

la Palabra

Con Orgullo en Nuestra Hispanidad

AUTUMN 2009 / VOL.6 NO.3

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH / Embracing the Fierce Urgency of Now!

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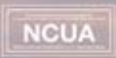
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MISSION

The National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE) is a professional organization acting as an advocate for equitable representation and opportunities in employment, development, and leadership.

HISTORY

Established in 1978 to provide a network for Hispanic employees of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), NHCFAE became a national organization in 1983, and, today, 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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- > Vice-President, Sadie P. Alvarado
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- > Director of Resources, David Dominguez
- > Director of Administration, G. Kenneth Sharp
- > Director of Education, Don Espinosa
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La Palabra

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COVER

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Embracing the Fierce Urgency of Now!



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- o League of United Latin American Citizens
- o Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund
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PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL

Finishing a Fantastic Four-Year Flight

Saludos Amigos y Colegas (Greetings Friends and Colleagues)

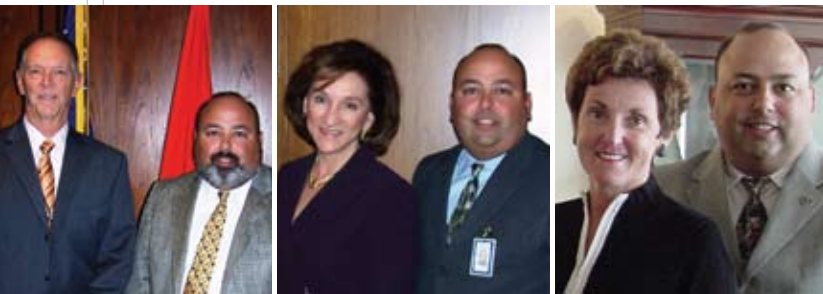


PHOTO // NHCFAE President Ron Lozano (Right) with FAA Administrators (Left to Right) Randy Babbitt, Marion Blakey, and Jane Garvey.

Now we have taxied safely to the gate and it is time for the new crew to take over. Looking back, it has been a fantastic four-year journey and we have accomplished much.

EL FARO ESTABLISHED A STRATEGIC DIRECTION

El Faro, the Strategic Plan, came together, establishing a definite direction for the organization. The legislative effort was established to carry the concerns of the NHCFAE membership beyond where we had ever imagined. Our branding and electronic communications initiatives supported a fresh and vibrant website and newsletter, and also made email available to members who wanted to use the “nhcfae.org” address. Our accounting system transformed to allow for growth, expediency, greater accuracy and transparency.

PEOPLE ARE THE HEART OF THE NHCFAE

As President of the NHCFAE, the many people I worked with over the years truly were marvelous! Along the way, I also met a number of FAA Administrators as well as some Acting Administrators.

However, it is the people inside this unique organization who work so hard to make a difference that are the most memorable – particularly members of the Board of Directors with whom I worked so closely. I especially want to recognize the following NHCFAE colleagues:

Roger Treviño not only brought me into the organization, but also quietly found a way to push me to the pinnacle.

Maria Franqui was always supportive and provided wisdom applicable to life as well as to the NHCFAE.

Brunhilda Sanders-Lane (Sandy Lane) always has a hearty laugh to go with the swift kick that was the spark to keep us moving.

Danny Gutierrez was as true to the goals and objectives of this organization as anyone I've met. He never knew how much he meant to me as a colleague and a friend, and I am proud to have established a lasting way to remember his contributions through a memorial scholarship.

David Dominguez had a hard act to follow as he took on the Director of Resources position, but he did it with conviction and determination that made the position his own.

Kristina Gonzales continues to be a bright light in the FAA and undoubtedly will leave her signature quality in everything she does for the FAA and in her life.

Don Espinosa is a solid confidant with the sun shining upon him as he works wonders with any assignment he takes on.

Gabriel Mahns came onto the Board and provided opportunities through his growth for teaching and coaching; his persistence will take him far.

Faviola Garcia has charm and charisma that is overshadowed only by her professionalism. She never fails to carry through thoroughly with every task she decides to tackle.

Homer Benavides stepped up when the organization needed him most, even after he left the FAA. His dedication and honor are true to the Marine code, but his friendship goes way beyond that.

Then there is **Celsa Rodriguez** – a more – devoted friend and harder worker you will never find. How a heart so big fits in that tiny body I will never know.

As I sign the books and give up the controls, I resist the temptation to look back when I refer to Sadie Alvarado even though she has been there with me from the beginning. Instead, I look forward and know that the organization is in good hands, destined to grow beyond expectations with her at the helm. It has been a pleasure serving you and this organization. Atentamente. ◉

RON R. LOZANO // President, NHCFAE

NEW PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Passing the Torch: Together We Can!

Saludos Amigos y Colegas (*Greetings Friends and Colleagues*)

Thank you for your support in electing me President of the NHCFAE. I am honored, humbled, and especially excited to take on this role now as we foster excellence in diversity, and proactively address the many challenges we face as this nation's largest minority group.

These challenges not only begin with attracting, recruiting, and hiring Hispanics, but also include ensuring equal opportunity and access for all people by training, development, and promotion. Some thought we would never elect an African – American President. We have witnessed this historical change, as well as another hallmark event – the appointment and confirmation of this nation's first Hispanic female Supreme Court Justice, the Honorable Sonia Sotomayor.

Consequently, I am optimistic about the inevitable changes that will take place and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As your President, I will work proactively with the new Administrator, Randy Babbitt, and other key officials within and outside the Agency.

NATIONAL EMPLOYEE FORUM

On July 23, 2009, I had the pleasure of meeting Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt at the National Employee Forum in Washington, DC. Over the years, I have attended several Forums and I was particularly pleased to have attended this one.

First impressions are important, and I believe that both Transportation Secretary LaHood and FAA Administrator Babbitt were genuine in their commitment to work with the Forum in addressing our concerns and issues, many of which have been unsatisfactorily addressed.

For those of you who aren't aware, the National Employee Forum consists of the Employee Associations within FAA. Although the mission of each individual Employee Association differs, we all share one common issue: underrepresentation.

FEWER THAN 5% OF FAA EMPLOYEES ARE HISPANIC

Underrepresentation isn't new to my administration. However, underrepresentation remains at the forefront of the challenges facing the Agency, its employees, and the NHCFAE. Hispanics represent less than five percent of approximately 46,683 FAA employees. This is an embarrassing statistic. Now, I am realistic in my belief that this will not change overnight.

There are many areas that the Agency can and should focus their efforts upon. Although I will continue my efforts to expand recruitment of Hispanics into the Agency, I also believe that achieving real systemic change will require a change in culture and leadership. By striving for more diverse employees and leaders, we can ensure that there will be a diverse set of backgrounds and experiences, and a decrease in prejudices and biases.

NHCFAE CAN BE ORGANIZED FOR MORE EFFECTIVE IMPACT

Considering the many years of my experience with the Coalition, I understand the structure of our organization intimately. Over the 31 years that the NHCFAE has been in existence, there have been many changes in the Agency.

The Coalition has been steadfast in adjusting to these changes and in speaking with a united voice. However, the infrastructure has not changed. I believe that we can be more efficiently and effectively organized, giving us

more opportunities to position ourselves to have a greater impact on the Agency.

Coalition membership also plays a key role in determining what and how many issues we can address and support. NHCFAE has grown through membership dues, and has been able to bring attention to our issues and concerns at the DOT and FAA levels.

We also are fortunate that we have been able to sustain the Coalition without significant growth in our membership. I plan to concentrate on recruitment in order to increase our membership – and our impact on the Agency. Working with our Membership Chair, I aim to continue concentrated efforts to increasing our membership numbers, and hope you all will join us.

Without you, our valued members, the Hispanic Coalition would not exist. I strongly believe in open communication, welcome your ideas and concerns, and will make myself available through a variety of social media: Facebook, Twitter, and email. If you want to pick up the telephone and call, I will be there.

OUR TIME IS NOW!

We have the motivation, skill, determination, and ability – we should be able to go where we want. Our time is now! I encourage you to take a chance and get involved. Together, we can make a difference! I look forward to working with you, and am optimistic that you will join me on this exciting, albeit challenging journey. ◉

¡Juntos, si podemos!
(Together, we can!)

SADIE P. ALVARADO
President, NHCFAE



The Executive Potential Program: One Participant's Experience

The program had me at hello: Gettysburg – the perfect location for learning about the “*Essence of Leadership*.” Our March, 2008 to March, 2009 Action Learning Team (ALT) – Team 11 – was one of the first teams to experience the impactful management lessons taught to us so dramatically right on the battlefield. It blew me away. What a way to kick off one year of training!

BONDING WITH ALT TEAM 11

Then there was ALT Team 11, with whom I seemed to have an almost immediate bond. In fact, we *stormed and normed* our way into a team quite painlessly. We bonded even more when we received our Myers-Briggs results and found that not one of us was “Feeling” dominant. From then on, the phrase, “We have no feelings,” could be heard randomly whenever we’d convene. It was great.

Of course, we knew this didn’t mean we had no feelings just that we leaned predominantly more towards the “thinking” designation. The challenge and the lesson from knowing we were all weak “F’s” was to make sure we verified the impact our group of “T’s” had on people – especially others outside our team – as we moved on towards our goals.

The second residential week found us in Norfolk for training on “Leading People.” Our on-site visit, “*No Substitute for Victory: Leadership Lessons from General MacArthur*,” gave us some insight into what motivated this hero; and, our in-house EPP training prompted us to look inside ourselves. Certainly, this was accomplished with the training course, “*Ethical Fitness and Moral Courage*.”

Residential week three in San Francisco continued to build onto our structured learning. While we had gotten into best practices a bit while in Norfolk, this third week had us delve into “*Best Practices in Leadership*.” What an opportunity we were afforded while in San Francisco!

Our newly formed teams for this week interviewed top management officials of some of America’s twelve best non-profits. Our San Francisco team visited the Exploratorium – the museum of Science, Art and Human Perception. The Exploratorium is a leader in the movement to promote museums as informal education centers.

“A wonderful place to be at play in the gravitational fields of the Lord. A great place to reveal your inner physicist.” — ROBIN WILLIAMS, ACTOR AND COMEDIAN

Online since 1993, the Exploratorium was one of the first science museums to build a site on the World Wide Web. Their site now contains over 18 thousand award-winning pages exploring hundreds of different topics, serving 20 million visitors a year – making it one of the most visited museum Web sites in the world. Pretty amazing; and, our team was able to speak with its Executive Director, nationally known science education and policy expert Dr. Dennis M. Bartels, and top members of his staff.

When does one get a chance like this? We asked questions regarding their challenges, how they identified these challenges and the process used in determining where they would hunt for best practices to address the challenges identified. This interview taught me best practices processes

and also drove home the drive needed for continual improvement and the perseverance required to remain #1 in your field.

In San Francisco, our team convened with members of other teams, to volunteer with the National Park Service. We helped prepare a tall ship for dry-docking and helped clear some paths to prepare for fencing and some planting. This was an initiative undertaken to help increase our awareness of “volunTourism” – the subject of our team project. I don’t know how our week in San Francisco could have been improved upon as it was full of great experiences and tremendous learning.

Our fourth residential training program, “*Public Leadership*,” was as impactful as the other three residential weeks. Teams also gave their final group project reports, including the recommended solution(s) to the issue undertaken, the benchmarking performed, best practices, research points of view, and conclusions drawn.

The experience culminated in our EPP graduation and ended a year of powerful and dynamic learning. I often felt like I had three jobs during this past year: my position of record, my EPP participant position, and my jack-of-all trades’ position that covered everything else in my life, titles such as homeowner/mom/caregiver, etc.

It hasn’t been easy but what does one remember – or gain – from easy? It also wasn’t easy for my office, but

they handled my absence by providing yet another person, a co-worker, with a developmental opportunity by detailing her into my regular position while I was on detail. Actions such as these speak volumes about management's commitment to develop its people. It also positively impacts our agency's succession planning efforts.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE INTERVIEWS

Another key element of the EPP was the senior executive service (SES) interviews. I will remember the wisdom shared and the lessons learned through conducting the SES interviews as well as some of the short but valid one-liners from those interviews. Statements that included: *"The more simple a solution is, the more elegant it is;"* and, *"If I don't have a strong management team then someone else sets my agenda."*

The SES members whom I interviewed each had valuable messages. Three of the five never aspired to enter management but had a mentor who urged the individual into the management arena. One was a Presidential Management Intern and the other applied for increasingly more challenging positions until she reached the executive level.

WHO KNOWS YOU IS MOST IMPORTANT

The interview discussions benefitted me greatly, because I was able to ask questions about real life situations that I was experiencing in my workplace. Also, I was able to reconnect with two executives that I've long known; and, get more familiar with the other three. People say that "who you know" is important. Personally, I believe *who knows YOU* is more important.

The two developmental assignments required by the EPP were also memorable and full of learning. My first two-month assignment was with the Air Traffic Organization Operations

Group (the ATO's largest business unit) in D.C.

This temporary assignment presented new leadership and growth opportunities while functioning as a (temporary) team member of the ATO. The detail also expanded my knowledge of the ATO, its Planning Program requirements, and allowed me to meet many potential networking contacts.

The second developmental two-month assignment turned into a four-month assignment as Acting Manager of Executive Operations in the Great Lakes Region. As such, I provided direction and guidance to 15 employees working in the Regional Operations Center (ROC), Building Services, and in Executive Services.

This staff assists the Regional Administrator in achieving ARC goals in support of the agency's flight plan. The ARC Mission is to provide critical aviation leadership, integration, and business services to internal and external customers. ARC provides leadership within the FAA on issues and programs involving multiple FAA organizations and aviation disciplines.

The Acting Manager detail supplied me with an opportunity to integrate and implement the teachings of the EPP. It was a leadership position for which the EPP prepared me to better perform. It's what the EPP is all about — preparing employees to be more viable candidates for positions of greater leadership.

Take the plunge and explore whether the EPP — or other developmental program — is for you. Remember, preparing to meet the agency's workforce needs of tomorrow is a shared responsibility. ○

"The more simple a solution is, the more elegant it is."

USDA Executive Potential Program (EPP)

The Graduate School, USDA, (GS, USDA) is an innovative institution for continuing education that offers more than 1,500 courses to assist participants improve job performance and further their career. Established in 1921 by the Secretary of Agriculture to provide career advancement opportunities, the GS, USDA is, today, self-sustaining and receives no federal funds. Income is derived from tuition and fees.

As the "Government's Trainer," the GS — USDA's Center for Leadership and Management — offers various long-term career development programs for individuals at various government levels (GS-5 through GS-15).

The Executive Potential Program (EPP) is a yearlong, intense, competency-based leadership development program that provides training and developmental experiences for high potential GS13-15's, and prepares them for leadership positions. The Program is based on OPM's Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs): Leading Change; Leading People; Results Driven; Business Acumen; and, Building Coalitions — and, on the competencies that are the foundation for success in each of the ECQs.

It also is based upon the Graduate School's Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI); a systematic assessment tool designed to measure competency and determine developmental needs for organizations and individuals in public service. The LEI assesses individual proficiency levels in over 100 specific leadership tasks and activities against the 28 competencies that comprise the Leadership Effectiveness Framework.

Other key program elements include serving on an Action Learning Team with a major project deliverable; four one-week residential sessions; SES interviews, SES shadow assignment; and, two details of two-month's duration each.

EPP participants are expected to be away from current positions for a minimum of six months over the course of the program. Participants may schedule developmental activities to minimize disruptions of their normal workflow. The nomination procedure and associated fees for the EPP and other grade level programs can be found at: <http://grad.usda.gov>.

NHCFAE 31st Annual Training Conference

Special Thanks to You!

The Great Lakes Chapter accepted the challenge, and delivered a memorable and exciting 2009 Coalition Conference.

On behalf of our region, we want to thank everyone who was involved in the planning and execution of a successful NHCFAE Conference in Chicago.

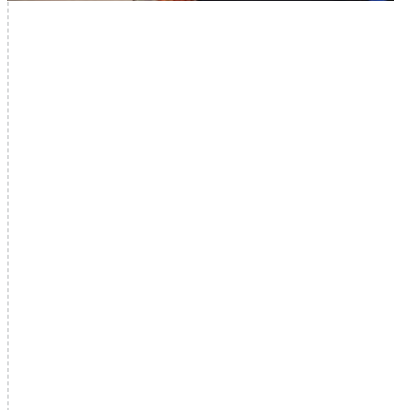
The task was challenging but, nevertheless, very rewarding as well. I am very proud of all the hard work and the innovative ideas that were put together – and achieved. Also, we hope that we proved that the NHCFAE Conference can get better and better every year.

In my opinion, the Great Lakes Chapter fully realized the 2009 Conference theme: “Our Community, Our Vision, Our Future:”

- **COMMUNITY** for an outstanding outcome from visitors who were able to experience what the NHCFAE is all about, and understand the importance of being involved and staying connected,
- **VISION** for the commitment, ideas, and goals met, and
- **FUTURE** for continuing to promote and advocate in order to grow, become stronger, and demonstrate our commitment.

Special thanks, also, to the Great Lakes Regional Administrator, Mr. Barry Cooper, who took time to attend and to participate in almost the entire three day training program. Being able to see our Administrator personally demonstrate his support was most rewarding.

The Partners Reception on the Odyssey Cruise ship was specifically dedicated to Great Lakes Regional leaders who gave their support and commitment to our organization – special thanks for their years of loyalty and generosity.



FUTURE

for continuing to promote and advocate in order to grow, become stronger, and demonstrate our commitment...

COMMUNITY

for an outstanding outcome from visitors who were able to experience what the NHCFAE is all about, and understand the importance of being involved and staying connected...



VISION

for the commitment, ideas, and goals met...



SPOTLIGHT



Three-Minute Spotlight on Your RCD

Submitted by Kristina Gonzales, Editor in Chief, La Palabra

How many Regional Chapter Directors (RCD) and their respective regions can you name? While you are writing down your list, let's take the time to introduce to you a new face from the Northwest Mountain Region.

Linda Miller (now McCray), an Air Traffic Control Specialist (ATCS) at the Denver Center, took some time to answer a few questions.

Editor in Chief (EiC): How were you first introduced to the world of Air Traffic Control?

Linda McCray (LM): During my junior year in Reno High School, I participated in an Airport Manager internship at the local airport (RNO) in Reno, Nevada. As an intern – along with the airport manager – my duties were to oversee a multitude of operations needed to maintain an airport operating safely and efficiently 24/7. During this school program, I was introduced to the world of air traffic control.

EiC: What was your intended career path?

LM: My intended career was education. I wanted to become a French teacher.

EiC: What led you to a career at the FAA?

LM: After graduating from high school, I attended college for two years pursuing my degree in Education. When the scholarship money ran out, I knew I had to do whatever it took to continue a higher education and could not let anything stop me. I went to a recruitment office on campus and enlisted in the Army.

After joining the military, I clearly understood the professional (and personal) investment I had made in myself. Slowly that desire to pursue a degree in education dissolved, and after earning a variety of FAA ATCS certifications, I obtained my Bachelor of Science degree in Professional Aeronautics.

EiC: What were some of the biggest challenges you faced in training?

LM: During training, my biggest challenge was adapting to a highly dynamic, situational environment. A way to minimize this challenge is to train, hours upon hours on position, to a point where everything becomes a second nature response. This adaptation

to the environment, plus the successful management of inherent professional stress, plays a big part in becoming a successful ATCS.

EiC: Describe the work culture in Denver Center.

LM: There have been some positive changes! With the recent promotions of some very capable supervisors, I hope to see a resurgence of motivation in the workforce.

EiC: What challenges if any, do you still face?

LM: I've been there for 7 years, and I'm challenged daily, not only because of the nature of my job, but also because I work in a multi-generational environment. There are many challenges in adapting to new ideas, culture, and technology. Underrepresentation is a problem that needs to be addressed. I want to be more involved in increasing the representation of Hispanics here in our Center and in Denver as a whole.

EiC: You've also become involved in the community. What are some examples?

LM: I've conducted and done volunteer work in schools, at job fairs, and in citizenship workshops. Also, I've worked to increase the registration of Hispanic voters as well as volunteering at health fairs.

EiC: Wow! You are keeping busy! Now about changes in the Northwest Mountain chapter!

LM: As of now, my role is the acting Northwest Mountain RCD, and the acting title will remain until further advisement from our coalition's leadership. In addition, I am reaching out to all those who may be interested in joining forces with our coalition, and think our membership will increase once we let others know about us and what we do.

EiC: Congratulations on your chapter winning the "Star Recruiter" award!

LM: Thanks! I will utilize any networking mechanism available such as: holiday gatherings, our website, Facebook, membership drives, and other community gatherings. ◉

Note from the Editor: At press time, Linda was preparing for her wedding to Brady McCray, an FAA employee — also out of Denver Center. Congratulations Linda and Brady! We wish you all the best in your marriage!

Spreading Awareness of FAA Career Opportunities for Hispanics

By Kimberly Castillo, FAA Acting National Hispanic Employment Program Manager

Since the NHCFAE Training Conference in July, 2009, a lot has taken place in the arena of equal employment opportunity (EEO), outreach, and advocacy to increase the employment, retention, and advancement rate of Hispanics at the FAA as well as for prospective applicants.

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Convention and Career Fair in Puerto Rico

Immediately following the Coalition Conference, I attended the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Convention and Career Fair in San Juan, Puerto Rico. There, I represented you and the agency in numerous events in a targeted effort to bring awareness of the FAA's many exciting career opportunities to Hispanic prospective applicants, career counselors, students, employers, and Federal partners.

Targeted Outreach Produces Positive Results

Various targeted efforts were exercised to spread awareness of opportunities at the FAA:

- > Delivered two workshops on the FAA's Best Practices for Employing, Retaining, and Advancement of Persons with Targeted Disabilities at the Federal Training Institute.
- > Conducted outreach during a three-day college/employer symposium and at a two-day career fair where 466 signatures were collected from prospective Hispanic applicants in an effort to keep the public abreast of employment opportunities at the FAA
- > Shared remarks on behalf of the agency about the vast career opportunities available at the FAA, and encouraged all attendees (members of LULAC, students, and distinguished guests) to work united in order to affect positive change in the Hispanic communities

FAA National Employee Forum

On July 22 to 23, 2009, all the FAA Employee Association Presidents and EEO Special Emphasis Program Managers attended the FAA National Employee Forum where we addressed our concerns and collaborated on strategic measures to act upon the change we wish to see. This meeting was very successful.

DOT Secretary Ray LaHood and FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt met with the Forum and received a brief listing of recommendations to ensure that Equal Employment Opportunities are present in all aspects of employment.

One of the accomplishments resulting from this meeting was receiving DOT Secretary Ray LaHood's reinforcement and full support of the Departmental three percent hiring goal for persons with targeted disabilities (PWTDD), previously established in FY-06 by the former Secretary of Transportation, Mary E. Peters. Currently, the Department's workforce of PWTDDs is 0.56 percent. The Federal high ratio for the employment of PWTDD in a Federal agency is 2.65 percent.

Given the Department's low participation rate, Secretary LaHood states that the Department of Transportation will continue to monitor the hiring rates of PWTDD "until DOT reaches an on-board rate of three percent in the overall workforce." PWTDDs are the largest untapped unemployment group and Hispanics, along with all other minority groups, are affected.

Civil Rights Office Hosts Hiring Fair

In support of this hiring initiative for PWTDD, the FAA Office of Civil Rights hosted the first Hiring Fair for PWTDD. An estimated 1,400 individuals with disabilities were present on August 10, 2009 in Washington, DC for the Hiring Fair. For inquiries regarding the National Hispanic Employment Program and/or the National People with Disabilities Program, and the noncompetitive hiring flexibilities, you may contact me via e-mail at Kimberly.Castillo@faa.gov or by telephone at 202-385-8130.

KIMBERLY CASTILLO »

Hire This Intern!

By Kristina Gonzales,
Editor-In-Chief, La Palabra

The NHCFAE and the FAA should keep an eye on this summer intern. She's a rising star and will be looking for employment soon!



Rising Star:

Alexis Martinez
{Summer Intern with the FAA}.

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois.

Educational Institute: Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona — Class of 2010.

Major: Aviation Business Administration, with an area of concentration in General Management and a minor in Space Studies.

Dream Job: Director of Human Resource Management at NASA.

Random Facts: Found her calling at a college fair on the Navy Pier; interested in astronomy; wants to get her Ph.D. in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior; loves helping people; first in her family to go into Aviation industry; interned in Ventura, California with Flight Operations at Oxnard and Camarillo airports.

Advice She Gives To Her Peers: "The biggest thing is not to limit yourself. No matter who you are or where you come from — always ask. You are going face rejection and it is going to suck. There are going to be times when the world seems like it is not in your favor, but do not give up. Be persistent. If there is something you want, go for it. It is always good not to plan everything out, because you never know when an opportunity is going to knock and take you in a different direction."

Knock, knock, Alexis. It's the FAA calling!



MMAC Chapter Recruits Prospective FAA Employees

By Erik Salazar, MMAC Regional Chapter Director, NHCFAE

On Saturday, July 25th, members of the MMAC Coalition Chapter participated in the annual Viva Oklahoma Hispanic Chamber Expo at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds. The Expo included a career fair, vendor booths with food and merchandise, music, and entertainment. Thousands of visitors were in attendance.

Equipped with pamphlets and giveaways from Human Resources and the FAA Logistics Center, we were able to educate visitors on the many different careers available at the FAA as well as the benefits of membership in NHCFAE. Members of our chapter rotated shifts throughout the day to staff the booth.

Our booth was very popular because visitors were excited about the different giveaways we offered. Many visitors were unaware that there is an FAA center in Oklahoma City — and some were not even certain exactly what the FAA is all about.

By talking with the many visitors who stopped by our booth, we were able to open some doors that might not otherwise have been opened. We also were able to plant some seeds of encouragement with many young students.

In order for the FAA to more closely resemble the rich diversity of our nation, it is going to have to take measures to increase the current lower than anticipated participation rates. Through events like the Hispanic Expo, NHCFAE members and the MMAC Chapter are working to close the gap.

And, sincere thanks to the following MMAC Chapter members for taking time out of their Saturday to volunteer at the Expo: Bryan Burch, Veronica Salazar, Alex Sotomayor, Erik Salazar, and John Turke (Southwest Region member).

PHOTO // (Left to Right) Bryan Burch, Veronica Salazar, Alex Sotomayor, and Erik Salazar — promoting the benefits of FAA employment at the Viva Oklahoma Hispanic Chamber Expo.



Putting the Power of Blue to Work for You

NHCFAE's partner, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Service Benefit Plan, wants to remind you of tools available on www.fepblue.org to help our members make informed decisions about their medical care choices:

- > You are having a diagnostic procedure next week and you don't know what to expect after the procedure.
- > You have just had a baby and need some information about immunizations for children.
- > Your husband was just diagnosed with diabetes and both of you need help planning a diet.

Where can you go to get the answers to your questions and the information you need? Blue Health Connection under the Health and Wellness feature on our web site is your resource for around-the-clock information that puts you in control of managing your health decisions when and how you need it.

The Ask Our Nurse feature gives you access to a registered nurse that lets you email non-emergency questions about a condition, symptom, treatment, or procedure through a secure and confidential messaging system.

You will get a personalized response to your email within 24 hours. If you have a more immediate situation or question, you can call Blue Health Connection at 1.888.258.3432 and a registered nurse will be happy to assist you.

You aren't sure if your rash is serious enough for a visit to your physician. You can check out the Online Symptom Adviser for help with your decision. The Online Symptom Adviser uses a series of questions to evaluate your condition. Based on your answers, the Online Adviser will recommend the appropriate medical care, from calling an ambulance to providing self-care instructions you can use at home.

You also have access to information about thousands of health related topics when you use the Clinical Reference System and our Audio Health Library.

We hope you will check out Blue Health Connection online for help in making informed health care decisions for you and your family.

Wishing you a healthy 2009



The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Service Benefit Plan

22 Winners Receive Scholarships from Four NHCFAE Programs

TEN RENE MATOS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

This memorial scholarship program was established in the name of a very motivated and dedicated man, Rene Matos, who in every way epitomized the dream to succeed, while at the same time, helping others along the way. NHCFAE Executive Committee budgeted \$10,000 and the Scholarship Selection Committee selected ten applicants each of whom will receive \$1,000:

NAME	REGION	NAME OF SCHOOL ENROLLED
Madison Mojica	ASW	Texas A&M International University
Teanna Medina	ACE	University of Missouri-Columbia
Rita Wong	AEA	Eastern Connecticut State University
Miriam Reyes	ASW	Texas Woman's University
Patricia Caligari	ASO	University of Sacred Heart -San Juan, PR
An Ninh Tran	AWP	University of California, San Diego
Jose de la Cruz	ASW	Texas A&M International University
Danyel Wynn	AWP	Colorado State University
Luz Macias	AWP	California State University, Sacramento
Jessica Crowninshield	ANE	University of New Hampshire, Durham

TWO DANNY GUTIERREZ MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

Natalia Ocampo	ANE	Rutgers University
Luis Mendoza	ANE	University of New Hampshire, Durham

FOUR NHCFAE MEMBER EDUCATION TUITION REIMBURSEMENT WINNERS!

Each year, the NHCFAE Executive Committee allocates funds for Coalition members who have successfully completed a course or training program of higher education. This year the Scholarship Selection Committee will reimburse up to \$7,000. The dollar amount awarded will be based upon the number of NHCFAE members applying and the cost of the courses completed.

Gail M. Donohue	ANM	Management & Program Analyst
Miguel Narvaez	ASO	Air Traffic Support Specialist (ATSS)
Victoria Rogers	AWP	Air Traffic Controller Specialist (ATCS)
Rick Franceschi	ASW	NAS Planning & Integration Lead Planner

SIX FEDERAL EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE FUND (FEEA) WINNERS!

The FEEA scholarship program was established to extend support to NHCFAE members, their spouses, and college-age children. FEEA will serve as the selection committee for six \$1,000 NHCFAE-FEEA Scholarships. In 2009, FEEA was able to select six winners because BCBS has been more generous this year so we are awarding two BCBS FEP scholarships among the six. They are a great group of winners:

NAME	NHCFAE MEMBER
Courtney Contreras	Daughter of Vicki, Employee Services Group, Forth Worth, TX
Jessica Figueroa and Jocelyn Figueroa	Daughters of Melvin, ARTCC, Miami, FL
Allison Jaimes	Daughter of Andrew, Northern California TRACON, Mather AFB, CA
Melissa Meinke	Daughter of Beatrice, Great Lakes Region ADO, Romulus, MI
Christine Munoz	Spouse of Ricky, ARTCC, Lubbock, TX

LETTER OF GRATITUDE FROM LUIS MENDOZA

I am so thankful that I have been given a chance to obtain some of the aid for my education. I am very excited to start my new path leading toward a better life, and I would not be on this path if I couldn't find this help.

This scholarship was created to encourage and promote people of Hispanic decent to further and better their life goals. With the aid and support, I am one more Hispanic who will be able to get my desired degree. Words cannot describe my true appreciation; however, hopefully my actions one day will. Knowing that I have support and belief behind me, I will strive to become the best student I can be in order to represent my culture in a positive manner.

Also, I would like to use this inspiration in my mentoring of younger, disadvantaged students who believe degrees and higher careers are not for them. I am so very honored to get this chance to help my family and my life, and all that I can say is thank you, thank you, and thank you!

This scholarship truly has affected my life in the best way possible. It is not about the money, but rather the opportunity I would not find anywhere else. Thank you again.

— LUIS MENDOZA, FUTURE ENGINEER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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