

There were runners and walkers alike of all age groups. There were survivors of breast cancer and some running/walking in memory of their loved ones. I plan on joining the Race for the Cure next year.

In 2013, I attended my first college course that I have taken in quite a few years (maybe 20) and it felt good doing it!!! So far, I have taken 3 courses and plan to take more in the spring.

THANK YOU NHCFAE!!!



From left to right: Natasha Chappelle, Brenda Smith-Keene, Laurie Ortiz (RCD-Central), Rhonda Bandy (DOR-Central), and Marina O'Sullivan

# The NHCFAE Central Region Celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month

By: Laurie Ortiz, Central Regional Chapter Director

A little background information on how a week became a Month, Hispanic Heritage Month.

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson and his friends in Congress, declared the week of September 15 and 16 as Hispanic Heritage week. We had a whole week dedicated to our heritage for the next 20 years. I was in elementary and high school during this time. I remember in high school making posters by cutting out pictures from magazines that depicted our culture. Or trying to research our history by reading these books called "World Book Encyclopedia." Remember, no internet at the time.

Twenty years later, in 1988 President Reagan and a new set of friends in Congress expanded the observance to a month long celebration: September 15-October 15. September 15 was chosen as the starting point for the celebration because it is the independence day of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. They all declared independence in 1821. Mexico, Chile and Belize celebrate their independence days on September 16, September 18, and September 21, respectively. Hispanic Heritage Month also celebrates

the histories and cultures that help shape this Nation. Outstanding Hispanic men and women add daily to our Nation's accomplishment in aviation, science, technology and in other fields.

Present Day, members of the Central NHCFAE Regional Chapter joined together for lunch to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at Manny's Mexican Restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri. While we enjoyed some delicious Mexican dishes, our Chapter discussed what our plans are for Cinco de Mayo and upcoming events. This was also a great opportunity for our members to meet and share ideas on membership, outreach, and our personal goals and accomplishments. We all had a great time and plan on another perfect outing.



# Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month with the Western-Pacific Chapter

By: Dolores Leyva, Western-Pacific Regional Chapter Director & Ofelia Medina, Western-Pacific Chapter Director of Administration

A Spanish philosopher, George Santayana once said, “A man’s feet should be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world.” The Western-Pacific Chapter took this statement to heart in honoring 2014 Hispanic Heritage Month. The chapter held three fun filled events during Hispanic Heritage Month. The opening event was an invitation to meet and greet the Chapter Board members. We served coffee and delicious pastries which included pastelitos de guayaba from Cuba, Alfajores from Peru, conchitas from Mexico, rellenos de dulce de membrillo from Argentina and last but not least tasty doughnuts! What better way to survey the world than by tasting the different combination of flavors in the pastries from Hispanic countries.

The second event was a demonstration of the Loteria game, which was held on September 30, 2014 during lunch time in the administration building’s patio area. The game was lots of fun and everyone who played had a good time,

specially the winners. The Loteria game gave the players an opportunity to not only learn a new game, but also learn Spanish along the way. It was interesting to hear everyone pronouncing each word and perfecting their Spanish.

The third and final event was the closing ceremony held on October 9, 2014. Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to celebrate our culture and recognize the contributions of Hispanic American to society. In order to highlight such contributions, committee members worked on boards that celebrated the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens with ancestors of Hispanic heritage. The poster display famous firsts by Hispanic Americans in fields of medicine, science, literature, film, drama, television, baseball, football, military, and government. It was a great opportunity to look back and honor the great contributions of those individuals who helped shape the America we now enjoy. Each poster included a photograph and biography of individuals such as Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, author

of the “Who Would Have Thought It? (1872),” the first novel written in English that was written and published in the United States. We also learned about Severo Ochoa, 1959 Nobel Prize winner in Physiology or Medicine as well as Luiz Walter Alvares 1968 Nobel Prize winner in Physics. Posters displaying the contributions of those who served in the military such as Chilean immigrant Philip Bazaar, Medal of Honor (1865); Dr. Hector P. Garcia, President Medal of Freedom (1948); Secretary of the Navy (1979), Edward Hidalgo; Richard Cavazos, first Hispanic brigadier general, and many other astronauts, actors, Pulitzer prize winners, U.S. representatives, U.S. treasurer, U.S. Cabinet members, U.S. supreme court justices, filled the room with pride of our Hispanic heritage. Our displays also included a special poster honoring FAA Administrator Elwood Richard Quesada.

The ceremony included opening remarks by Glen A. Martin, Western-Pacific Regional Administrator who welcomed the audience with a traditional “Buenos Dias.” Our featured speaker was artist Anna E. Siqueiros, grandniece of Los Tres Grandes muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros, was raised with role models, such as Diego Rivera and Jose Clemente Orozco. Siqueiros created her first mural at age three. Her elders encouraged and nurtured her talent. By high school, she exhibited at Triton

Museum of Art. This year, Anna received the Service Award from President Obama. She was honored with the Recognition Award from Oaxaca, Mexico and the City of Los Angeles for her community leadership and activism. Anna E. Siqueiros has organized and executed many neighborhood mural events and volunteered as art director for American Cancer Society in New Mexico. Siqueiros founded and is president of Siqueiros Foundation of the Arts, whose mission is to serve the community developed in the Siqueiros family traditions. Ms. Siqueiros gave a presentation on her Hispanic Heritage and how that has influenced her art as well as influences by her father and activists such as Cesar Chavez. Her artwork was on display for everyone to see.

After the ceremony, we enjoyed a sampling of foods and pastries from countries such as Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Cuba and El Salvador. Sampling included ropa vieja, saltado de pollo, popusas, chorizo Salvadoreno, arroz con gandules, chimichangas, tostadas de frijol con chorizo, empanadas de pollo y res, nachos, churros, alfajores, galletas, and pan de elote. The celebration had a great turnout and was a complete success with praises for great speaker and the delicious food that was served.





# South Florida Chapter Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrations

By: Edward Cardenas, Southern Regional Chapter Director and Freidy Lazala, Southern Director of Administration

The South Florida Chapter of the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE) hosted two luncheons in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. We had a great turn out at the FAA facility in Miramar with over 50 attendees. The Miami Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) in Doral, Florida had their event a few days later with over 30 attendees. We received positive feedback from both events and 15 guests wanted follow-up information about NHCFAE with 4 who joined on the spot!!

It's always great when we have a representative of the Executive Board attend our local events, but to have the National Vice President present at both luncheons,

speaks volumes for the Coalition. Ida Marrero, our new Vice President was a special guest at both events. Ida participated in the opening ceremonies at our Miramar luncheon and was our guest speaker at the Miami ARTCC luncheon. There, she discussed the celebration of our pride in being Hispanics and what we have achieved throughout the years. She discussed the struggles many have experienced and how there is so much more to be done, like increasing the Hispanic representation in the United States Government. Ida also spoke about our volunteer organization that has been standing for 36 years and will continue advocating for career placement and advancement through support, education and alliances for many more years to come.

Our guest speaker at the Miramar facility, Dr. Sarit J. Levy, CEO/Founder Synergy Strategists, LLC., spoke of the continued growth of the Hispanic population in the United States and how important it is to instill our values on our children making sure our kids know their heritage and be proud of it. Growing up in the United States can make us lose some of that identity. It is important to have our children participate in events where they can learn and explore their heritage.

Both events were catered by Vecky Bakery located in Pembroke Pines, Florida. Some of the delicacies on the menu were arroz con pollo, congri, lechon asado, arroz con gandules, pollo asado, maduros y tostones. The food was delicious! This year was extra special thanks to our member and newly elected Southern Director of Administration, Freidy Lazala and his wife Zoraida. They made an exquisite cake that was in high demand at both luncheons. It was a great way to end a joyous event.

Lastly, I'd like to thank everyone that helped putting these events together. This was a team effort where our work familia comes together to celebrate our Hispanic heritage.



# ¿HISPANIC VS LATINO.. IDENTITY CRISIS?

By: Roberto Villa, Technical Center Regional Chapter Director

“Am I Hispanic or Latino? Are they not the same thing? Am I both? Am I having an identity crisis?” For many years people have often used the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” to describe the same group of people, but which one is right? Is there a difference? This was a question brought to me some time ago about the politically correct use of the terms. I really should have known more details about it given my background, and be able to give an educated answer at the time...so I researched!

Can the terms be used interchangeably? In short, yes. However, we need to understand where the terminology derives from: Hispanic refers to language, where Latino refers to geography. So, not all Hispanics are Latinos, and not all Latinos are Hispanics. Many are both.

The term “Hispanic” comes from the word “Hispania” for Spain, which later became “España” where the language is Spanish. The term “Latino” specifically refers to Latin America, consisting of South America, Central America, Mexico, and the islands of the Caribbean. When we consider the nearly 50 million Spaniards (population of Spain), you can be certain they can never be called Latinos, but they are Hispanics. In contrast, the 200 million Brazilians in South America, where they speak Portuguese, are accurately called Latinos, but they are not Hispanics.

One thing is clear, we are proud of our heritage, and of course we enjoy when a Spanish-sounding word like “Latino” becomes acceptable in other languages, rather than the English word “Hispanic”, so Latino becomes a preference to many and a proud label to carry. As a Puerto Rican (born and raised), I am “Hispanic” and “Latino” so either term is acceptable and applicable to me.

As we look into growing our organization and reaching out to our fellow members and prospective members as a unified group, we need to look at our own name: National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees. In the end, which one are you? Is it clear as mud?



# ACE

Aviation Career Education Academy Program

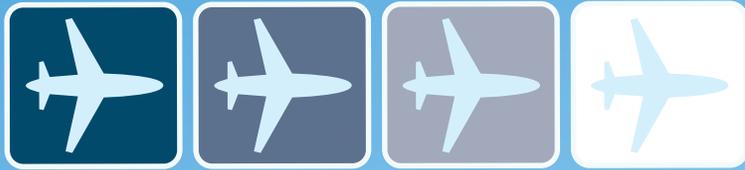
## ACE CAMP-Los Angeles, CA

By: Susie Diaz, National Director of Public Affairs

This year's ACE Camp took place from July 13-18, 2014. Approximately 20 junior high and high school students from the Los Angeles area joined us. For the past couple of years, NHCFAE has paired up with the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation of Employees (NBCFAE) along with the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals (OBAP) to make each ACE Camp a successful one. Each year that I've volunteered to be a part of this wonderful camp, it is a unique experience with different stories and new faces. Each year, I feel privileged to be part of their lives, even if it's just for a week. I enjoy being part of this amazing program and I am happy that we are able to offer it each summer to our communities.

I enjoy the outcome, as it is a form of reaching out to students by teaching and guiding them onto their education path and hopefully a career. I love to see their "wow" faces when they go inside of United Airlines Boeing 777 premium plane. They even get to sit and play with all the different gadgets they have in first class and go to the cockpit and see where the pilots' sits and where the flight attendant sleeps during a long flight. The last day of ACE Camp is their "FUN Day" and they all love it because that is when they get to take off and fly with a licensed pilot in a Cessna-172 single engine plane. How awesome! I believe that each student that goes through the program realizes the opportunity that has been given to them and takes that and uses it for self-motivation and further their education goals. We, as volunteers, are there to guide them and we hope that they put what they learned into work.





Aviation Career Education Academy Program

# ACE

## ACE CAMP- Great Lakes Chapter

By: Vanessa Gurrola, Director of Administration, Great Lakes Chapter

**E**very year, the last week of July, Great Lakes holds an ACE camp. We host around twenty kids, for a full jammed packed five days. It is a pretty exciting week. For many of the kids, it's the first time they are away from home that long. We stay in the dorms at Lewis University in Romeoville, IL. The kids go to class and learn everything we can teach them about aviation. We have pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, airport operations, air traffic controllers and even fire fighters to come talk to the kids. They each explain their important role in the industry. They learned a lot in the classroom but they also do a lot of hands on learning. We visited Midway Airport, where we saw the Southwest operations. The staff there was amazing. The kids were able to talk to pilots one on one and even sat in the cock pit of a Boeing 737. We then visited the main control office of the City of Chicago Airport Operations, where they were able to see everything it takes to keep an airport functioning. This is where they really learned that aviation takes so much more than pilots and controllers. There are electricians, snow removal teams, construction workers, agriculture teams, architects and so much more. We then went to see the airport control tower. Besides the amazing view of the skyline there, they were able to see all the rules and the equipment needed to run a safe and efficient operation. Our last stop that day at Midway was the firehouse. The kids were able to what the airport crash rigs did, try on some fire equipment, test the water hoses and see a demonstration of the equipment practicing cutting through the fuselage of a 737.





# ACE

Aviation Career Education Academy Program

There is definitely a lot of learning that goes on, but we worked really hard and make sure the kids have fun with it. One of their favorite activities is getting to fly themselves! The amazing flight instructors at Lewis take the kids in a Cessna 172 and let them take control of the yokes (with supervision of course). It was so amazing to see their faces when they land. They enjoyed every minute of it. Another big part of the camp is our trip up to Oshkosh for Airventure. We departed at 4:00 am and spent the whole day there, and despite the early wake up call, everyone loves it. They get to see the war birds, meet some Tuskegee Airmen and see the awesome airshow. This year they were even able to meet the FAA Administrator, Mr. Huerta. This year was definitely a camp year to remember. We fit so much into our short time together but we have a blast. Whether in the class room, building rockets (and getting to launch them later), on our airport tours, or in Oshkosh, these kids get so much out of this camp. They leave with an amazing passion for aviation. To say that this was a rewarding experience is an understatement. The counselors had just as much fun and get just as much out of it as the kids do. I hope this is a camp we can continue hosting for years to come.





# ACE

Aviation Career Education Academy Program

## The Bethel, Alaska ACE CAMP

By: Rick Neff, Alaska Chapter Member

**T**he Bethel, Alaska Aviation Career Education (ACE) camp was conducted on April 29 through May 1, 2014. We facilitated motivational discussions, including videos from Lakeland, Florida "Sun n Fun- Fly-in" and a video on the Blue Angels demonstration team. We also conducted tours through the Bethel Communications Facility, (RCAG/RCO); the Satellite Earth Station, (ASTI); and the Wide Area Augmentation System, (WAAS). They also toured our Airport Traffic Control Tower and the Weather Station. The 3 employees that assisted with the ACE Caps were Doneva Cheeseman, Tech-Ops Manager; Janet Gray, Management Personnel Assistant; and NHCFAE member, Rick Neff, Bethel Front Line Manager. There was a total for 24 youths with an average age of about 13 years old. Most were engaged and highly curious about what we do in the FAA. I emphasized the theme "Why not you?" in the discussions and handed out product-ware with FAA logos and literature. Rick reminded them that they are the future in the world of aviation and there is no reason why they can't do anything they desire. We stressed the importance of making good decisions as youths and to not do anything that would jeopardize a rewarding future in aviation.

**Below is the official FAA press release on the ACE Camp:**

### LKSD Holds Successful ACE Academy

The Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) held its second annual middle school Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy recently. Out of 130 applicants, 24 youth from 13 villages were chosen to attend this 4 day ACE academy.

Given the importance of aviation to rural Alaska, the LKSD has made a commitment to developing and offering aviation programs to its students. In the Spring se-

mester, they will offer a residential semester long class to high school juniors and seniors. They will hold two middle School ACE academies each year, one in Fall and one in the Spring.

Students visited several local aviation businesses including the Yuut Yaqungviat Flight School, the AMP Maintenance facility who graciously allowed the academy to use their hangar for some indoor flying activities, Northern Air Cargo, Yute Aviation, Life Med the NOAA Weather Balloon facility, Fish & Wildlife Services hangar, the ATC Contract tower and the National Guard Readiness armory. Evening meals were prepared and served by the Bethel High School JROTC cadets





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By: Susie Diaz, Director of Public Affairs

“Our Stories” is a new section in La Palabra, which was introduced by our NHCFAE President David Dominguez. Our Stories, will tell the stories of our fellow brother and sisters within the FAA. This is not limited to members, but to anyone who works within the FAA. We each work side-by-side with someone who has a “story” of how they became the individual they are today. There are wonderful stories out there that could be about a personal achievement, overcoming a hardship, military adventures and so on. These are the kinds of stories that can inspire our fellow members/employees and affirm that we all have something to contribute.

So, how does it work? Ask a coworker or you as a member, write an article detailing their story or your own story. Perhaps you can write the story for your coworker if they’re willing to share. You can reach out to our Director of

Public Affairs, Susie Diaz for assistance. The story should be between 350-750 words (Include pictures separately) If you want it published in our next edition of La Palabra, please submit it to [dopa@nhcfae.org](mailto:dopa@nhcfae.org).

Remember, our organization is about you. Please make an effort to contribute to our magazine and make it the choice of our colleagues in the FAA. I look forward to reading about all the stories about our members and our fellow employees within the FAA.

Let’s look at Elsa Gonzalez and Yadira Lacot’s stories.



## My Story and the Story of My Family, and My Hispanic Culture

By: Elsa Gonzalez, Western-Pacific Member

**H**ola my name is Elsa Gonzalez; I have been employed by the FAA for over 15 years, and I currently serve as a Contracting Officer.

On October 9, 2014, our chapter had an event to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month and I had an opportunity to share my story to all employees that attended the event at the Regional Office in Hawthorne, CA.

Currently, there is a lot of controversy surrounding illegal immigration. Allow me to share “mi historia” with you...

I am the oldest of three siblings born in Michoacán, Mexico during the late 70's. My brothers and I were born not in a hospital or a clinic, but in a small house made from “adobe,” which had no electricity or running water. My journey began at the young age of three alongside my two young brothers and grandparents, and a three-day bus ride from our hometown of Michoacán to Tijuana, Baja California. Upon our arrival to Tijuana, the “Coyote” would be responsible for smuggling my brothers and I illegally into the United States. Being that we were too young to be interrogated by the U.S. Border Officials, the plan seemed quite simple. My brothers and I would assume the identities of children whose U.S. Birth Certificate description matched ours. My youngest

brother, who was a year old at the time, was detained by immigration officials because his description did not match the description of the birth certificate being leased to him. Thinking and fearing for the worst, my mom and dad who had illegally come into the United States a year prior, waited for the arrival of their third and youngest child. After a week, my parents received the call that my brother had also been successfully smuggled into the United States. My parents worked tirelessly to save sufficient money to cover the costs associated with the journey.

It was not until the Immigration Reform and Control Act enacted and signed into law by former President Ronald Reagan on November 6, 1986, that my family and I were given the opportunity of becoming legal U.S. Residents. Although this seemed like a great opportunity, my parents hesitated to begin the process of legal residency because there were rumors floating around our community that this was a Government scheme to deport as many illegal immigrants as possible.

I am grateful for the opportunities that have been given to me and to share my story with you. Today, I am a proud Latina and an even prouder U.S. American Citizen.



# Direct From You — Global Leadership in the Middle East? Yes, Please!

Written by Yadira Lacot for Focus FAA

*In this Direct from You article, Yadira Lacot, Foreign Affairs Specialist at the Office of International Affairs, recently traveled to Dubai, United Arab Emirates for on the job training with the FAA Senior Representative in Abu Dhabi and also to attend the ICAO Middle East Runway Safety Workshop.*

**B**efore I begin sharing my overall experience in Dubai, I must write about the real meaning behind this trip... Global Leadership.

This past April, the FAA brought together personnel from all Lines of Business involved in international activities, for the 1st annual FAA Global Leadership Meeting. By way of background, one of Administrator Huerta's strategic initiatives is Global Leadership. It is focused on how the FAA can maintain its leadership in aviation around the world. During this meeting, we not only discussed the development and implementation of an agency-wide international strategy, but also focused on the need for all Lines of Business and Staff Offices to work together internally and externally.

I recently had the opportunity to travel to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to observe and learn the role of an International Senior Representative (in my case Aaron Wilkins for the Middle East), understand the aviation

issues in the Middle East, work on strategic planning for Fiscal Years 15-16, and also attend the Second ICAO Middle East Runway Safety Workshop.

This workshop offered an incredible opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA), Air Navigation Service Providers, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), IATA, ACI, and industry partners, like Boeing. But, I didn't go alone...

Besides myself and Aaron Wilkins from the Office of International Affairs (API), the FAA was represented by James White, Deputy Director, Office of Airports (ARP) and James Fee, Manager, Safety Analysis Branch Manager and Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) Representative, Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention. They both participated as panelists sharing FAA's best practices on Runway Safety. The ATO was represented by Darryel Adams, Manager, Europe, Af-



rica and Middle East Group, ATO International (AJR), who participated in all bilateral meetings from the operations side, and is able to share all this information with FAA's Chief Operating Officer, Teri Bristol. With this representation, the FAA is working on achieving two of the four focus areas of Global Leadership: Ensure the Safety and Security of U.S. Lives and Ensure Efficient Global Air Traffic System to Support U.S. Economy. All this is important because, according to the UAE GCAA statistics, the number of travelers to the UAE is expected to grow by 8 to 10 percent annually.

Having such a strong representation from different Lines of Business is a great example of how we can all work together towards achieving that leadership spot around the

world. The FAA is already seen as a leader in aviation, but opportunities like these reaffirm 1) our commitment to our global partners, and 2) that we can work as one FAA.

Outcomes from all these bilateral meetings included identifying areas where we may be able to affect safety and efficiency, not only in the UAE but in the Middle East region. These include sharing best practices, participating in Runway Safety efforts in the Middle East, partnering with ICAO Middle East, potential training opportunities, attending seminars on data sharing, and relationship building, which is essential.

As for my experience in Dubai... it was an amazing learning experience. Though a 108-degree temperature is not always pleasant, I was amazed at the amount of development Dubai





has experienced. The building architecture is as creative as you can imagine – from the tallest building in the world, the Burj Khalifa, to the Abu Dhabi mosque. Did you know there are more than 150 nationalities in Dubai only? Well, now you do... The customer service and the people are truly wonderful.

During my trip, I was able to visit the US Embassy in Abu Dhabi and meet with US Ambassador Michael Corbin. We discussed the Middle East strategic plan and the prioritization of critical states in the Middle East. In addition to the continued growth of aviation in the UAE and how the FAA can engage with activi-

ties to support this growth and the overall aviation issues.

Being able to shake hands with the UAE Director General of Civil Aviation, Mohammed Saif Al Suwaidi; sit at the same table with the Assistant Director General for Aviation Safety, Ismaeil Mohammed Al Blooshi; meet with Captain Alan Stealey, Divisional Senior Vice President, Flight Operations, Emirates Airline, and visit their Headquarters to look at the Emirates operations, including the beautiful Airport Traffic Control Tower at the Dubai Airport (DXB); to connect with my FAA colleagues and learn about the amazing work FAA does; and to learn more about

aviation issues in the Middle East and strategically plan our next efforts and initiatives with my Senior Representative is an invaluable experience.

Oh! And I learned my name is Arabic... It means worthy. So, when you're referring to a Certificate of Airworthiness, my name is there!

I'm thankful for this opportunity. I learned more about the work I support on a daily basis but in a more direct way. I created new and strengthened existing working relationships. I am a part of promoting one of the main strategic initiatives our Administrator has put forward: Global Leadership. I'm a proud FAAer!



# Furthering their Education

By: Raquel Ysasi-Huerta,  
Corporate Sponsor Chair

I recently learned that more than \$2.7 billion in scholarships and education assistance has been awarded to more than 1.8 million students since 1958. I can't begin to express how proud I am to know that our organization is able to contribute to such an outstanding cause.

For the last four years I have held the position of National Director of Education (DOE) for the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE). One of the functions of the DOE position is to oversee the annual scholarship programs. NHCFAE has 4 scholarship programs.

Two of our scholarship programs were established to help individuals from low income families. The applicants are ranked on the following criteria, Family Income, Grade Point Average, Co-Curricular activities, Leadership Roles, Extra

Curricular Activities, Leadership Roles, Community Activities, Academic and Honor Awards. The first year as I went through the applications, I was astonished by the amount of some of the families' total income. Over 50 applicant's family's income was less than \$10,000 annually. I couldn't imagine how they were able to survive, but even more impressive was their desire to continue their education.

The difference between these two scholarships is those individuals who apply for Danny's scholarship must be studying in the field of Electronics or Engineering.

The Rene Matos Scholarship with was established in the memory of one of our past Presidents who pass away while in office. This scholarship program provides 10 individuals a \$1,000.00 scholarship.

## The winners of this year's Rene Matos Scholarship are:

Name	Score	Name	Score
Eduard Aguirre	100	Arely Sanchez	87
Kayla Potter	100	Rebecca Johnson	87
Britney Silver	97	Jonathan Nobles	86
Rosolen Barrero	92	Iris Paulino	85
Avery Barnes	90	Cinthia Gutierrez	83

The Danny Gutierrez Scholarship program was established in the memory of our past National Director of Resources, who also passed away while in office.

The winner of this year's Danny Gutierrez Scholarship is Eduard Aguirre with a perfect score of 100.

The Federal Employees Education and Assistance (FEEA) / NHCFAE scholarship is for our members and their dependents. These scholarships are processed the FEEA staff.

## The Winners of the FEEA/NHCFAE Scholarship are:

Courtney Contreras, Daughter of Vicki Contreras — Southwest Region

Mia Garcia, Daughter of Josue Garcia — Southwest Region

Jesus Sanchez Jr., Son of Jesse Sanchez — Southwest Region

The Member Tuition Reimbursement Program is solely for our members. I am impressed with those members who have taken

advantage of this member benefit to reach their goal to finish their education. It gives me great pleasure to share with you the winners of the 2014 Members Tuition Reimbursement Program.

**The winners of the Member Tuition Reimbursement Program are:**

Rhonda Bundy— Central Region

Magda Carver— Capital Chapter

Christina Filipowski— Western Pacific Chapter

Cynthia Garcia— MMAC Chapter

Cesar A Gomez— Northeast Chapter

Yamileth Gonzalez— Southern Chapter

Miguel Narvaez— Southern Chapter

Laurie Ortiz— Central Region

Erik Salazar— MMAC Chapter

Congratulations to all this year's winners!

In the last four years, I have learned and experienced a lot, but if I had to select one word to describe the last four years that word would be "COMMITMENT."

I have truly enjoyed the last four years and I am privileged to hand over the reins to Cynthia Garcia Torres who will serve as the new DOE.

Con Mucho Orgullo Siempre

## NHCFAE PAST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

By: Lorena Cedeno-Zambrano

Dear National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE),

I was very happy to run into your organization's booth at the 2014 LULAC National Convention. I am a former recipient of the NHCFAE scholarship. I am writing to thank you for your generous financial support towards my education. Currently, I work at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and greatly value my education which has opened many doors for me. Graduating from college has been life changing.

In 1999, I graduated from Colorado State University. After graduation, I pursued graduate education and attended the University of New Mexico (UNM), where I completed two degrees: a Master's of Community and Regional Planning and a Master's of Arts in Latin American Studies. While in graduate school, I accepted a Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Internship which brought me to Washington, DC and introduced me to Federal Civil Service. "Getting in" was not easy, but I entered Federal Civil Service 10 years ago.

By awarding me the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees Scholarship, I was able to concentrate on what was important for me at that time, my education. Your financial generosity allowed me to be one step closer to my goal. Throughout high school, college and as a working professional, I have been inspired to help others by giving back to the community. In undergraduate and graduate school, I volunteered through numerous student organizations, in the Washington, DC area. I have worked with young women by volunteering for the Girl Scouts of America and for a Virginia-based organization called Latinas Leading Tomorrow, and most recently as an EMT in Montgomery County, MD. Thank you for making a difference in my life, and for continuing to help students achieve their goal, just as you helped me.

*Note: Misty Peña, National Director of Administration, met Ms. Cedeno-Zambrano at the LULAC Conference. Ms. Cedeno-Zambrano was an NHCFAE scholarship recipient about 10 years ago, and she graciously agreed to write an article detailing how the NHCFAE scholarship program helped her achieve her educational goals.*



# League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Federal Training Institute Program



By: Yadira Lacot, Capital Chapter member and President's Special Assistant

LULAC celebrated its second Federal Training Institute Program (FTIP) in Washington, DC on September 16 and 17, and Capital Chapter members Jacqueline Pino, Region/Chapter Director; Eric Saldaña and I, participated. The FTIP program was created in May 2013 as part of a Public Non-Profit Partnership with Federal Agencies, LULAC and a cadre of Federal employees who have served or are currently serving in Federal leadership positions. The event provides an intensive and structured career-development program for government employees. The FTIP will offer plenary sessions, workshops and executive coaching sessions. It is designed to enable government employees to enhance their leadership skills and develop the Executive Core Qualifications required for leadership positions and entry into the Senior Executive Service .

At the opening ceremony, keynote speaker Catherine Archuleta, Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), emphasize the importance of the new generation of federal employees, specifically Hispanics. Also indicated how much work needs to be done to in-

crease the current numbers of Hispanics in the federal workforce. A highlight of her message was mentioning the FAA National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE) as part of her speech; in front of 300 federal employees.

Ms. Archuleta commended NHCFAE for its contributions to the Air Traffic Control hiring effort a few months ago. She highlighted that because of our efforts and the joint work with OPM, 17 percent of Air Traffic Controllers Specialists job offers went to Hispanics. It was great to be sitting in the auditorium, listening to the praises this organization received by the OPM Director.

As part of the workshops, there were sessions on: Senior Executive Service, Dealing with Difficult People, Behavioral-based Interviewing, Ethics and Leadership, among many others.

If you can attend next year as part of the spots LULAC grants NHCFAE, I highly recommend attending (even if you're in another region).

## 2014 LULAC National Convention

By: Misty Peña, National Director of Administration

In July 2014, I attended the 2014 League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) National Convention, representing the NHCFAE. LULAC offered NHCFAE a booth in the Exhibitor's Hall. I arrived in New York City with my bags packed and a wealth of information about the NHCFAE. I brought pamphlets, member benefit hand-outs, applications, goodies, corporate sponsor information, props, table cloth, display, a sign-in sheet, and business cards. I knew I wanted to be overly-prepared for this great event.

Over the course of the two days, I met and spoke with numerous students, parents, grandparents, vendors, etc. Pamphlets and hand-outs were disseminated that provided information about our scholarships to both students and adults. Many of the adults that were attending this convention were gathering information for family members and friends. One of the individuals who stopped at our booth was a young lady who had previously been a recipient of our annual scholarship. Ms. Loreno Cedeno-Zambrano now works for the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). We spoke at length about how the NHCFAE helped assist her during her educational studies. Please see the article she wrote on how the NHCFAE assisted her in reaching her educational goals.

Our NHCFAE booth shared a table with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). While sitting next to these female Special Agents and Supervisory Special Agent, I was able to gain information about some of their programs that the FBI partners with for children who may have an interest in law enforcement. For more information about the NYC's Law Enforcement Exploring Program, visit [www.nyexploring.org](http://www.nyexploring.org). Because of the FBI's efforts to outreach more, I provided Jacqueline Pino, Capital Region Chapter Director (RCD) and Barbara

Lindsay, Eastern/New England RCD, with their contact information in hopes of working events with these agents in the future.

We had other convention sponsors stop-by our booth, and we discussed potential corporate sponsorship with the NHCFAE. Through one of these conversations, I learned about "Aviation High School", which is located in Long Island, NY. For more information about this high school, visit <http://www.aviationhs.net/>. Corporate sponsor information was disseminated to Ida Marrero, and contact has been made with potential sponsors.

One of my booth attendees was a Professor of Military Science. He explained that he was a professor at a local college and wanted information about the possibilities of someone attending a career day and/or conducting outreach efforts. He explained that not all of his students would enter the military and he was looking for potential speakers to discuss career opportunities and what better field than aviation. His information was passed along to Barbara and she has made contact with this Professor about future outreach/career day events.

Overall, this was an extremely exciting opportunity. I was fortunate enough to attend one of the lunches, in which the First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, was the Keynote Speaker, who was introduced by Actress Jennifer Lopez.

Attending this LULAC National Convention was a remarkable event and being able to advocate for the NHCFAE was truly rewarding. I recommend if you have the opportunity to attend a LULAC convention, take advantage of it. It was an educational and terrific experience.



The crew of the aircraft carrier USS MIDWAY (CV-41) mans the rails as the ship arrives at Pearl Harbor 1991. The USS ARIZONA Memorial is in the background.

## Interview with Rear Admiral William D. Rodriguez, USN, Retired

By: Raquel Ysasi-Huerta, Corporate Sponsor Chair

Our distinguished speaker for the Awards Banquet at this year's National Training Conference was Rear Admiral William "Will" D. Rodriguez, United States Navy (Retired). When you Google him, the biographies are extremely impressive. Once we extended an invitation to the Rear Admiral to speak at our banquet, I contacted him to see determine availability and share our conference theme. I felt fortunate to spend time with him prior to the banquet. The Rear Admiral is very down to earth and passionate about his causes. During my initial contact, he shared a portion of what he had planned to speak about and I was very moved by his words and the zeal he spoke with.

As our Keynote Speaker, the Rear Admiral was a dynamic speaker, who spoke honestly, with actual facts. As he would say, "the facts don't lie." The internet has a wealth of interesting data about him, but what this information lacks, is the full portrait of the person that the Rear Admiral really is.



After the conference, I contacted him and asked if he would be willing to be interviewed for an article in La Palabra and he quickly agreed. In preparing for the interview, I searched the internet. Below is a short excerpt from one of the many biographies of the Rear Admiral:

*"Upon graduation from Citadel with a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science, Rear Admiral Rodriguez was commissioned an ensign through the Navy Reserve Officer's Training Course Scholarship Program. He served aboard the USS Thomas C. Hart (FF 1092) where he was designated as a surface warfare officer. He later reported to the staff of (Tactical) Destroyer Squadron 32. Rear Admiral Rodriguez attended Postgraduate school and received a Master of Science degree in System Technology (Command Control and Communications with emphasis in Computer Science and Communications Engineering). Later in his career, he served as the officer in*

*charge of the Naval Command, Control and Ocean Surveillance Center. Prior to retiring, Rear Admiral Rodriguez served as the Director of Outreach, West Coast for the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where he was responsible for business development and relations building between the Naval Postgraduate School and its external customers.”*

To prepare for my interview, I took some of the information I found and formulated a variety of questions. I hope each of you find this article enlightening:

**RLYH:** In reading your biographies, I discovered that your father was a Captain in the Navy. Did this have any influence in your decision to join the Navy?

**RAR:** It was the reason that I joined the Navy, I have salt water in my veins. I was born at a naval hospital, baptized on a Naval Destroyer, and I believe I was destined to join the Navy. I was a Navy Jr. as a child, and since my dad was in the Navy, we moved around. I lived on both coasts of the United States Puerto Rico, and in Japan growing up.

**RLYH:** Growing up as a Military Child, were you exposed to many other Hispanics?

**RAR:** No, not really. Growing up, I spent my early years in Virginia; Key West, Florida; Monterey, California; and Long Beach, California. When our family moved to California in the early 60's, our family was exposed to discrimination. My dad was looking for houses and he kept getting turned down. Finally, my dad went to the realtor office and when they saw that even though his last name was Rodriguez, he was white, they allowed him to buy a house. When I was attending school in Puerto Rico, I would tell the other students that my last name is “Rodriguez”. They would look at me very strange since I didn't really “look” Hispanic. After serving about 10 years in the Navy, I received a demographics survey. In this survey, they spelled my last name Rodriquez with a “q” not Rodriguez with a “g”. I sent them a letter requesting that they correct the spelling of my name and leave me alone.” During this time in my career, I was not aware of the lack of diversity in the Navy especially in the area of leadership.

**RLYH:** In your biographies, I noticed that you have a degree in Mathematics and Computer Science, what steered you towards this field of study?

**RAR:** My dad's sister was a Professor of Mathematics and so I believed that a mathematical foundation was necessary. While I was studying at Citadel, Computer Science caught my attention and I knew that this was going to be the future. In 1984, I changed my Master of Science (MOS) to Engineering.

**RLYH:** How does it feel to be 1 of only 15 Hispanics to obtain the rank of Rear Admiral?

**RAR:** I feel extremely honored, it is a real honor and I feel that I have a responsibility to set an example and to mentor others to help open doors, because I can. I try to encourage my fellow flag officers to do the same.

**RLYH:** What challenges did you have to overcome in the Military, and how did they influence your decision to continue to reach the rank of Rear Admiral?

**RAR:** The challenges that I faced I set for myself. It was through these challenges that helped me reach the rank of Rear Admiral, which I achieved on March 17, 2004. I learned after about 10 years in the Navy the importance of mentors. I believe that there is a lack of mentors in the Hispanic community and young Hispanics need mentors someone with a fresh outlook and can help open doors.

**RLYH:** At our conference, your speech was on young Hispanics today, what do you feel they need to do in order to be successful?

**RAR:** In 2006, my daughter was beginning to search for colleges to attend. I learned that in the County of San Diego, California, there was only a 56% graduate rate for Hispanics. Because of this, I got involved with creating a foundation to help raise money to support programs in a measureable way to keep Hispanic students in school, which is “The San Ysidro Education Van Guard Foundation.” Through the work of the foundation, the Annual Performance Index (API) has gone up 118 points in the last six years. It was through my work with the foundation that led me to become President of the Association of Naval

Services Officers (ANSO), which is an infinity group of Navy, Marine and Coast Guard Officers and enlisted personnel. I am very passionate about the national strategic issues that Hispanics face today. Based on a tremendous amount of research, 72% of young Hispanic males, which is 3 out of every 4, are ineligible to join the armed forces today. The three main reasons for this are 1) lack of a high school diploma; 2) cannot pass the entrance exam and/or the physical fitness test; and/or 3) serious criminal record, not misdemeanors but felonies. Research on why we see more Hispanics dropping out of high school and joining gangs is due largely to the Hispanic Familia connections. When the Familia breaks up, these young Hispanics look for a new Familia, which are generally gangs. An analogy of data from 2010 to 2011 indicated that the majority of prisoners are Hispanics which is a diverse group (within a diverse group). Fifty-three percent of Hispanics in prison do not have a high school diploma. Approximately 16% of all Hispanics have a Bachelor's degree, 65% of Hispanics do not have a high school diploma and the average income of Hispanics is \$37,000. The common denominator is lack of education. One of my solutions to the problem was the creation of "The San Ysidro Foundation", which encouraged young Hispanics to study in the following areas: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). In 2013, Forbes Magazine listed the top 100 Universities in the United States, which were located in Stanford and Pomona, California. California ranked 48th in education, this should be alarming. In California, students are in school for only 5.5 hours a day, and attend only 178 days of school a year, and they have eliminated Physical education, Arts and Music programs.

**RLYH:** What advice would you give young Hispanics today and what do you feel is the most beneficial resources available to young Hispanics?

**RAR:** My advice would be: Education, to strive for college, do not use poverty as an excuse, and change the mentality of our cultural. Also, change the expectation for Hispanic kids and tell them "You Can Do Whatever You Want to Do! Performance is a common denominator, those who perform will be successful at whatever they do." Find a mentor, someone who has been successful in the career and or life, and someone who has climbed the education ladder that can help you through your journey.

**RLYH:** What would you say to someone who asked you how they can make a difference?

**RAR:** I would tell them to do better to influence others and not to accept the status quo.

After a very lengthy conversation, I thanked him for taking time out of his busy schedule to share his passion and insights. I was very impressed with the Rear Admiral after reading his biographies, but even more so, after spending time talking with him about his role as leader in the Hispanic community.

## Baby Announcement from the Northwest Mountain Region!

Congratulations to Lora and Nick Singh as they welcome a beautiful little girl named Mia Rose Singh. Mia was born on September 9, 2014, weighing 8lbs, 5oz and was 20 inches long! Both mom and baby are doing well!



# Remember Veterans Day 2014—Honoring All Who Serve!

Honoring our Veterans is a Matter of Appreciation and Noble Patriotism

Submitted by: Iliá A. Quinones, Deputy Regional Chapter Director, Southwest Region

Source: This write-up is based on excerpts taken from various newspaper publications available electronically, and dated between June 10 and September 27, 2014. These include: NBC News, ABC News, The Washington Post, the Miami Herald, and American Forces Press Service.

## Building on the Legacy Puerto Rico's 65th Infantry Regiment Honored with the Congressional Gold Medal

On June 10, 2014, President Barack Obama signed House of Representative (H.R.) Bill 1726 to award the members of Puerto Rico's 65th Infantry Regiment – the 'Borinqueneers' – the Congressional Gold Medal. This is a historic event for veterans and for Latinos in general, especially Puerto Ricans. The term 'Borinqueneers' comes from the original Taino indigenous name of the Island - Borinquen.

The 65th regiment was a segregated unit much like the Tuskegee Airmen, the Navajo Code Talkers, the Nisei Japanese Soldiers and the Women Air Force Service Pilots of World War II; and, they join this handful of military units in being recognized with this award. Only one other Hispanic has received this award: Roberto Clemente, a Puerto Rican baseball hall-of-famer who died in a plane crash during a humanitarian mission.

This medal recognized the contributions and extraordinary heroism of the men of the regiment, who served during a time of segregated units. It raises awareness about the soldiers. It weaves positive contributions of Hispanics into the fabric of the American culture and recognizes them as a part of American History.

Shortly after Puerto Rico became part of the United States in 1898, a regiment of mainly Puerto Rican soldiers was formed. They served in World War I and World War II, and earned their glory for its service during the Korean War. In World War I they defended the homeland and patrolled the Panama Canal Zone. In World War II more than 62,000 Puerto Ricans joined the military. They fought in Europe and were limited to security and support roles. At the time they were kept from fighting in the front lines.

More than 43,000 men fought in Korea. The 65th participated in the Battle of Pusan Perimeter and provided vital support to the Marines' withdrawal from the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in Korea. They earned 1 Medal of Honor, 9 Distinguished Service Crosses, 258 Silver Stars, 628 Bronze Stars and 2771 Purple Hearts. An estimated 750 were killed in action and more than 120 are still missing in action.

Nearly 60 years later a small group of surviving 'Borinqueneers' were honored at the Hispanic Heritage Gala Awards held at the Warner Theatre in Washington D.C on September 18, 2014. This is one of the Nation's highest civilian honors. In spite of discrimination against minority service members at the time, President Obama said during the ceremony – "Segregation set them apart from their fellow soldiers, but their courage made them legendary". New York Congressman Jose Serrano said "The Congressional Gold Medal that is bestowed on their unit is a small token of appreciation from our nation for their services, their bravery and their role in ending racial stereotypes". "Hispanic veterans have always been, and continue to be, part of the American Story", said Congressional Hispanic Caucus Chairman Ruben Hinojosa.







## Coalition Founder Retires from the Federal Aviation Administration—His Life and His Vision for the Coalition

Interview by Ilia A. Quinones, Southwest Region, Deputy Regional Chapter Director

David P. Medina, Manager of the Planning and Requirements Group for the Air Traffic Organization, Central Service Center, retired on August 2014.

“My 41 years went by fast”, he said in this interview. “But I tried to seize the wonderful moments. It all started in San Antonio, Texas where I was born and raised. Growing up in a family with seven siblings, self-motivation was important if you wanted to make things happen. When I was a kid, I got a short ride in a small Piper Cub aircraft and I wanted to join the Civil Air Patrol or become a pilot. I wrote to many Air Force Bases to get pictures and information on aircraft. I even got a summer job in college delivering Anti-Detonation Injection (ADI) fluid to an aircraft maintenance facility at the San Antonio International Airport. In some way, I was always interested in aviation.”

When I asked what drove you? He indicated that he normally says: “I had great parents who were involved in community activities and were leaders themselves. Like many parents do, they gave me advice. A few

of my parents’ sayings still stand out for me. For example: “The train of opportunity comes around once in a while and it doesn’t stop if you’re not ready. Sometimes slows down if you’re somewhat ready, and stops to pick you up if you’ve gotten yourself educated and prepared.” Another one is: “where there’s a will there’s a way.”

“In addition, throughout my career, my main motivation was my three daughters and my wife. I couldn’t fail them. THAT was my motivation.

I also owe a lot to sports and to my coaches. I played football, and some basketball. I played baseball for about 17 years and it paid my way through college. I learned that in order to win, you need to “prepare”. Practice! Practice! You play smart and hard through the last out, the 4th quarter, or until the last buzzer! Similarly, to be successful in your job, you need to study, prepare, and produce.

I graduated in 1969 from Harlandale High School (HHS) in San Antonio and years later, in 1990, I was inducted into the HHS Hall of Fame.

I went on to play baseball at Ranger Jr. College, and in June of 1973, I graduated from St. Mary's University in San Antonio with a degree in Political Science.

In 1972, while I was a junior at St. Mary's University and during a double date, I learned that my buddy had worked that previous summer at the San Antonio Airport Traffic Control Tower (SAT ATCT). I asked him and found out about the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) affirmative action program called "Junior College Assistant Program" where the Air Traffic Controller Specialist (ATCS) test was given to juniors at targeted colleges and if you passed, you could get a chance to train and work for the FAA at an ATCT for the summer. The kicker was, you had to have done well in that summer program and you had to complete your degree to be eligible for full time employment. That's what I did, and as they say, "the rest is history!"

I started my career in 1973. One thing I never forgot was what Frank Burch, a Southwest Region, Human Relations Specialist, said to me: "well Medina, we have now hired you and are giving you the opportunity through this outreach program... Now it's up to you to make it happen and promote the FAA and reach out to other Hispanics." I made and stuck to that commitment.

I trained at Austin Tower and in 1974 transferred to Lakefront Tower in New Orleans. This is also where our discussions about forming a group/coalition of Hispanics in the FAA began. [See – La Palabra, winter 2011 article - THE FOUNDERS - What Happened 33 years ago?]

In 1977, I was promoted to Controller at the Moisant (MSY) Tower in New Orleans. While still there, I was promoted in 1980 to Training Specialist for the International Approach Control (MSY). During this tenure and with the help of the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE) members in the area, we met in New

Orleans; and, in 1978, the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Administration Employees (NHCFAAE) was founded." Note: He explained that initially the word Administration was a part of the name and the reason for the double (AA). This was later dropped and the acronym became (NHCFAE).

"I became the first Vice President. Concurrently, I also served as an EEO Counselor for two years. Carlos Gonzales, Manager of the El Paso (ELP) Flight Service Station (FSS) was the first President of the Hispanic Coalition (NHCFAAE – A voice for Hispanics in the FAA). During the early years, to get the organization established and sanctioned, we had the help and support of the FAA Hispanic Employment Managers (HEPMs). We spent a lot of our own personal money to organize and recruit. We also made use of the ATC Familiarization (Jump Seat) Program for travel to meetings and trainings.

In April of 1981, I was promoted to Chief of the Laredo ATCT. I was 29 years and 11 months old. One of my goals was to be a Chief (now called Air Traffic Manager) before I turned 30 years old and I made it! Then, the Controller's strike occurred in August 1981.

Later that year, I was moved to the Dallas Fort Worth Tower/TRACON. I first worked there as a Controller and then as an Airspace and Procedures Specialist. I loved it! In 1984, became the second President of the NHCFAE and served through 1986. Also in 1984, I was promoted to the Dallas Love Tower as a Supervisor where I remained until 1987."

He recalls that during his tenure as the second Coalition President, and with the help of the South Florida Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Council, the Coalition extended into the Southern Region. In 1984-85, the first combined Southwest/Southern Region Conference was approved and held. The Eastern Region also joined the Coalition in 1986. Soon after and under the tenure of the third Coalition President,

Richie Gomez, the Coalition was recognized as an Employee Association and the collection of dues was approved.

Over the next 13 years, he tells me: "I was willing to travel and relocate. I became a National Air Traffic Control Evaluation Specialist out of the Dallas-Fort Worth area traveling throughout the country on assignment to some of the busiest facilities in the country. In the late 90's, I transferred to the Tulsa Tower in Oklahoma as the Assistant Air Traffic Manager. I later became the Oklahoma HUB Air Traffic Manager and lived in Oklahoma City for over six years before returning to the Southwest Regional Office as the Manager for the Southwest Region Air Traffic Requirements Branch, responsible for a five-state Region.

I remained in the Southwest Regional Office and held six more positions over the next fourteen years, until my retirement in August of this year. This was a time of many changes and evolution within the Air Traffic Organization. My work responsibilities included: Manager; Air Traffic Quality Assurance Program;



Acting Manager, Resource Management Branch; Manager, Western Safety Evaluations Office; Manager, Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Central Service Center (CSC) Quality Control Group; Manager, ATO CSC Operations Support Group; Manager, ATO CSC Planning and Requirements Group. I also completed a detail with the International Civil Aviation Organization, North America/Central America/Caribbean Region (ICAO NACC) in Mexico City, Mexico as an International Air Traffic Management-Search and Rescue Officer. I was nationally nominated and appointed to this position with the primary function to assist ICAO NACC region in the implementation of quality assurance programs in various States/Territories/Countries in that region.

Working for the FAA in 21 positions total, has been very rewarding and no days were ever the same. I trained continuously for the increased management responsibilities; in particular in courses related to management effectiveness, labor and labor management relations as well as other FAA job-related coursework. Career aside, I also got involved in the communities where I lived. For example, while I was in Oklahoma City, I was a member of the Oklahoma Hispanic Professional Association, the Oklahoma Latino Community Development Agency, Southside YMCA Board, International YMCA Committee, and the Mike Monroney NHCFAE Chapter. Like other parents, I also coached my girls' basketball and softball teams."

David mentioned that throughout his career, he has received much recognition for his outstanding performance, service and dedication. Most recently this year, he received the Senate of the State of Texas Proclamation commending him for his exemplary career with the FAA.

Relating back to family and his primary motivation to succeed, he is very proud to tell me: "I met my lovely wife when we were in elementary school. We went to junior/senior high together; and, then we both graduated from St. Mary's University. I married the talented Norma Travieso (Miss Everything) and have three talented daughters. They take after their mother.

Marisa, my oldest daughter, attended Columbia University and the University of Texas in Arlington, where she received a degree in Electrical Engineering and Applied Mathematics. She completed a Masters and works for Lockheed Martin on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. Dyan, my middle daughter, was appointed to the United States Air Force (USAF) Academy and at one point was the third highest ranking cadet in her class. She graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering and was a member of the USAF Academy Wings of Blue - sky dive team. She became a pilot, and now heads her own consulting firm on Unmanned Aircraft Systems. She is married and has two wonderful children. Valerie, my youngest daughter, attended the University of Texas and earned her degree in Government (just like dad). She lives in Chicago with her family and just had her second child. I did relay to my daughters many of the things I learned in the FAA management training. In their successes, I feel successful!

I can say that along the way I had people that went out of their way to share a story or two about the do's and don'ts on a career path. I say: "Respond, don't react to situations. Don't get too emotional... when you do, you don't think rationally. To be a good leader you need to be a good follower. Stop and smell the roses (really!). Seize the moments in your life and along the way, take time to celebrate them."

Also, try to avoid two phrases "I could have" and "I should have." Don't let rose colored glasses get on your face. When you come up against a barrier... as Sinatra sang, "I just pick myself up and get back in the race... that's life!" As my dad explained to me, the path in life is a series of "Ys" in the road. It depends on which way you take. Normally, you may know the outcome of both paths, but you need to choose the best path for you at the time.

In the FAA, there are many career paths for employees. Some are quite different and some require different experiences. Regardless, I've always viewed a person's position as a career (their career); and respected what they did for the Agency, no matter where that decision took them. What significantly contributes to making our FAA a creditable and responsible agency is the corporate knowledge and experience of those who do their best at whatever they are responsible for. As my parents always said, regardless of what your job is, work hard and do it well.

After 41 years of service, early in the summer my wife and I first travelled to London and Paris. We also took a cruise and visited St. Maarten. In August, I had a great send off! Two receptions! I was humbled. My entire family, including brothers and sisters, were in attendance. I am thankful to those who attended and for the numerous presentations given.

My plan for retirement is not to become gainfully employed; it is to be home, set my own schedule, enjoy and play! I still make lists – long term big projects, daily things and honey do's!"

His message to the members: "The Hispanic Coalition was important in my life. I have been a member of the NHCFAE since its inception. When we set it up, there was very little Hispanic representation in the Agency and no voice. That's why we did it!

Having representation and a voice in the FAA is still important. The NHCFAE remains a viable vehicle for lending support and doing for others. More can be done with and within the organization than individually. It's still about good people doing good things. It's important to expose and help others to succeed."

David concludes this interview by saying: "I wish I could have mentioned everyone who made the NHCFAE successful, but it would probably take up this entire edition of La Palabra." I said: "David, thank you for sharing and congratulations! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement years. Que Dios te bendiga siempre!"

[nhcfae.org](http://nhcfae.org)

