

La Palabra

National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees

Volume 8 | March 2019





NHCFAE Annual Training Conference Save the Date: August 6-8, 2019



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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

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.

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Corporate Relations, Raquel Ysasi-
Huerta and Davey Irizarry
Membership, Yami Gonzalez
Conference, Edward Cardenas and Ida
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Legislative, Oralia "Lolly" Martinez
Elections, David Gonzales

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Message from the President

Happy New Year to you and your families. I look forward to great accomplishments from our organization in 2019. Even though our start to this year was a challenging one, we got through it and learned from it. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the FAA and NHCFAE family that had to work while we were in shut down mode. I hope that everyone was properly compensated.

As far as impacts to our organization, it cost the NHCFAE over \$14,000 in losses of member dues and caused the postponement of the 2nd Quarter Executive Committee meeting. To help recover the costs of the lost dues, the Executive Board is considering a virtual meeting, which may not be as efficient for training our officers. This in itself will pose its own challenges. We also had to postpone our visit to the Capitol to discuss funding for the minority internship program and were forced to take a smaller group of members from the Capital Chapter. It also forced us to pause and delay planning work on our annual training conference, as well as not printing this volume of La Palabra magazine. With that said, I assure you that we are trying to find areas, especially from our travel budget, where we can cut costs to ease the overall burden.

In the meantime, we are still accomplishing some great things in our organization, including efforts in the areas of succession planning and the establishment of our Charitable Foundation Scholarship. Both of which are near and dear to me as top priorities during my tenure.

As reported to membership on several occasions, our Succession Planning initiative prepares members to step into leadership positions. As of today, we have successfully established three new special assistant positions: Outreach, Historian, and Social Media. We have also reestablished the Communications Committee. You will read more about them and other committees in this issue. It is my hope that eventually these special assistant positions will be established as permanent committees in our Constitution and Bylaws, but that remains to be seen depending on future leadership, your input and vote.

I am also excited about our new Charitable Foundation Scholarship. This scholarship program is for all members, their spouses and children or dependents under the age of 25. The scholarship is called the NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarship and has replaced the NHCFAE FEEA Scholarship program from previous years. NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarships start at \$500

and are not income-based. To see the full list of scholarship requirements and submit an online application, visit nhcfae.org and select Education.

Finally and of utmost importance, the Executive Board and the Conference Committee continue to work diligently in planning our Annual Training Conference, which will be held at the beautiful Caribe Hilton in San Juan, Puerto Rico - August 6-8, 2019. We will have a wonderful Training Conference and hope to see as many of you there as possible. The conference website is up and running and you may visit it at <http://nhcfaeconference.org/>. It will be updated periodically, so check it frequently. In the meantime, I urge you to register as soon as possible.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of La Palabra. We will resume our regular printing cycle as we also recover from furlough related setbacks.

Con gusto y servicio,

Faviola Garcia

Editor's Message

Hola familia!

I hope all is well with you, your families and friends. Happy almost Spring! I do not know about you, but I'm ready to see some sunshine. There has been lots of rain, snow and cold days for most of us. We California people are spoiled and can't handle the rain or the cold days!

There has been lots of stuff happening since the beginning of this year, but we survived it with the help of each other. Familia, I'm talking about the 35-day Government shutdown, WOW! It was a wild one. In a positive way, I'm glad to have friends from our organization that communicated with me daily, even if it was a joke, a Hi or a How Are You text or phone call - that is real Familia for ME - this is my "Dream Team!"

Welcome to Volume 8 of La Palabra magazine. With this mini-volume, every NHCFAE member will receive a digital PDF copy in your email, and it will also be posted on the NHCFAE Website and NHCFAE Facebook. Do not miss out, remember to join us and be part of our Facebook page and please login to our website as well. In this volume, you will read about several great holiday events, member stories about the Furlough/Shutdown, and meet and get to know new faces in our regional chapters. Also, as of October 2018 a few new committees have been formed, so I encourage you to read about what we are doing as a Coalition and how their duties are helping to shape our Coalition for the future.

Reminders:

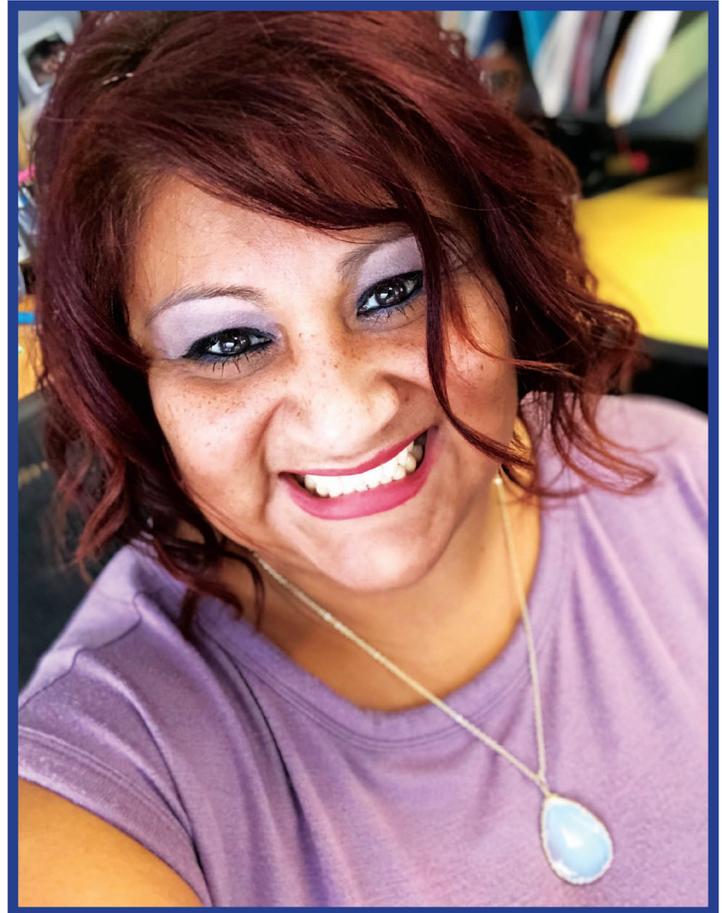
1. Save the Date for the 2019 NHCFAE Training Conference, August 6-8, 2019 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. You can find more information about the conference at www.nhcfaeconference.org and periodic emails will be sent out with updates.

2. Elections are coming up for National President, National Director of Administrative (DOA) and National Director of Public Affairs (DOPA). David Gonzales, Elections Chair, should be emailing you election information soon.

3. Scholarships and Member Tuition Reimbursement programs are open now at www.nhcfae.org! The deadline to apply is May 1, 2019. Don't wait until the last minute to submit your application.

4. Don't forget to submit nominations for National Awards, anyone can do it. Categories: Member of the Year, Chapter of the Year, Non-Member of the Year and FAA Manager of the Year. Read more information on our NHCFAE website under "National Awards Program"

5. The next deadline to submit articles for La Palabra, Vol.9 is June 7, 2019.



I hope you enjoy this mini-volume of La Palabra! Until next time, your DOPA is always here to help. I can be reached at dopa@nhcfae.org

Abrazos,

Susie Diaz
National Director of Public Affairs



www.linkedin.com/pub/national-hispanic-coalition



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NHCFAE Hill Day

By: Bill Fernandez, NHCFAE Vice President

On Monday February 25, 2019, four members of the NHCFAE Capital Chapter had the opportunity to join Andy Quinn of McAllister & Quinn, our Legislative Consultant, for a trip to the Capitol to speak to Congressional offices.

We visited the offices of five Members of Congress to gain their support for a letter that the office of Congressman Hank Johnson of Georgia will be trying to move through the Hispanic, Black, and Asian caucuses to support minorities in Aviation. Specifically, this language would look to “fence” (fence is a congressional term used to set a specified amount of money towards a specific end) between \$5 and \$7 million dollars for minority internship programs.

Why is this important? Currently, if any FAA office or facility would like to hire an intern, that office or facility would have to find room in their operations budget to pay the intern a stipend, which ranges between \$12,000 to \$15,000. With the current budget restrictions that each of the lines of business has to maintain, finding funding for an intern is normally very low on the priority list.



Andy Quinn, along with our Legislative Chair, Ms. Lolly Martinez, the Capital Chapter Director of Resources, Ms. Lolita Worthy, Capital Chapter member, Leonixa Salcedo, and the NHCFAE Vice President, Bill Fernandez, went to the offices of Congressmen Salud Carbajal of California, Ruben Gallego of Arizona, Chuy García of Illinois, Adriano Espaillat of New York, and Congresswoman Grace Napolitano of California.

Our group briefed the Congressional staffers on the NHCFAE’s concerns with the lack of diversity in the FAA and the importance of the internship program, and the potential for it to serve as a gateway to improving diversity at the FAA. Bill briefed the history and mission of the Coalition.

As an air traffic controller, Lolly talked about the lack of diversity in different facilities where she has worked. She also discussed the lack of diversity in the management and executive ranks. Lolita also discussed the lack of diversity



and the difficulty from the human resources aspect of being able to find funding to bring on interns.

Finally, Leonixa was able to provide the story of her own journey from a young graduate in Puerto Rico without a job opportunity. She talked about how she found out about the FAA intern program and how she took the chance at an internship that led to a full time job in the FAA. That start has led her to be able to grow within the FAA to become the Program Manager for the VOR/MON, one of the FAA’s biggest National Airspace System (NAS) modernization programs of NEXTGEN.

Our group was well received by all 5 offices, and each office was very concerned with the lack of diversity and saw this as an opportunity to help the FAA with its diversification. They all confirmed that each of their Representatives will gladly sign this letter to provide the fencing for the intern program. Congressman Chuy García’s office indicated that they plan to contact Congressman Johnson’s office directly to see if he might help co-sponsor this letter.





2019 NHCFAE Training Conference in Puerto Rico

By: Edward Cardenas, Conference Coordinator

Hola, mi familia! My name is Edward Cardenas and I am your NHCFAE Conference Coordinator. Please allow me to introduce the newest member of our team, Ida Marrero, who will play the role of Co-Conference Coordinator.

This year's National Training Conference is in San Juan, Puerto Rico, August 6 - 8, 2019. The beautiful Caribe Hilton San Juan will host our conference this year.

You can visit our NHCFAE National Conference website at www.nhcfaeconference.org, where you can register and find out more information about this year's conference. You can also make your hotel reservations at the Caribe Hilton, San Juan.

The National Hispanic Coalition cannot wait to welcome you to San Juan. Please visit our NHCFAE Facebook page and make sure you read your e-mails for more information.



New NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarship Now Available!

By: Erik Salazar, NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Chair

A brand-new scholarship program has launched this year for all members, their spouses and children or dependents under the age of 25. The scholarship is called the NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarship and will be replacing the NHCFAE FEEA Scholarship program from previous years.

In 2018, the NHCFAE created a new 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization called the NHCFAE Charitable Foundation. Eventually, as donations made to the Foundation continue to increase, the entire scholarship program for the NHCFAE may be managed by the Foundation. The NHCFAE currently offers 4 different scholarship programs: Rene Matos Scholarship Program, Danny Gutierrez Scholarship, Member Tuition Reimbursement and the NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarship. The Rene Matos, Danny Gutierrez and Member Tuition Reimbursement programs are all currently funded by the NHCFAE general fund, which consists of member dues and corporate sponsorships. The NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarships are funded separately from individual and corporate donations raised during the previous year, through fundraisers at the annual conference and other events.

NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarships start at \$500 and are not income-based. To see the full list of scholarship requirements and submit an online application, visit nhcfae.org and click on Education. The application filing period is February 15 – May 1. We hope that many members will take advantage of this scholarship!

Western Pacific 2018 Holiday Gathering

By: Susie Diaz, Western Pacific Member & NHCFEA National Director of Public Affairs

On December 18, 2018, the Western Pacific Chapter had a holiday drive and social gathering. During the social gathering, members and employees donated items for homeless care packages to deliver on Christmas Eve for the homeless on Los Angeles' Skid Row. The social gathering was located in Torrance, CA, and our Corporate Sponsor, SkyOne Credit Union, donated several gift cards from Amazon to raffle away. Additionally, Jonathan Eagle, Western Pacific Regional Chapter Director, donated two items to be raffled: two KTLA signed mugs and two concert tickets. Thanks to everyone that attended and donated. The Western Pacific Chapter in Los Angeles plans to have a successful 2019 with more events to come.



LA Food Bank Drive

By: Jonathan Eagle, Western Pacific Regional Chapter Director

In December 2018, I had the opportunity to volunteer for the LA Food Bank Drive at Stater Bros. in Pasadena, CA. The experience was so rewarding. I did not know that 1 in 6 kids in the United States do not know where their next meal is coming from. The generosity of people was truly amazing. My favorite story from the day was a father and son who came by the food drive. The father donated a \$100 bill to his son's shock. He told his son, "You never know if you'll be that person in need some day". I thought it was a true and telling moment - something we all could learn from participating in. These type of events are important and something that the Western Pacific Chapter will continue to do in the future.



Outreach in Los Angeles

By: Peter Juanpere, Western Pacific Member

Last year, I visited New Designs Charter School in Los Angeles with Abel Barba, a pilot from the Latino Pilot's Association (LPA) and spoke to the students briefly about careers and opportunities in aviation. Abel and I wanted to educate the students about what careers are available in the aviation industry that otherwise they may not have known about or considered. It was exhilarating being able to answer questions that took an interest in aviation and made me feel like I may have opened their eyes to a career field in aviation. My time was short lived, but I hope to be able to do it again soon.



Adelante Men's Conference

By: Jose Ramirez, Western Pacific Member

On November 10, 2018, the Western Pacific Chapter participated in our first men's conference with Adelante. We weren't alone this time because our friends Roger Avila and Abel Castillo from the Latino Pilots Association (LPA) also joined us. In attendance, representing NHCFAE was Jonathan Eagle and Jose Ramirez. Jose was attending his first conference and thought it was a great opportunity to talk to young Latinos. The conference gave him an opportunity to reach out and let the young men know what they can accomplish. "It's important," Jose says, "to have a guy that looks like them and say why not me?" The opportunity to do two workshops this time was invaluable. The first workshop focused solely on the path of becoming an air traffic controller and in the second, we invited Abel from LPA to participate in a discussion on how pilots and controllers work together to keep people safe. We are looking forward to this year's conferences and hoping to collaborate again with the LPA and include other employee associations going forward.





GET INVOLVED COMMITTEES!

Meet Your New Committee Chairs!

Constitution and Bylaws Chair

By: Misty Peña

In October 2018, I was appointed as the NHCFAE National Constitution and Bylaws Chair. First, I want to thank Bill Fernandez, who previously held this chair position and did an outstanding job! Many of you know I was the previous National Director of Administration, and when that role termed-out, I worked with the Southwest Region to put on a Texas-sized National Training Conference! When the conference was over, I realized I still had energy and dedication to give and when the chair positions became vacant, I offered my name as the C&BL Chair.

Why the C&BL chair? Over the years, I have submitted proposals to improve our governing documents. I believe it is important that we continue to evolve, and sometimes, that requires correcting our structure and looking at ways to improve the future; however, our C&BL belongs to the Coalition. In the coming months, you will receive an email for solicitation of proposed Constitution & Bylaws changes. I encourage each of you to review our governing documents and submit proposals for change – we can only get better.

For those of you that do not know me, I was part of the National Board from 2013 through 2017. I have also served as the National Membership Chair and I am currently a part of the “Dream Team” – your La Palabra Editor Team. I have been a member of the Coalition since about 1991, briefly leaving when I left the agency in 2000. From 1991ish – 1996, I was on the Dallas/Fort Worth Area Chapter board and in about 1998, I was on the Western-Pacific Regional Chapter board. Even during my departure from the FAA, I still was involved with the Coalition, because of the great friends and relationships I formed over the years. I have worked on several conferences, as well as, multiple local, regional and national events.

I currently am an Assistant Manager in the Flight Standards Service (FSS), Special Emphasis Investigations Team. I am responsible for leading a workforce of Aviation Safety Inspectors, who conduct a multitude of investigations, involving operations of airmen, aircraft, and aviation entities operating contrary to the regulations, as well as, providing technical guidance to other government agencies, within and outside the United States. In 1989, I began my federal career as a Student Aide for the Human Resources Management Division, Labor Relations Branch, Southwest Region and transferred to Airway Facilities in 1993. In 1997, I transferred to the Oakland Flight Standards District Office. In 2000, I returned to the Southwest Region, Office of Aviation Medical; however, I was soon offered a position with the United States, Department of Labor (DOL), Employee Benefits Security Administration, as a Federal Investigator and promoted quickly to the position of a Senior Federal Investigator. In 2007, I returned to the FAA as a Special Agent with the Office of Security & Hazardous Materials Safety, and currently am employed in the Flight Standards Service.

In 1996, I graduated from Tarrant County College with an Associates of Applied Science Degree in Criminal Justice and in 1999, I graduated from California State University – East Bay, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice - Law Enforcement Administration.

I am looking forward to serving as your National Constitution and Bylaws chair!



NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Special Committee Chair

By: Erik Salazar

Beginning this fiscal year, a special committee was created by the Executive Board to manage the newly formed 501(c)(3) NHCFAE Charitable Foundation. A 501(c)(3) is a nonprofit organization recognized by the IRS as tax-exempt. Donations made to these organizations are also tax-exempt. This is a major development for the NHCFAE since our organization was originally created as a 501(c)(5), in order to have the ability to perform legislative activities on behalf of its members, and does not contain the same tax-free donation benefit.

In 2018, the NHCFAE Executive Board decided to create this new 501(c)(3) organization. There had been discussions of doing this for several years, but it wasn't until the Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA) started charging our organization a 25% administrative fee to manage our NHCFAE FEEA Scholarship program, that we decided to move forward with the filing and creation of the new entity so that we could replace that scholarship and create future opportunities for our organization. As the National Director of Resources at the time, I was in charge of creating this new 501(c)(3). Articles of Incorporation, bylaws and a lengthy IRS application for tax-exempt status were just a few of the many steps that had to be completed in order to be granted 501(c)(3) status by the Federal Government. After several months, our approval was granted in the summer of 2018 and the NHCFAE Charitable Foundation was formed.

Since the Foundation is separate from the NHCFAE, it has its own accounting records and annual IRS 990 filing, as required by all nonprofits. Since we did not have a standing committee to run the Foundation at the time, the Executive Board formed a special committee to manage the organization. Since I was instrumental in the creation of the Foundation, and was familiar with the IRS requirements to maintain the 501(c)(3) status, I submitted my name as chair of the committee and was selected. I have been an active member of the Coalition since I joined the FAA in 2003. I have served as Director of Resources and Regional Chapter Director for the Aeronautical Center Chapter, as well as various positions at the national level, including Constitution and Bylaws Chair, National Director of Administration and National Director of Resources. I am also happy to be joined by Pete Rosa as a member of the committee, who will be assisting with the future developments of the Foundation.

Several duties of the Foundation are to manage the new NHCFAE Charitable Foundation Scholarship Program, which is available to all members, their spouses and children or dependents under 25. We will also be developing guidance to share with the Executive Committee regarding tax-deductible donations and fundraising, submitting a proposal to make the Foundation Committee a standing committee in the NHCFAE bylaws, working closely with the other committees to promote the Foundation, and working towards including all Coalition scholarships under the Foundation as donations continue to increase. We also welcome ideas by the NHCFAE membership to continue growing this foundation. This is an exciting time for the Coalition!



Corporate Sponsor Committee Co-Chairs

By: Raquel Ysasi-Huerta and Davey Irizarry

Have you ever wondered how the NHCFAE is able to bring such a wonderful conference for their members and others to attend with outstanding training every year? NHCFAE is able to put together such outstanding training largely due to the generosity of our corporate sponsors. In order to locate corporate sponsors, you have to have a team that is able to go out to find companies to become interested in becoming part of our NHCFAE familia. Your current Corporate Sponsor Committee is made of two individuals, previously there were three of us. Ivette Pazmino had an opportunity to advance in her career and we totally supported her decision to step down from the committee. This leaves the committee with a Chairperson and a Co-Chairperson, Raquel Ysasi-Huerta and Davey Irizarry.



If you know either one of us, you would have to wonder how is it that we are able to work so well together. One of us has 34 years in the agency and the other has 13 years, one has a Bachelors degree in social work and graduated from the Technical Operation Leadership Development Program and the FAA's Program for Emerging Leaders. One of us only attended 2 semesters of Community College and has held numerous positions in the FAA and is currently a Supervisor for the Flight Data Unit at a busy level 12 ARTCC. One of us is old enough to be the other one's parent. One of us is very epithetical, the other has a persuasive industrious awareness. One of us tends to be more expressive and the other more analytical. One of us always chooses to do things with the most favorable outcome and the other one looks at things in an enterprising technique. Therefore, you have to wonder with all our differences, how is that are we able to work so well together. We are able to work so well together by setting clear goals, getting to know each other's strengths, but for the most part it is our ability to communicate with each other in a very open and honest manner.

One of us had an idea of how to obtain more sponsors, so that at some point, the conference could be funded by sponsors and registration. When we connected, the one that was a previous business owner had to come up with a way to put this idea into motion. We went over the ideas, came up with a plan, redesigned the plan and continue to make changes to the plan by keeping the plan liquid - we are continuously evolving. This year, we partnered with our legislative team to help us expand our outreach to other prospective sponsors in the aviation industry. This year, we have a member who is based in and will be acting as our local contact in San Juan. Daniel Melendez is working hard to help us gain some local sponsorships for this year's conference.

If you think that you may be interested in joining our ventures to seek and locate new corporate sponsors, please feel free to reach out to us at corpchair@nhcfae.org. We will spend time with you to train you so that you will have a solid understanding of our goals and achievements and you may bring new ideas to help the continuing development of our plan.

We would also like to recognize our 2018 corporate sponsors: Long Term Care, NATCA, Blue Cross Blue Shield, PASS, Sky One and Livingston. Without you, we could not provide such a wonderful conference thanks to your continued support.

Membership Chair

By: Yami Gonzalez



My name is Yami Gonzalez, and I am your National Membership Chair. In 1995, I began my aviation experience as a Passenger Reservations Agent for a Venezuelan airline. Looking for a greater challenge and wanting to expand my knowledge, I became the only female in the Sales division for a Part 145 Repair Station stocking, selling and shipping aircraft components. After a couple years, I worked different tasks at a Cargo airline, until the opportunity arose as an Import Coordinator for a freight forwarding company, where I dealt with the special handling of aircraft engines and the complexity of processing through US Customs. In the FAA, I have 15 years experience in the Air Traffic Organization, and currently hold a position as an Aviation Safety Technician in the South Florida Flight Standards District Office.

On a personal level, I have two sons; one is proudly serving in the Navy, while the other is excelling as a gifted fourth grader. I have been an NHCFAE member since 2005. Through the Coalition, I have attained the roles of South Florida Director of Resources, Chapter Director (twice) and on a Regional level: Deputy Director and Director of Administration. Furthermore, between 2010 and 2014, I took advantage of the tuition reimbursement program, and completed my Bachelor's degree in Public Administration with a minor in Criminal Justice from Florida International University.

New Co-Conference Coordinator

By: Ida Marrero

My name is Ida G. Marrero and I am very proud to, once again, hold a position with the NHCFAE. As the Co-Conference Coordinator, I share the responsibility with Edward Cardenas, Conference Coordinator, to ensure that we oversee all activities necessary to hold an annual conference. We not only receive guidance from the National President, but also take input from the National Executive Board and the National Executive Committee. We also serve as liaison between the National Executive Board and the Hosting Region Conference Chair.

There are many parts to organizing a successful conference. We provide guidance to the Hosting Regional Chapter Director (RCD) and ensure they manage and track the tasks completed by the sub-committees, hold regular meetings and execute other assignments as needed.

We also work with various Board members to ensure a successful and educational conference is provided to our members.

I have been a member of the NHCFAE since I became employed with the FAA in August 1993. I have served in various capacities, such as Southern Regional Chapter Director, Vice President and Director of Education. I have had the honor and privilege to represent you, the members, of this organization in various events and would like to continue with the momentum to support you and our current President's vision. Again, I am very thankful to continue to serve this organization in my new role as your Co-Conference Coordinator.



Social Media Expert and Historian

By: Misael Goicuria and Hilda Banda

Misael Goicuria is currently the Chapter Director for Houston Chapter and Social Media Expert for NHCFAE. Misael has been a part of this organization for 3 years. He works as an Air Traffic System Communications Specialist at George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH). In February of this year, Misael graduated with his Bachelor's in Business Administration. To help with some of the projects he has planned for the Houston Chapter and NHCFAE, Misael obtained his commercial drone pilot's license. You can see some of his footage and artwork on his Facebook and Instagram pages. Included in this article are a sample of some of his more humorous renditions of digital media artwork.

As a Social Media Expert, I will be working closely with the President and Communications Committee to develop a schedule and strategy for messages shared on social media. I would like to streamline all of our communications across all platforms so that we can reach out to all members through social media sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. All members are encouraged to reach out to us with events, pictures and suggestions to add to these platforms. We are looking forward to all the projects that are in store for this year. Con mucho gusto, Misael Goicuria.



Hilda G. Banda is currently Director of Administration for Houston Chapter and Historian for NHCFAE. Hilda has been part of this organization for 3 years, works for Tech Ops as an Operation Support Specialist at the Houston District and is responsible for I90 technical training and the Houston Districts EOSH training. She is a former Communications Tech at Houston Air Traffic Control Center (ZHU ARTCC) and a former CTI student. Hilda graduated from Texas Southern University with a Bachelor's Degree in Electronics Engineering Technology.

Hola familia! As Historian, I will be working on maintaining a living history of our organization. I will maintain a log of organizational activities, take pictures and maintain a narrative of the organization. I will organize and maintain all information sent to me. I will be working with the social media expert, current and past presidents, and public affairs to gather and document all events and milestones.

Congrats Davey Irizarry!

By: Celeste Fleming, MMAC Member

Davey Irizarry, NHCFAE member, was honored with the Keller-Sullivan award on Oct 30, 2018 by the National Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees with Disabilities (NCFAED) during National Disability Employee Awareness Month (NDEAM) festivities in Oklahoma City. The Keller-Sullivan award is named for Helen Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan. Davey was nominated for his work as a supervisor in Atlanta, Georgia. Mary Scherer, Eastern Service Area Director of Tech Ops represented the ATO during Davey's award presentation. Davey's nomination specifically recognizes him for taking a chance on a person with a disability, as well as, his support of employees in his supervisory role. It was an emotional celebration as the audience appreciated the real difference in lives and in society initiated by those who create opportunities for people with disabilities. The nomination by Bobby McQueen states, in part:



“Mr. Irizarry has extreme integrity, deep passion for ensuring everyone's rights are protected, and continuously expands his knowledge and networking concerning these ideas. He carries a positive attitude and attempts to uplift those around him. Mr. Irizarry has put countless hours in helping the Atlanta ARTCC with matters that affect employees. He is known for being only a phone call away and has the reputation for being aggressive for individuals whose rights may have been infringed upon. He enters negotiations looking for common ground and areas of agreement; however, he does not fold under pressure. This reputation is very important in helping people understand that the union does help aggrieved individuals. As COMM Manager Mr. Irizarry demonstrated great leadership, he expected our best and gave us his best. I witnessed his giving the crew credit for jobs well done yet accept responsibility when a mistake occurred. Mr. Irizarry put his crew as a top priority, ensuring our safety, reminding us of our professional responsibilities, and advocating career improvement and advancement. Our crew understood and strongly felt that Mr. Irizarry had our back. He took a chance to hire a person with a disability and enabled that individual to demonstrate that he can do the duties of an ATSS, this type of thinking opens doors for others with disabilities. Mr. Irizarry is a member of such groups as; PASS as a Representative and Individuals with Disabilities Committee. He doesn't just talk and promote these ideas, he lives it. I'm not sure that I have ever met anyone who works as hard for the values, efforts, ideas and philosophy of the Keller Foundation like that of Mr. Irizarry. All he ever asks is to pay it forward.”

The program for the NDEAM event included participation from members from the sitting volleyball team program, including medal winners from the 2012 and 2015 Parapan American Games. It included a keynote by Tim Eldridge, the 421st GUMAC Requirements Section Chief at Tinker Air Force Base. Davey's exemplary performance in supervising employees and creating equal opportunity for disabled individuals gained him this well-deserved recognition. These values are in keeping with the goals of the NHCFAE, NCFAED and the FAA as an agency. Congratulations to Davey Irizarry.



Congrats Misael!

By: Susie Diaz, National Director of Public Affairs

In December 2018, Misael Goicuria, Houston Chapter member, graduated from University of Phoenix, with a Bachelor's in Business Administration, as well as, graduating with honors. He plans to continue his education to obtain his Master's Degree in Information Systems and possibly a Doctorate degree in the future. He plans to utilize the NHCFAE Member Tuition Reimbursement to help him pursue his education goals.

Misael is an active member of the Southwest Chapter and is located in Houston, Texas.

Shutdown Warriors

By: Jonathan Eagle, Western Pacific Regional Chapter Director



Recently, we just averted another shutdown of the federal government after a historic one that lasted 35 days. Although there were many aspects of helping us get back to work, I would like to recognize 3 Western Pacific members who spent their off time to help us all out by visiting their congressional representatives. During their visits, they were able to talk about the shutdown's effects on their personal lives and how it was affecting safety of the National Air Space (NAS). In the first photo is member Juan Serna-Spuler and co-worker Erik Mandy visiting Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren's office. In the second photo is Christina Lewis, who visited Congresswoman Katie Hill and made such a lasting impact that she was invited to attend the State of the Union address! In the third photo is Martin Ramirez pictured with Erik Mandy and Congressman Brad Sherman. Martin worked tirelessly to end the shutdown, including appearing on Vice News and the Young Turks show to spotlight what the shutdown was doing to aviation and the lives of employees like himself. These three exemplified great self-sacrifice and professionalism, on behalf of all the members of Western Pacific, THANK YOU!

Meet a Few of Our Capital Chapter Members!

By: Karen Perez, Capital Regional Chapter Director

Karen Perez



Meet Karen Perez, if you haven't already, Capital Chapter's Regional Chapter Director. Living away from home, she shares that she joined NHCFAE back in 2012 because the Coalition feels like family. "I had just moved to the DC area by myself and one of my mentors in the office I worked in, Jose Joga, now retired, encouraged me to join. The Coalition allowed me to find the piece of home I was looking for."

Working as an Aerospace Engineer in the Office of Commercial Space Transportation for the past four years, Karen loves the idea of creating something from nothing and enjoys sewing in her free time, whether by altering clothes or reupholstering her couch, a nice little project she undertook during the Christmas government shutdown.

Born and raised in the Bronx, NY but finished high school and college in Miami, Karen shares that an interesting fact about her is that she has a couple of screws in her face. "Next time you see me, ask me about it!" she exclaims, sharing that because of that experience she at some point wanted to be a dentist.

Growing up being immersed in her culture, as her family on both sides is from the Dominican Republic, she attended the University of Miami where she earned a dual degree in Aerospace & Mechanical Engineering. Her daily aspiration is to wake up every morning and be happier than the day before. "It's working so far," she reveals, "and I wish the same for everyone!"

Ana Peña

Meet Ana Peña, one of Capital Chapter's newest officers. Currently working as the EEO Assistant in the Office of Civil Rights, Ana gracefully accepted the challenge of serving as the Deputy Regional Chapter Director after our National Vice President, Bill Fernandez, stepped into his role at the beginning of this term.

Being a new resident in the DC area, as she recently transitioned from being a HACU intern to a full-time permanent FAA employee, Ana shares that she joined NHCFAE because of the meaningful connections and relationship bonds that are created to help everyone in both professional and personal ways.

Born in Santiago, Dominican Republic, and moving to Jersey City, NJ with family in 2001, Ana enjoys working out and doing yoga when she is not working. She is always aspiring to live a healthy lifestyle both mentally and physically. In addition, Ana also loves painting in her free time and is still looking to join a co-ed sports team in the DC area such as football, softball, basketball or volleyball.

Always having been into math, she is currently an online graduate student at Penn State University, pursuing a Masters in Data and Business Analytics.



Näleé Romero

Näleé, who grew up in El Sereno/City Terrace Barrio in East Los Angeles and El Paso, Texas is one of our newest members. Born to teen parents and raised by her grandparents, she is very fond of her Abuelo, Poppies, who fought in the Korean War and upon his return graduated from High School. Being the first of her familia to put an emphasis on education vs. blue collar work and military enlistment, her Abuelo went on to work for Lockheed Martin Skunk Works in the Mojave Desert with the Research & Development Team working on SR-71 BlackHawk, F117 Stealth & various other air, land & sea projects. “When we were growing up, he always left for long periods of time and when he would return, we would ask him the ‘who, what, and where?’; his response was always, ‘If I tell you, I would have to kill you.’” Näleé believes that this is how she indirectly fell in love with aviation. Her Abuelo would take her twin brother to air shows. When she wanted to go she was told, “That’s no place for women.”



Due to circumstances, she became the property of the state & eventually was adopted into a Caucasian family (Bakers) in Monterrey, CA, then to a Costa Rican familia (Cascantes) in Huntington Park, CA. “My blood is Navajo y Spaniard but my culture is Central American-Costa Riquense. I consider Long Beach, CA my hometown even though I grew up in many other areas - it’s where I lived the longest.”

Temporarily serving as the Vice-President of Puente Student Association at Long Beach Community College, and subsequently receiving her Associates of Arts (AA) from Los Angeles Community College, she transferred to California State University of Los Angeles where she received her Bachelor of Arts in History & Single Subject Teaching credential. Like in many Hispanic families, she is the first Romero-Cascante to attend and complete a college degree. She is currently a student Pilot and a Part 107 Remote Pilot (Drone Pilot), and now researching schools to conduct her MBA.

Volunteering with her time as a 2nd Lieutenant with the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Auxiliary of the Air Force, Näleé describes herself as always looking back to remember where she came from and being grateful for where she is now. In addition, she serves as the Deputy Commander of Support & Finance Officer for Tuskegee Composite Squadron, and is always finding ways to work on her personal development - understanding and practicing that she is responsible for her present & future. As the Acting Director of Operations, Unmanned Systems & Assistant Public Affairs Officer for the District of Columbia National Capital Wing, Näleé feels it is important to be willing to share her story to help and motivate others in their endeavors.

Previously, an entrepreneur starting her own Aerial Photography Company-Active Aerial LLC, and currently serving as a Management and Program Analyst in the Recommendation Branch (AVP-420) within the Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention, Näleé shared with us why she joined the NHCFAE. “I saw a notice on the HQ 10A elevator wall celebrating Hispanic Heritage month with numerous events. I participated in the Nationals game outing, where I met many members. After reviewing the informational packet and speaking over lunch with William (Bill) Fernandez, I decided to join not only as a member, but applied for a position.” Näleé saw this as an opportunity to volunteer after having been in the DC area for just a few months. Also considering the option of returning to school to obtain her MBA, she was also drawn to the tuition reimbursement program. “Lastly,” she shares, “this was a great opportunity for me to network with mi gente.” I look forward to meeting & working closely with my NHCFAE familia! ¡Pura Vida!

Rhonda Frazier



Rhonda Frazier, Director of Administration for Capital Chapter, joined NHCFAE to become more connected with her daughter’s Hispanic heritage (Dominican). A Management and Program Analyst in the Office of Aviation Safety (AVS), she loved the comradery from this group and the fact that we are more of a family rather than an organization.

Born and raised in Louisville, KY, she obtained two Masters from Wayland Baptist University out of Texas – a Masters in Management with concentration in Human Resource Management, and a Masters in Public Health Administration with a concentration in Government Administration. She is currently finishing her Doctorate in Business Administration from Columbia Southern University, where her dissertation is centered on Inadequate Discrimination Policies in the Workplace for Non-Binary Transgendered Employees.

Rhonda aspires to work her hardest and continue to be a positive role model for her daughters. On her off time, she enjoys reading and working on her dissertation.

Nancy Rodriguez-Brown



On October 2, 2018, I was on my way to lunch when I saw a flyer by the elevator promoting a development session, “How to Brand Yourself Professionally.” Who doesn’t want to brand themselves professionally, right? Then I noticed that Kimberly Castillo was the presenter. I had met Kim before I worked with the FAA, at the time she was with FAA, Civil Rights. As I learned later, Kim is now with USAID and doing great things there in the employment and development arena.

Back to the session, I noticed the time and unfortunately the session had already started, however I decided that I would sneak in quietly and hopefully go unnoticed. I was wrong, I was noticed. However, I received the most welcoming and warm reception from Kim and Karen Perez, as well as two of my former co-workers Rhonda Frazier and Lolita Worthy, who happened to also be attending the session. It felt very familiar to me. I was immediately asked and encouraged to join the NHCFAE, and I agreed without even thinking about it any further. I have since learned more about the NHCFAE and I am looking forward to being an active and engaged member.

As a Program Analyst within the Management and Personnel Systems Branch, in the Aerospace Medicine (AAM) Office, I started in November of 2014 and it has been a great experience. I love what I do and love my AAM team. I am originally from Pasadena, California, and my dad is African American and my mom is from Mexico. I moved to DC to attend Howard University, and stayed. I have two Masters Degrees - the first in Industrial Organizational Psychology and a Master’s in Public Health. Outside of my Human Resources related work, which includes performance management, employee relations, EEO, and conflict management, I formerly interned for a member of Congress, conducted Alzheimer’s Research at NIH, and have done some public health consulting.

In addition to having leadership aspirations, I would like to promote a healthier work environment, such as developing strategies to manage stress, smoking cessation, and chronic conditions that can be used by the FAA workforce. I would also like to promote diversity, engagement, and a more inclusive work environment.

Outside of work, I love traveling and I have traveled to over 30 countries and I am ready to expand my list to 30 more! I love cooking and dining out. Need a recommendation from a foodie? - Just ask me!

Meet the Houston Chapter

By: Misael Goicuria, Houston Chapter Director

This year, the Houston Chapter had open elections. Misael Goicuria, was nominated for Chapter Director, James Page for Deputy, William Vallejos for Treasurer, and Hilda Banda for Director of Administration. Together, this team is off to a great start. They have managed to start a recruitment campaign and have exceeded preliminary expectations. The Chapter is looking forward to major events they have planned for the area. They participate in mud runs, 5Ks and other team building exercises. Two of the members have teamed up with the National Committee to help in other avenues. This young chapter is on the move to make grand things happen. Their current motto is “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”





Meet Mitzi Pendleton from Alaska Region

I was recently solicited by Sylvia Villa Harvath, the NHCFAE Alaska representative, to join the Hispanic Coalition. I'm excited to meet members of the NHCFAE soon! I have heard many great things about this organization that helps people with different life challenges. I've learned that through NHCFAE there is a need to further enhance the lives of the next generation of young Hispanics. Embracing the diversity and inclusion in a way that we can enhance mentorship, aviation training, education and outreach programs is so exciting and I'm thrilled to be part of that.

I transferred from Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to FAA as an Aviation Safety Assistant (ASA) in November of

2014 with Flight Standards District Office, Denali CMO of Anchorage, Alaska. I went to the University Alaska Anchorage in Alaska after graduating from Central Point High School in Oregon. I'm the youngest of the five children in my family and was born profoundly deaf. I communicate fluently in spoken English and use American Sign Language. I enjoy outdoor activities and love to travel. I have two beautiful grown up daughters. Life is good!

Rest in Paradise, Marva E. Taylor: 1959-2019

By: Luanne Willis-Merrel, Great Lakes FSDO Manager

Marva had 37 years of federal service. She began her FAA career in the "Word Processing" Department, at the Great Lakes Regional Office in Des Plaines, IL. Sometime before 1980, she joined the Flight Standards Family, working in various positions until her death. Years ago, she worked for me as an administrative support in the AGL-230 Branch, and then later, she worked for me as an Administrative Officer at the DuPage FSDO. From the FSDO, she returned to the Flight Standards Division in the Great Lakes Regional Office. During last year's Flight Standards reorganization, she remained in the Great Lakes Regional Office, working for AFS-370.

Marva was a long time and loyal member of the Coalition. She helped with National Conferences and I believe some Regional Conferences as well. She was the Chapter Secretary for many years, and when the Treasurer quit, she took on those duties as well. She is the reason I joined the coalition. I can't tell you much about the early days of the coalition, but I know she was a vital part of it.

I remember when Marva acquired a new hobby. One day, Marva decided to take some golf lessons. She became a very, very good golfer and joined an African American Female Golf League called the Tee Timer's. Marva was also a longtime supporter of the National Kidney Foundation.

Although Marva struggled with health issues, she was a very strong woman. She overcame those issues and never used her health as an excuse to be less effective. She strived for perfection.

