



WAI2026

CONNECT | ENGAGE | INSPIRE

37th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference

Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center

Dallas, Texas

[Register here](#)



or visit WAI.org/2026-conference for more details.
We look forward to connecting with you during #WAI2026.

Download the #WAI2026 Conference App

Navigate the 37th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference like a pro with the WAI2026 mobile app. Download the app before conference to preview education sessions, exhibitors, speakers, and schedules, so you can hit the ground running in Dallas, Texas.

Visit the App Store or Google Play and search for WAI Events. For all other devices and other web browser-enabled devices, scan the QR code.

See you in Dallas for #WAI2026!

Are you already registered, but would like to add or update your registration? Use your registration confirmation email to access the Attendee Service Center.

Space is limited for our professional development seminars, tours, and the Pioneer Hall of Fame Ceremony and Celebration Dinner. Don't miss out!

Registration Hours

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18
noon–5:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
7 a.m.–5 p.m.
(Closed 10–10:30 a.m.)

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
7 a.m.–4 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
7–10:30 a.m.

Media Center

The Media Center is provided to all members and exhibitors to share information about their company and/or services to media professionals attending WAI2026. Exhibitors and sponsors can share press releases, company videos, and related materials.

Information for *Aviation for Women* and *Aviation for Girls* magazines and the monthly *WAI Connect* eNewsletters is collected here as well. The Media Center is the base for the WAI Communications staff, as well as the team for *WAI On Air*, photographers, and videographers.

Media Center Hours

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18
8 a.m.–4 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
8 a.m.–5 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
8 a.m.–5 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
8 a.m.–noon



WAI2026

Wednesday, March 18 (Pre-Conference Activities)

TOURS:

Additional fee may apply; registration required

8:30 a.m.–3 p.m. American Airlines Tour
11 a.m.–2:30 p.m. CAE Tour
1–5 p.m. Ft. Worth Stockyards & Line Dancing Tour
3–8 p.m. Southwest Airlines Tours (3 options)

10 a.m.–5 p.m. Exhibitor Set-Up
noon–5:30 p.m. Registration Open
noon–6 p.m. WAI Store Open
1–5 p.m. Chapter Leadership Workshop
Registration required
1–5 p.m. Professional Development Seminars
– PD 1: Destroy Your Imposter Syndrome
– PD 2: Overcoming Underearning: Elevate Your Worth, Expand Your Career
Additional fee; registration required

5–6:30 p.m. 1st Timer Conference Attendee Event
6:30–7:30 p.m. Chapter Connect Reception
Invitation only

7:30–10 p.m. Jazz with Wings Hangar Dance
(Sponsored by Wings Credit Union)

Thursday, March 19

7 a.m.–5 p.m. Registration Open
7 a.m.–7 p.m. WAI Store Open
7–7:45 a.m. Mind. Body. Spirit. Courses:
– Yoga
– Sound Bath and Mindfulness
Additional fee; registration required
7:30–8:30 a.m. New Members Breakfast
Members who joined April 2025 or after
(Sponsored by Alaska, Hawaiian Airlines, Horizon Air)

7:30–8:45 a.m. Braintdate Connection Lounge Open
9–10 a.m. Opening General Session and Membership Meeting
Lynda Coffman and Nicole Malachowski
(Sponsored by United)

10–11 a.m. Exhibit Hall Preview Hour
10:15 a.m.–4 p.m. Braintdate Connection Lounge Open
10 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Authors Connect Open
(Sponsored by United)

11 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open
11 a.m.–noon Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

11 a.m.–noon Industry Briefings
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Networking 101 for Students
Presented by American Airlines

12:30–1:15 p.m. Mind. Body. Spirit. Course: Self-Defense
Additional fee; registration required
1–2:30 p.m. Plan & Host an Outstanding GIAD Event
1:30–2:30 p.m. Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

1:30–2:30 p.m. Industry Briefings
1:30–3:00 p.m. Speed Mentoring Session
Registration required

3–4 p.m. Educating the Future Workforce in Aerospace
3–4 p.m. Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

3–4 p.m. Industry Briefings
4:30–5:30 p.m. Opening Night Reception

5:30–6:30 p.m. International Members Reception
International Members only
5:30 p.m. Aviation Networking Events Begin

Friday, March 20

7 a.m.–4 p.m. Registration Open
7–7:45 a.m. Mind. Body. Spirit. Course:
Self-Defense
Additional fee; registration required

7 a.m.–6 p.m. WAI Store Open
7:15–8:45 a.m. Authors Connect: Meet the Authors
(Sponsored by United)
7:30–8:45 a.m. Braintdate Connection Lounge Open
8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Authors Connect Open
(Sponsored by United)

8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open
9–10 a.m. Morning General Session
Alex Marren and The Honorable Jennifer Homendy
(Sponsored by Amazon)

10:30–11:30 a.m. Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)
10:30–11:30 a.m. Industry Briefings
10:30–noon How to Start a WAI Chapter
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Braintdate Connection Lounge Open
noon–12:45 p.m. Mind. Body. Spirit. Course:

– Sound Bath and Mindfulness
Additional fee; registration required
1–2 p.m. General Session: **Scholarship Celebration**
2:30–3:30 p.m. Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

2:30–3:30 p.m. Industry Briefings
2:30–3:45 p.m. Student & Collegiate Chapter Leadership Workshop
2:30–5:30 p.m. Braintdate Connection Lounge Open
4–5 p.m. Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

4–5 p.m. Industry Briefings
6:30–8:30 p.m. Pioneer Hall of Fame Ceremony & Celebration Dinner
Additional fee; registration required
(Sponsored by American Airlines)
8:30–10:30 p.m. WAI After Party & Dancing

Saturday, March 21 / Girls in Aviation Day Dallas

7–10:30 a.m. Registration Open
7–7:45 a.m. Mind. Body. Spirit. Course: Zumba
Additional fee; registration required

7:30–10:30 a.m. Braintdate Connection Lounge Open
8–9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation in the Exhibit Hall
8–10:30 a.m. Authors Connect Open
(Sponsored by United)

8–10:30 a.m. Exhibit Hall Open
8 a.m.–noon WAI Store Open
8 a.m.–3 p.m. Girls in Aviation Day Dallas
Separate registration required

9–10 a.m. Education Sessions
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

9–10 a.m. Industry Briefings
10:30–11:45 a.m. Closing General Session
Stephanie Chung
(Sponsored by Delta Air Lines)

10:30 a.m.–3 p.m. Exhibitor Tear Down

Networking 101 for Students

Krystal McCoy
(Presented by American Airlines)



THURSDAY, MARCH 19
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Learn How to Network Like a Pro

Are you a student ready to master the art of networking? Join Krystal McCoy, American Airlines director of airports, cargo, regional, safety, and technical operations recruitment, at “Networking 101 for Students” for an insightful session on building and leveraging your professional network. Learn how to be intentional with your connections and engage your network for good. With a team of 17 recruitment professionals who focus on sourcing top talent and driving pipeline strategies, Krystal will provide the pro tips for making your netWORK.

Speed Mentoring Session

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 | 1:30–3 p.m.
(Registration required)

WAI Speed Mentoring connects attendees with experienced aviation professionals from across the industry for a series of focused, high-impact conversations. Participants gain practical insight on career advancement and in-demand soft skills such as leadership, communication, and career navigation.

Educating the Future Workforce in Aerospace

(formerly called Aerospace Educators Workshop)
THURSDAY, MARCH 19 | 3–4 p.m.

With a predicted shortage of skilled employees for the growing number of aerospace jobs, it is important we develop programs that inspire youth to pursue aviation careers. Join us in this interactive workshop where K-12

aerospace education organizations will share resources and activities for formal and informal educators. Attendees will design a collaborative lesson to take back to their learners to teach aviation STEM skills.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

Aviation Networking Night



5:30–10 p.m.

On Aviation Networking Night there will be a wide variety of events hosted by WAI sponsors, exhibitors, chapters, universities, and other aviation communities. It's an opportunity to gather, network, and unite in relaxed, informal settings. Scan the QR code to review the list of events.

International Members Reception

(International members only)

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
5:30–6:30 p.m.

If you are one of our members joining us from outside the United States, we invite you to attend the International Members Reception and connect with professionals around the globe. Beer, wine, and light hors d'oeuvres will be available.

Professional Development Seminars

(additional fee, registration required)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18 • 1–5 p.m.

PD1: Destroy Your Imposter Syndrome

Presented by:
Stacey Jackson



Imposter Syndrome can undermine confidence and achievement. This session will provide practical cognitive techniques to combat self-doubt, including cognitive restructuring and mindfulness practices. Attendees will learn to reframe negative self-beliefs, validate their accomplishments, and develop a clearer self-image. Additionally, we'll introduce the concept of the “horizon point” — a future vision that motivates and guides personal and professional growth. By applying these strategies, participants will gain actionable tools to overcome Imposter Syndrome, embrace their true potential, and confidently pursue their goals.

PD2: Overcoming Underearning: Elevate Your Worth, Expand Your Career

Presented by:
Tiffany Jones, ICF CEC, ACC, Executive Coach



Is the biggest gap in your paycheck the one between who you are and what you believe you deserve? Join Tiffany Jones for a transformational workshop based on Barbara Huson's Overcoming Underearning methodology. Designed specifically for women in aviation, this session helps you uncover and shift the hidden beliefs and patterns that limit your earning power. You'll leave with a bold financial vision, practical tools, and the confidence to take values-aligned action toward higher pay and greater impact. Because while systemic change matters, your mindset is where power begins.




Let your career *take off* with PSA

- Pilot
- Aircraft Maintenance Technician
- Flight Attendant
- Corporate Roles
- Integrated Operations Center
- Operations & Support



Learn more or apply for a career opportunity at psairlines.com





Education Sessions Schedule

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

Career Development

11 a.m.–noon

- Empowering Skies—Women Leading Aviation Innovation in the Caribbean Fighting to Fly: Inspiring Lessons in Perseverance from the WASP
- How to Get Started in the World of Aerobatics

1:30–2:30 p.m.

- Not a Pilot? Not a Problem. Insight into Diverse Aviation Careers.
- The Future of Flight is Autonomous: Exploring Careers in Emerging Technology

3–4 p.m.

- Funding Your Flight Training Through Military, Scholarships, and Side Gigs
- Own Your Strengths: The Antidote to Imposter Syndrome and the Secret to High-Performing Teams

Emerging Technologies

1:30–2:30 p.m.

- The Future of Flight is Autonomous: Exploring Careers in Emerging Technology

3–4 p.m.

- Designing for Manufacturability in Aerospace: Enabling Scalable, Safe Production from Day One
- Navigating Challenges in the Aviation Industry

Health & Wellness

11 a.m.–noon

- Invisible Battles: Confronting Aviator Cancer and Transforming the Future of Flight Health

1:30–2:30 p.m.

- Hazard Alert! Avoid Potentially Severe Injuries of Fatalities While Working with Commercial Aircraft

3–4 p.m.

- Aviation and Women's Health: Advancing Knowledge and Care for Holistic Wellbeing in Aviation

Leadership Skills

11 a.m.–noon

- Empowering Skies - Women Leading Aviation Innovation in the Caribbean
- Fighting to Fly: Inspiring Lessons in Perseverance from the WASP

1:30–2:30 p.m.

- Beyond the Glass Ceiling—What Still Holds Women Back in Aviation Through Culture, Laws & Systems
- Beyond the Horizon: Aviation Outreach with Real Altitude
- Hazard Alert! Avoid Potentially Severe Injuries of Fatalities While Working with Commercial Aircraft

3–4 p.m.

- Navigating Challenges in the Aviation Industry
- Own Your Strengths: The Antidote to Imposter Syndrome and the Secret to High-Performing Teams



WAI2026

Education Session Tracks



Career Development



Leadership Skills



Emerging Technologies



Maintenance and Tech Ops



Health & Wellness



Military

Note: Seating for all Education Sessions, Chapter Sessions, and Special Sessions will be on a first-come, first served basis.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19



Are Aviation Programs Doing Enough to Support Women Students?



11 a.m.–noon

Presented by: Amy Rutledge, Assistant Professor of Aviation Management; Gail Avendano, Faculty Advisor; Irene Miller, EdD, Assistant Professor; Stephanie Chambers-Baltz, PhD, LP, Clinical Assistant Professor and Interim Director of Clinical Training; Karen Johnson, PhD, A&P, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator in the Aviation Technologies

Hear from experienced educators, researchers, and WAI chapter advisors who are using published formal research along with recent personal student accounts to identify and more clearly understand the continued challenges women experience. The challenges are clear; so, what can we do about them?



Empowering Skies – Women Leading Aviation Innovation in the Caribbean



11 a.m.–noon

Presented by: Tania Herrera, Director of Stakeholders; Eileen Marie Velez-Vega, PE, Strategic Infrastructure Director; Olga Custodio, Captain AA (retired)/LtCol USAF (retired); Caroline Ocasio, Assistant Professor

This is an empowering panel, featuring accomplished women leaders from the Caribbean aviation industry. Hear their inspiring journeys in aviation engineering, flight operations, management, and education, and learn about their contributions to initiatives like Girls in Aviation Day. Discover their strategies for overcoming challenges and fostering inclusion and gain valuable insights on promoting STEM careers for future female aviators.

Fighting to Fly: Inspiring Lessons in Perseverance from the Women Airforce Service Pilots of WWII



11 a.m.–noon

Presented by: Katherine Landdeck, Ph.D. in History, Private Pilot, Aviation Historian

The Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II fought for the chance to fly every plane in the USAAF inventory and to serve their country. They had to prove that women could fly heavy, fast planes and could be counted on to do it safely and efficiently. They heard those who doubted them, whether family and friends or the military itself, but didn't listen.



How to Get Started in the World of Aerobatics



11 a.m.–noon

Presented by: Patty Rosalie Wagstaff, Patty Wagstaff Airshows, Inc. and Patty Wagstaff Aviation Safety LLC, Speaker; Brittane Donelle Lincoln, Airshow and Competition Aerobatic Pilot; Nina Stewart, Bachelors and Aviation and Aerospace Science, IAC Collegiate Program Chair; Peggy Jordan Riedinger, International Aerobatics Club Judge, Aerobatic Judge

Interested in joining aerobatics but don't know where to start? Come learn all the ins and outs of aerobatics and how to get started no matter your skill level. Whether you are in college, at the airlines/corporate, or flying for fun our panelists will describe the best way to get familiar with aerobatic maneuvers, sequences, and competition aerobatics.

Invisible Battles: Confronting Aviator Cancer and Transforming the Future of Flight Health



11 a.m.–noon

Presented by: Shelly Mendieta, Boardmember

Join retired fighter aircrew and breast cancer survivor Col. Shelly Mendieta, USAF (retired), for a powerful session on the hidden crisis of cancer among military aircrew. As Communications Team Lead for the Military Aviator Coalition for Health (MACH), Shelly will share insights from the passage of the ACES Act and the ongoing fight to pass the ROTOR Act. Learn how aviators and families are transforming their lived experiences into legislative victories—and how you can support safer skies, healthier crews, and a stronger aviation future for all.

Beyond the Glass Ceiling—What Still Holds Women Back in Aviation Through Culture, Laws, & Systems



1:30–2:30 p.m.

Presented by: Jessica Ruttenber, over 20+ years in the industry and pilot (ATP) with over 3,500 hours, Founder and Director of Level Up Aviation Nonprofit

Despite progress, women in aviation still face systemic barriers that limit access and advancement. This session explores how outdated aircraft design standards disqualify half of American women—compared to just 3% of men—from flying military aircraft, with a disproportionate impact on Black women. We'll also examine cultural bias, pregnancy discrimination, lack of postpartum accommodations, and the persistent childcare burden. Through data, policy insight, and personal experience, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, legal, and structural challenges still holding women back—and leave with actionable ideas to help create a more inclusive future in aviation.

**Beyond the Horizon:
Aviation Outreach with Real
Altitude**



1:30–2:30 p.m.

Presented by: Carley Walker, Director of Development
Join Carley Walker, Director of Development at STEM Flights, to learn how you can inspire the next generation through aviation mentorship. This session offers practical tools, real-world stories, and a free Mentorship Toolkit to help you connect with students, whether in the cockpit, classroom, or hangar. Learn how to mentor with impact, expand girls in STEM, and join a national movement making aviation more accessible one flight at a time.

**Hazard Alert! Avoid
Potentially Severe Injuries
or Fatalities While Working
with Commercial Aircraft**



1:30–2:30 p.m.

Presented by: Carolyn Birdsong, Manufacturing Manager
Exposure and understanding of high hazards that crews are exposed to in the commercial aircraft manufacturing workplace. A briefing of each hazard category, with photos (e.g. heights, hazardous energy, chemicals, noise), accompanied by technical dialogue focused on origin, consequence, identification, containment, mitigation, elimination.

**Not a Pilot? Not a Problem.
Insight Into Diverse
Aviation Careers.**



1:30–2:30 p.m.

Presented by: Joanna Kiel, Business Development Manager
When people hear “women in aviation,” they picture pilots, technicians or flight attendants. While these roles are incredibly important, they represent only a fraction of the opportunities available in aviation today. This session features four Embraer executives whose careers span business development, corporate social responsibility, aftermarket sales and production leadership. They’ll share their unique journeys, offering insight into lesser-known, high-impact roles and how to pursue them.

**The Future of Flight is
Autonomous: Exploring
Careers in Emerging
Technology**



1:30–2:30 p.m.

Presented by: Ayisha Malaika Minter, Student; Brittney Tough, Part 135 Drone Delivery Pilot, CFI, eVTOL Test pilot, Global Training Lead
This session explores the expanding world of Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS), from drone delivery services to community integration. Gain a comprehensive overview of careers in this field and learn more about the skills, certifications, and educational paths needed to succeed. Whether you are

a student pilot seeking a change, or a seasoned aviation professional looking for your next career move, you’ll gain actionable tips to find your place in the next generation of aviation.

**PANEL Funding Your Flight
Training Through Military,
Scholarships, and Side Gigs**



3–4 p.m.

Presented by: Jessica Ruttenber, Founder of Level Up Aviation; Nobi Marlaine Buntin, Student/Flight Attendant; Jolanda Witvliet, Captain; Cathyrine Armandie; Tiffany Behr, United Pilot

Learn how to fund your flight training through military, scholarships, and side gigs. Come explore different options to funding your aviation dreams.

**PANEL Aviation and Women’s Health:
Advancing Knowledge and
Care for Holistic Wellbeing in
Aviation**



3–4 p.m.

Presented by: Dr. Sky Overbo, PhD HIMS licensed psychologist; Dr. Elizabeth Bjerke, Ph.D. CFI, Associate Dean & Professor; Dr. Sarah Albers, Senior AME, Physician and Aviation Medical Examiner; Dr. Laura Morgan, HIMS AME

This panel explores the unique physical and mental health landscapes for female pilots emphasizing the importance of a proactive informed approach to care. Female specific concerns like childbirth and menopause, can be worsened by worries about career potential grounding. Mental health challenges, including stress, anxiety, depression are often intensified by the underrepresentation of women in the aviation industry. The all-female panel will offer insights into the evolving landscape of medical evaluations and highlight changes being made in the FAA aeromedical system.

**Designing for
Manufacturability in
Aerospace: Enabling
Scalable, Safe Production
from Day One**



3–4 p.m.

Presented by: Divya Manivannan, Structural and payloads Design Engineer, Ms

This session presents proven methods for integrating Design for Manufacturability (DFM) into engineering workflows, reducing rework, improving tooling and inspection outcomes, and enabling scalable production. Studies show that up to 85 percent of manufacturing costs are fixed during preliminary design, yet change orders remain common. Drawing from real-world aerospace examples, we explore practical approaches to embedding DFM at the concept stage to boost first-pass yield, support automation, and minimize risk, delivering reliable, certifiable systems with fewer surprises throughout development.

**Education
Sessions Schedule**

**THURSDAY,
MARCH 19 (cont’d)**
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

Maintenance/Tech Ops

11 a.m.–noon

- Are Aviation Programs Doing Enough to Support Women Students?

3–4 p.m.

- Designing for Manufacturability in Aerospace: Enabling Scalable, Safe Production from Day One

Military

11 a.m.–noon

- Invisible Battles: Confronting Aviator Cancer and Transforming the Future of Flight Health

1:30–2:30 p.m.

- Beyond the Glass Ceiling-What Still Holds Women Back in Aviation Through Culture, Laws & Systems

3–4 p.m.

- Funding Your Flight Training Through Military, Scholarships, and Side Gigs

**New Members
Breakfast**

**THURSDAY,
MARCH 19**
7:30–8:30 a.m.

(Sponsored by Alaska, Hawaiian Airlines, Horizon Air)

WAI members who joined April 2025 or after are invited to mix and mingle during this special morning kick-off event at WAI2026.

Please remember, you will need to be registered for conference to attend this event—attendees are encouraged to pick up their badges at registration on Wednesday, March 18.



WAI2026

Education Sessions Schedule
FRIDAY, MARCH 19
(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

Career Development

- 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- Allyship in Action: Moving from Awareness to Impact
 - Cleared Direct for a Legal Update: What's Been Happening in Aviation Law
 - High-Altitude Motherhood: Breaking Barriers in Professional Pilot Training as a Single Mom of Four

- 2:30–3:30 p.m.
- Civil Air Patrol: Multi-Generational Leadership in Action
 - Cleared for Takeoff: Navigating FAA Medicals with Confidence
 - WCA's Corporate Aviation Career Panel

- 4–5 p.m.
- Airline Pilot Panel

Emerging Technologies

- 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- Cleared Direct for a Legal Update: What's Been Happening in Aviation Law
 - Emerging Technologies: Net Carbon Zero Emission
 - Flight Pilot Forum

- 2:30–3:30 p.m.
- Women on the Frontlines: Shaping the Future of Electric Aviation

- 4–5 p.m.
- Navigating New Heights: Women, Leadership, and AI
 - Sustainability: What Does a Future Sustainable Aviation Industry Look Like and How Do We Get to Net Zero

Health & Wellness

- 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- High-Altitude Motherhood: Breaking Barriers in Professional Pilot Training as a Single Mom of Four

- 2:30–3:30 p.m.
- Cleared for Takeoff: Navigating FAA Medicals with Confidence

Leadership Skills

- 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- Allyship in Action: Moving from Awareness to Impact
- 2:30–3:30 p.m.
- Civil Air Patrol: Multi-Generational Leadership in Action
 - WCA's Corporate Aviation Career Panel
 - Women on the Frontlines: Shaping the Future of Electric Aviation

- 4–5 p.m.
- Airline Pilot Panel
 - Navigating New Heights: Women, Leadership, and AI
 - Rethinking Risks: Embedding Ethics and Human Factors to Elevate Safety Culture

Maintenance/Tech Ops

- 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- Emerging Technologies: Net Carbon Zero Emission

- 4–5 p.m.
- Rethinking Risks: Embedding Ethics and Human Factors to Elevate Safety Culture

Military

- 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- Flight Pilot Forum
- 4–5 p.m.
- "I Can Set the Very Skies Ablaze": Wartime Military Evacuation



WAI2026

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 Cont'd

PANEL Navigating Challenges in the Aviation Industry

3–4 p.m.
Presented by: Dr. Janette McMurtrie, Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, Doctor/Captain

This session provides aviation professionals with a comprehensive overview of key challenges faced by the industry. Today, our world moves at jet speed. Airports are global villages, trains run driverless, and drones deliver packages to our doorsteps. We will explore how leadership styles in transportation and aviation have evolved—from the rigid commanding military style through the collaborative adaptive structure of today and where we are going with the tech styles.

Own Your Strengths: The Antidote to Imposter Syndrome and the Secret to High-Performing Teams

3–4 p.m.
Presented by: Rebekah Seifer, ATP, CFII, MEI, CA, FAC-P/PM, MH-60T (Medium Range Recovery) Systems Manager

Imposter syndrome often creeps in when we focus on what we lack—instead of what we bring to the table. This session introduces the nine Belbin Team Roles as a practical framework to help you identify your strengths, communicate your value, and build stronger, more collaborative teams. Drawing from experience as a Coast Guard aviator and aeronautical engineer, you'll learn how to reframe self-doubt, navigate unfamiliar environments with confidence, and contribute meaningfully—even when you don't check every box.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Allyship in Action: Moving from Awareness to Impact

10:30–11:30 a.m.
Presented by: Alison Faddis, Amazon Director, Global Aviation Operations

In today's interconnected world, effective allyship goes beyond good intentions to create meaningful change. This presentation introduces a practical approach to transforming passive support into active engagement. Through evidence-based strategies and real-world examples, participants will learn how to develop authentic allyship skills, including managing implicit bias, amplifying marginalized voices, and creating sustainable support structures. Moving beyond performative gestures, we'll explore how meaningful allyship drives innovation and builds inclusive environments in both professional and personal contexts. Attendees will leave with actionable tools for implementing effective ally practices.

PANEL Cleared Direct for a Legal Update: What's Been Happening in Aviation Law

10:30–11:30 a.m.
Presented by: Trevor Simoneau, Kathleen A. Yodice, Esq.

During this dynamic panel discussion, aviation law and policy experts will unpack recent key court decisions, legislative developments, and regulatory changes in the aviation industry, with a specific focus on FAA regulatory enforcement cases and challenges created by new technologies. They'll humorously translate the legalese into plain English. And they'll explain how these developments might affect aviation safety regulation, enforcement, litigation, and technological innovation in the industry.

Emerging Technologies: Net Carbon Zero Emission

10:30–11:30 a.m.
Presented by: Swara Arya

Learn how biomass-derived Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) can reduce contrail formation and CO2 emissions in transatlantic aviation. This session presents a hybrid model that combines fuel chemistry, atmospheric science, and propulsion performance to optimize SAF deployment across major airports. Discover how targeted SAF blending—especially using HEFA and ATJ from regional biomass—can lower radiative forcing without compromising aircraft efficiency. Ideal for professionals interested in sustainable aviation, environmental policy, or next-gen propulsion systems.

PANEL Fighter Pilot Forum

10:30–11:30 a.m.
Presented by: Julie Tizard, ATP/USAF Pilot, Pilot/USAFR, Col.; United Captain; Author

What does it take to fly the fastest, most advanced and most lethal aircraft ever built? This is the chance to find out from the women who fly them. This session will examine how to become a fighter pilot - the flying skills, the mindset, and the personal characteristics required. We will discuss types of advanced training and the different fighter missions with pilots from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

PANEL High-Altitude Motherhood: Breaking Barriers in Professional Pilot Training as a Single Mom of Four

10:30–11:30 a.m.
Presented by: Spring Vick, CFI/CFII, Adjunct Professor, MS Aeronautics, PhD Candidate Aviation

As a single mother of four who transitioned from flight attendant to CFII and jet SIC, Spring Vick offers a candid look at the barriers mothers face in professional pilot training. This session explores the institutional, instructional, and cultural challenges that limit access and progression for mothers in aviation.



Civil Air Patrol: Multi-Generational Leadership in Action

2:30–3:30 p.m.

Presented by: Morgan Bennett, Lt Col; Susan Broderick Mallett, Associate Director, Outreach and Partnerships; Jackie Fleming, Lt Col; Regena Mechelle Aye, Maj Gen, CAP National Commander and CEO

Hear from Civil Air Patrol cadets (youth), pilots, educators, and the national commander about what building multi-generational success looks like. Attendees will walk away with clear action items to apply immediately in-flight departments, classrooms, technical ops, or military units. Topics include rotational leadership, peer mentorship, real-world training assignments, and veteran integration. This session offers practical tools to grow leaders at every stage.



Cleared for Takeoff: Navigating FAA Medicals with Confidence

2:30–3:30 p.m.

Presented by: Dr. Sarah Albers, Senior AME, Physician and Aviation Medical Examiner

Dr. Sarah Albers, Senior Aviation Medical Examiner certified by the FAA, will guide pilots through the FAA medical certification process, offering insights into common medical issues, special issuance certificates, and tips for success. With practical advice on maintaining health and addressing disqualifying conditions, Dr. Albers will empower attendees to approach their FAA exams with confidence and clarity.



WCA's Corporate Aviation Career Panel

2:30–3:30 p.m.

Presented by: Kim Kissh, Pilot

Join us for an interactive discussion that brings together professionals from across the business aviation industry. This moderated panel will explore the unique career journeys of each panelist, offering candid insights into their day-to-day roles, quality of life, and work-life balance. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of job satisfaction in the field, the pros and cons of working in business aviation, and the pivotal mentors and colleagues who influenced their paths.



Women on the Frontlines: Shaping the Future of Electric Aviation

2:30–3:30 p.m.

Presented by: Laura Caputo, BETA

As aviation enters a new era with electric aircraft and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), women are stepping into pioneering roles across military, commercial, and regulatory sectors. This session highlights trailblazers like Brig. Gen. Laura Caputo, ALIA pilot Ella Brisson, and Kristen Costello, BETA's Head of Regulatory Affairs. Attendees will explore emerging



career paths, including aircraft certification, policy development, and electric aviation operations. Participants will gain strategies to support women in these fields and be inspired to shape aviation's future as innovators, leaders, and change-makers in a rapidly evolving industry.

"I Can Set the Very Skies Ablaze": Wartime Military Air Evacuation

4–5 p.m.

Presented by: Judy Barger, PhD, Lt Colonel, USAF, retired

Learn about Lifesaving Missions in wartime military air evacuation in three past wars, focusing on flight nurses who provided often lifesaving care to their patients en route. Follow the fascinating experiences of U.S. Army flight nurses who flew with the U.S. Army Air Forces in World War II and the U.S. Air Force flight nurses of the Korean War who were assigned in Japan when the war began. Join the speaker on her Operation Babylift mission as a flight nurse at the end of the Vietnam War.



Airline Pilot Panel

4–5 p.m.

Presented by: Ann Marie Nicholas, Pilot; Jennifer Meiners, CFI, MEI, ATP, First Officer; Kelly McConnell; Krissie Katte; Kelly Hansen

This panel is comprised of five female pilots encompassing the regional, major, and cargo carriers. The first half of this education session we will be sharing our own personal aviation journey to the flight deck. The last half of the session is open to questions from our attendees. The purpose of our education session is to encourage and inspire other female pilots, as well as help them realize they, too, can achieve the career of their dreams!



Navigating New Heights: Women, Leadership, and AI

4–5 p.m.

Presented by: Nancy Coleman, Dean, Harvard Extension School and Continuing Studies

Today, the intersection of leadership, artificial intelligence (AI), and the impact on women in leadership roles is more crucial than ever. Learn how modern leadership within aviation is being reshaped by innovative technologies while emphasizing the necessity of maintaining a human-centric approach in the age of AI. Women, with their innate ability to prioritize empathy and collaboration, are well-suited to leverage these advancements to enhance their roles and the work of their teams, ensuring that technology serves people rather than the other way around.



Industry Briefings

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Industry Briefings allow companies to host a session, showcase opportunities within their organizations, discuss current positions available, and their requirements. These 60-minute briefings include time for any Q&As.



Volunteer at WAI2026

The annual WAI conference isn't possible without a small army of volunteers! Join our volunteer crew at WAI2026 and have experiencing the conference in a different way and meet other WAI members.

Please note, you must be registered for the conference day you are volunteering. Submit your registration first, and when asked if you are interested in volunteering, check "Yes" and our volunteer coordinators will contact you with details. Email volunteer@wai.org with any questions.



WAI2026

Education Sessions Schedule

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

(Sponsored by Dallas Love Field)

Career Development

9-10 a.m.

- Business Ownership as a Working Mechanic
- Launch Your Aviation Career: Explore Opportunities & Connect with Women Trailblazers

Emerging Technologies

9-10 a.m.

- From Cockpit to Code: How AI and Cybersecurity Are Shaping the Future of Aviation
- The Next Revelation: Hybridization and Electrification in Commercial Aviation

Health & Wellness

9-10 a.m.

- Public Benefit Flying-Do what you can, in an airplane if you can

Maintenance/Tech Ops

9-10 a.m.

- Business Ownership as a Working Mechanic
- The Next Revelation: Hybridization and Electrification in Commercial Aviation

Military

9-10 a.m.

- From Cockpit to Code: How AI and Cybersecurity Are Shaping the Future of Aviation



WAI2026

FRIDAY, MARCH 20 Cont'd

Rethinking Risks: Embedding Ethics and Human Factors to Elevate Safety Culture

4-5 p.m.

Presented by: Laura Del Rio

In high-pressure environments, risk is not just technical; it is human. This session explores how ethical thinking and human-centered risk approaches can enhance traditional safety and compliance frameworks. We will examine how applying principles from ethical governance and human factors models can reveal deeper organizational vulnerabilities and improve safety culture. Attendees will gain practical ideas for integrating ethics, inclusion, and leadership into ground handling systems.



Sustainability: What Does a Future Sustainable Aviation Industry Look Like and How Do We Get to Net Zero

4-5 p.m.

Presented by: Danielle Ukanowicz, Regional Director, Sustainability

Sustainability is shaping the future of aviation. Learn how the industry is moving toward Net Zero by 2050, what challenges exist, and what the future may look like.



SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Business Ownership as a Working Mechanic

9-10 a.m.

Presented by: Maria Vianco, A&P/IA, PPL, Mechanic

Learn what it takes to run a small business! This presentation will cover the necessities as well as give insight on what is needed to have a business in aviation.



From Cockpit to Code: How AI and Cybersecurity Are Shaping the Future of Aviation

9-10 a.m.

Presented by: Ambericent Cornett, MS, MPH, MBA-HCM, MSTI-CIDA, Founder and CEO, Master Sergeant - U.S. Army

Explore how artificial intelligence and cybersecurity are transforming aviation in this forward-looking session. From autonomous flight systems and predictive maintenance to threat detection and secure digital operations, discover how AI is reshaping flight while cybersecurity keeps these innovations safe. Tailored for pilots, engineers, students, and aviation professionals, this session highlights real-world applications and career pathways at the intersection of emerging technology and aviation. Learn how to transition from traditional flight roles



to tech-driven opportunities that are shaping the future of the industry—from cockpit to code.

Launch Your Aviation Career: Explore Opportunities & Connect with Women Trailblazers

PANEL



9-10 a.m.

Presented by: Justin Dahan, ALPA Education Committee Chair & FedEx Pilot

Aviation is an exciting career field full of opportunity where women can thrive, innovate, and inspire. Join us to unlock a world of possibility in fields where women have historically been underrepresented. Aviation needs more diverse voices and perspectives to innovate and thrive. Plus, with the industry constantly evolving, there's no shortage of opportunities to grow, lead, and make a real impact on how the world connects. This panel will address challenges women face in various aviation professions and offer practical insights into career paths, scholarships, mentorship programs, and hands-on opportunities that could launch a fulfilling journey.

Public Benefit Flying-Do what you can, in an airplane if you can

PANEL



9-10 a.m.

Presented by: Jeanne Willerth; Avery VandeVen; Susan Delgado; Carley Walker

Learn about Public Benefit Flying and how you can use your talents to help others. Opportunities include those providing access to medical care, animal transport, environmental research, veterans transport, disaster response and the list goes on. There are over 40 organizations nationwide that leverage volunteer pilots of all experience levels. Learn how you can get involved!

The Next Revelation: Hybridization and Electrification in Commercial Aviation

9-10 a.m.

Presented by: Divya Manivannan, Structural and payloads Design Engineer, Ms

Hybrid-electric propulsion offers a timely path to emissions reduction without waiting decades for all-electric flight. This session examines the current state of hybrid systems in commercial aviation, focusing on advancements in batteries, electric machines, and integrated power management. As multiple programs approach flight testing, we explore how these technologies are being engineered today to deliver cleaner and more efficient aircraft that align sustainability goals with operational performance.





WAI **AUTHORS**
CONNECT

Schedule

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Authors Connect: Meet the Authors
7:15–8:45 a.m.

Longhorn Hall F Pre-Function
(just outside of the Exhibit Hall)

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
8–10:30 a.m.

Authors Connect

(Sponsored by United)

Each year with the support of **LiteraryAviatrix.com**, attendees can meet a growing community of female aviation authors and purchase their books. New this year, the Authors Connect Booth will be located just inside the entrance of the Exhibit Hall and will offer several author signings.



**Authors Connect:
Meet the Authors**
FRIDAY, MARCH 20
7:15–8:45 a.m.
Longhorn Hall F
Pre-Function
(just outside of the Exhibit Hall)



Participating Authors

(as of February 1, 2026)

Cecilia Aragon

Flying Free: My Victory over Fear to Become the First Latina Pilot on the US Aerobatic Team

Erika J. Barger, Esq.

Scholarship Hacks: Insider Tips for Winning College Money

Anneke Bogardus

Aviators United: Building Together

Cady Coleman

Sharing Space: An Astronaut's Guide to Mission, Wonder and Making Change

Olga E Custodio, Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.)

Flightpath of Fortitude

Kimberly K. Dougherty, Ph.D., Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.)

Airpower in Literature: Interrogating the Clean War, 1915-2015

Laura Fryar, LTC, USA (Ret.)

Be Something Epic: Aviator

Natasha Gonzalez

TransporTed Eggventures: The Great 50-State Eggs-pedition

Darcy Guyant, Cdr., USCG (Ret.)

Into The Storm: The Adventures of Dolph and Gwen

Caroline Jensen

Thundermouse

Erin Miller

Final Flight Final Fight

Erin Murphy

Daring Dexter: How Aviation Sparks Change in a Rescue Dog's Life

Captain Janet Patton

Riding the Lines: An American's Adventures on the London Underground

Caroline Paul

Why Fly: Seeking Awe, Healing, and Our True Selves in the Sky

Jennifer Pitt

The Barnstormer & the Lady: Aviation Legends Walter and Olive Ann Beech, 15th Anniv. Edition

Katherine Sharp Landdeck, Ph.D.

The Women With Silver Wings: The Inspiring True Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II

Captain Lynn Rippelmeyer

Life Takes Flight

Tiffany Robinson

Zoe's Big Flight

Laura Savino

JET BOSS

Mary Shipko

The First: Women Pilots, and How They Changed The Airlines.

Samantha Arrington Sliney

All The Things Our Mommy Can Do

Judy Tarver

Expert Witness: Wrongful Death

Merryl Tengesdal, Col., USAF (Ret.)

Shatter the Sky: Tales of Dragon Lady 788

Graciela Tiscareño-Sato

Good Night Captain Mama/ Buenas Noches Capitán Mamá

Julie Tizard, Col., USAF (Ret.)

Free Fall at Angel Creek

Marielle Veilleux

The Adventure of an Aviatrix

Teri Weber

Fly with Mytai

Jolanda Witvliet

The Airline Transition Manual

Jazz with Wings Band

(Sponsored by Wings Credit Union)

Imagine a group of musicians who are all passionate about aviation. Gather them together and you have the Jazz with Wings Band.

Founded in 2004, the band represents a group of WAI members who have a broad spectrum of backgrounds including pilots, flight instructors, flight attendants, medical doctors, military personnel, educators, attorneys, students, and retirees.

Listen and enjoy the Jazz Band performances during the following times:

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

Hangar Dance

7:30–10 p.m.

Grapevine B

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

Exhibit Hall Preview Hour
10–11 a.m.

Exhibit Hall Stage

Opening Night Reception
4:30–5:30 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Stage

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Exhibit Hall Stage
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

2–3 p.m.

If you are interested in joining with your musical talents email Barb Lauer at barblauer51@gmail.com



WAI2026

Thank You!



Attendee Wi-Fi

Sponsored by PSA Airlines

Authors Connect:

*Meet the Authors
Sponsored by United*

Charging Stations

*Sponsored by Bronze Sponsors:
ALPA, Avery Lane, CAE, FedEx,
Grapevine, Harvard Division of
Continuing Education, JetBlue,
Meds-Global, NATCA, NBAA, PASS,
SUN 'n FUN, UND Aerospace*

Conference App Banner Ads

*Sponsored by Aviation Technical
Services, Southwest*

Conference Bags

Sponsored by Amazon

Conference Connect

Sponsored by Republic Airways

Education Sessions

Sponsored by Dallas Love Field

General Sessions

Thursday: Sponsored by United

Friday: Sponsored by Amazon

Saturday: Sponsored by Delta Air Lines

Headshots

Sponsored by Envoy

Jazz with Wings Band

Sponsored by Wings Credit Union

Lanyards

Sponsored by Piedmont Airlines

New Members Breakfast

*Sponsored by Alaska, Hawaiian
Airlines, Horizon Air*

**Pioneer Hall of Fame Ceremony &
Celebration Dinner**

Sponsored by American Airlines

WAI On Air Conference

*Sponsored by GoJet Airlines, Global
Medical Response*

Wristbands

Sponsored by United



WAI2026

Girls IN AVIATION DAY DALLAS

A Women in Aviation International® Event

Girls in Aviation Day Denver
SATURDAY, MARCH 21

8 a.m.- 3 p.m. • Grapevine C
(preregistration required)



Girls ages 8-18 will be introduced to all the career possibilities in aviation/aerospace and have fun with hands-on activities at more than 25 stations. In addition, participants will participate in an Exhibit Hall scavenger hunt and hear from a variety of female role models during a career panel. During lunch, participants will meet **Shaesta Waiz**, a pilot, entrepreneur, and founder of Dreams Soar Inc.



Thank you to our generous GIAD Dallas sponsors!

Amazon, American Airlines, American Airlines Cadet Academy, Embraer Foundation, Gaylord Texan Resort & Conference Center (parking), United



Mind. Body. Spirit. Courses

(preregistration is required)

Experience our wellness activities designed to refresh and rejuvenate you through the conference.

Sound Bath & Mindfulness

THURSDAY,
MARCH 19
7-7:45 a.m.

FRIDAY,
MARCH 20
noon-12:45 p.m.

\$15 per person

Led by Irene Lopez, WAI member, enjoy a 45-minute full-body meditation in shavasana, immersing you in deep, resonant sound vibrations.

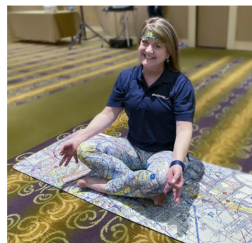


Yoga

THURSDAY,
MARCH 19
7-7:45 a.m.

\$15 per person

Enjoy yoga hosted by Eileen Simoneau with Chart It All. This class is appropriate for all skill levels. Beginners are welcome!

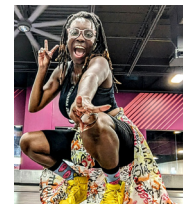


Zumba

SATURDAY,
MARCH 21
7-7:45 a.m.

\$10 per person

Join Olivia Stancil, WAI staff member and certified Zumba instructor, for a workout that blends Latin and global rhythms with easy-to-follow dance moves.



Self Defense

THURSDAY,
MARCH 19
12:30-1:15 p.m.

FRIDAY,
MARCH 20
7-7:45 a.m.

\$10 per person

Build real-world confidence and personal safety skills in this 45-minute hands-on session for women. Based on Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu principles, the class is led by Jennifer Klenka, a certified Woman Empowered Instructor and Lockheed Martin associate fellow.



THURSDAY, MARCH 19
Opening General Session & Annual Membership Meeting
 9–10 a.m.

Lynda Coffman, WAI CEO



Lynda Coffman joined WAI as CEO in January 2024 and leads the business development and strategic direction of the 20,000-member strong nonprofit organization while partnering with the board of directors

and overseeing staff and daily operations. Lynda has more than 30 years of successful leadership positions at United in various roles that highlight her passion for financial management, operational oversight, strategic planning, and talent retention.

Nicole Malachowski



A 2019 National Women’s Hall of Fame inductee and former Presidential appointee, Col. Nicole Malachowski (USAF, Ret.) has over 21 years of experience as an officer, leader, and fighter pilot in the

U.S. Air Force. Upon her commission into the military, she was competitively selected to fly combat aircraft and embarked on an adventure among the first group of women to fly modern fighter jets.



EMCEE Sarah Kalmata

Sarah Kalmata, known as “Sarah The Pivot,” is an international leadership strategist, trainer, and emcee whose career arcs through aviation, aerospace, and transformational leadership. With nearly two decades in the industry, Sarah has worked for Jet Edge and Universal Weather & Aviation.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
Morning General Session
 9–10 a.m.

Alex Marren

Alex Marren is chief operating officer at Air New Zealand leading and empowering a team of 9,000 aviation professionals across aspects of operation to deliver safety and service, leveraging transformation through technology and process for an exceptional flying experience.



NTSB Chair Jennifer Homendy



Jennifer L. Homendy is the 15th chair of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation, including rail, transit, roadway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space.

Jennifer has served as the agency’s 44th board member since 2018 and chair since 2021. She was re-nominated and unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate in May 2024 to continue serving in both roles. Her current term as chair expires in August 2027, while her term as board member expires at the end of 2029.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
Afternoon General Session
 1–2 p.m.

Scholarship Celebration

The WAI2026 scholarship recipients and the Harvard Classes of 2026 will be celebrated with the entire WAI community. All registered conference attendees are welcome to attend.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
Closing General Session
 10:30–11:45 a.m.

Stephanie Chung

Stephanie Chung is not just the #1 international best-selling author of *ALLY Leadership, How To Lead People Who Are Not Like You*—she’s also a force of strategic innovation, a beacon of change, and a titan in the world of business growth and human capital management. With over 30 years of experience, Stephanie has cultivated a reputation for turning challenges into opportunities and transforming growing businesses into thriving hubs of success.



FRIDAY, MARCH 20
SCHOLARSHIP CELEBRATION
 1–2 p.m.

WOMEN IN AVIATION INTERNATIONAL
SCHOLARSHIPS CHANGE LIVES

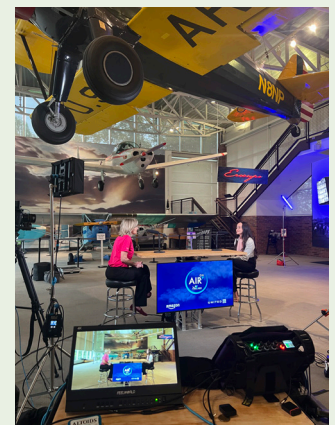
Join us during the Friday afternoon General Session to honor the WAI2026 scholarship recipients and recognize the generous funders. WAI will also recognize the 2026 Harvard Emerging Leaders cohorts.



Scan here for a list of WAI2026 scholarship recipients.

WAI ON AIR CONFERENCE

The bi-weekly On Air podcast will be recording live episodes from the WAI Membership Booth in the Exhibit Hall. Thank you to sponsors GoJet Airlines and Global Med Response.



WAI2026

NEW AT
WAI2026

WAI After Party and Dancing

FRIDAY,
MARCH 20
8:30-10:30 p.m.



New this year, all WAI2026 attendees are invited to keep the celebration going at the WAI After Party, immediately following the Pioneer Hall of Fame Dinner! This high-energy event will take place in the same room as the Ceremony and feature dancing, cash bars, and incredible music from Dallas' favorite DJ Kelly Hooper, joined by live saxophonist and electric violinists.

Please note that food will not be provided, so be sure to enjoy dinner beforehand. Conference badges are required for entry. We can't wait to celebrate and dance the night away with you!

Attire for the event is cocktail, business formal or military formal.



WAI2026

Pioneer Hall Of Fame Ceremony & Celebration Dinner

(Sponsored by American Airlines)

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
6:30- 8:30 p.m.

Each year, WAI honors the new inductees into the Pioneer Hall of Fame (PHOF) during this very special event. Join us for our 2026 celebration as we honor our newest members of the PHOF. The evening will include a presentation highlighting the magnificent careers and achievements of these women, a wonderful dinner, and entertainment.

Attendees can purchase an admission to the dinner when they register for the conference. Guest admission can also be purchased. Space is limited for this special event and may not be available for purchase onsite. Attire for the event is cocktail, business formal or military formal.

Olga Custodio



As the first Latina pilot in the U.S. Air Force and a pioneering Hispanic female captain in commercial aviation, Olga Custodio defines her success through three principles: overcome self-doubt, stay open to possibilities, and see yourself as an equal. After flying the T-38 as an instructor pilot, she served 24 years in the Air Force and retired as a lieutenant colonel. Olga then flew with American Airlines on the Boeing 727, Fokker 100, Boeing 757 and 767, accumulating over 11,000 hours of flight time and retiring as a captain. As a STEM advocate, Olga is a speaker serving as a role model for aspiring aviators. She is a tireless volunteer to inspire and educate students, especially from underserved communities. Her memoir *Flightpath of Fortitude* includes Olga's essential life insights on how to overcome barriers and achieve your dreams.

Joan Sullivan Garrett



Joan Sullivan Garrett began her medical career as a flight nurse who envisioned a worldwide solution for travel safety on air, land, and sea, anywhere in the world, after losing a young patient in the remote Arizona mountains. She founded MedAire in 1985 and pioneered global telemedicine through radio, teletype, and satellite communications. She personally trained flight crews and corporate pilots in emergency response, bringing a hands-on approach to a challenge the industry had largely overlooked. But her most transformative innovation came with the creation of MedLink, a 24/7 air-to-ground response center staffed by emergency physicians. Serving as CEO until 2008, Joan details her journey in her autobiography *One Life Lost, Millions Gained*. She has received numerous awards and accolades as a visionary healthcare leader and aviation safety pioneer and served on various aviation boards.

Nadine Berniece Ramsey



The late Nadine Berniece Ramsey was a pioneering female pilot of military aircraft and a member of the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) during World War II. As the first woman in the United States to fly military aircraft, she helped pave the way for today's women military aircraft pilots. Nadine's flying achievements came early and often, including being the first Kansas woman to earn a commercial pilot license, among the earliest women to fly the U.S. Air Mail, as well as a successful aircraft businesswoman, stunt flier, and racer. She was also a first squadron commander for the Civil Air Patrol Program and one of only about 50 women to provide wartime service training instruction during the war. Her legacy to the nation is detailed in the book *Taking Flight*.

Visit a wide variety of exhibitors, including aerospace companies, airlines, associations, manufacturers, military, museums, and universities. This year we're adding even more excitement with two special events in the Exhibit Hall.

Exhibit Hall Hours

Thursday, March 19

Exhibit Hall Preview Hour | 10–11 a.m.

Exhibit Hall Open | 11 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Opening Night Reception | 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Friday, March 20

Exhibit Hall Open | 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 21

Exhibit Hall Open | 8–10:30 a.m.

*Coffee & Conversation | 8–9:30 a.m.

*Open to all attendees. Enjoy complimentary coffee, light breakfast-style refreshments, and warm connections as we wrap up an inspiring week together—the final networking event of WAI2026! (Girls in Aviation Day attendees visit the Exhibit Hall 8-9:30 a.m.)



WAI2026 Exhibitors

(as of February 1, 2026)

Abingdon Co.
Advanced Air
Advanced Airlines LLC
Aeris Aviation Apparel
AerSale, Inc
Aeroview Design Co.
Air Force Reserve
Air Line Pilots Association International
Air Methods
Air Race Classic
Air Transport Services Group, Inc. (ATSG)
Aireon LLC
Airshare
Alaska Airlines
Amazon
American Airlines
American Airlines Cadet Academy
American Airlines Credit Union
AOPA – Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Association for Women in Aviation Maintenance (AWAM)
Atlantic Aviation Corporation
Atlas Air
ATP Flight School
Auburn University School of Aviation
Authors Connect
Avery Lane for Women
Aviation Technical Services
AviationJewelry.com
BH MED SOLUTIONS
Bose Corporation
CAE Inc.
Cape Air
Capitol Technology University
Cirrus Aircraft
Clear Skies Ahead
Coast Flight Training
CommuteAir
Contour Aviation
Dallas Love Field
David Clark Company
Delta Air Lines
Elevated Access
Embraer
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Empire Airlines
Endeavor Air

Envoy Air
Epic Flight Academy
Executive Jet Management
Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA)
FedEx
FedEx Employees Credit Association
Flexjet
Flight Schedule Pro
Flight Uniform
FlightSafety International
Fly Girls Aviation
Freedom Aviation Network
Frontier Airlines
Global Aviation Data
Global Medical Response
GoJet Airlines
Gulf Air Group, Inc.
Gulfstream
Hartzell Propeller LLC
Harvard Division of Continuing Education
IFOD Institute of Flight Operations and Dispatch
ISA+21
JAZ Medical
JetBlue
JSfirm.com
JSX
Kalitta Air
Latino Pilots Association (LPA)
Leading Edge Financial Planning
Level Up Aviation Nonprofit
Liberty University School of Aeronautics
Life Flight Network
Life Link III
M&H Uniforms
Meds-Global
Metro Aviation, Inc.
Middle Tennessee State University
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
National Airlines
Neptune Aviation Services
NetJets
NGPA
Ninety-Nines
NOAA Aircraft Operations Center
Northwest Aviation Medicine

Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals (OBAP)
Phoenix Air Group, Inc.
Phoenix East Aviation / Superior Flight School / MzeroA Online Ground School / A&P Maintenance Institute / Wayman College of Aeronautics
Piedmont Airlines
PlaneSense, Inc.
PreFlight Aviation Camp
Pro Aviation Safety Specialist
Procter & Gamble
Professional Asian Pilots Association
PSA Airlines
Rendezvous App
Republic Airways
SkyWest Airlines
Southwest Airlines
Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology
Spitfire Elite Consulting
Sun Country Airlines
Surf Air Mobility
Techinnovation
Telex Aviation
TeroMed
TES
Texas Woman's University
Textron Aviation
Thomas Edison State University
Travelpro
United Airlines
United Airlines Aviate Academy
United Network Operations Center
United TechOps
University of North Dakota
US Aviation Academy
Visionary Training Resources
Vista America
West Star Aviation
Western Michigan University College of Aviation
Whirly-Girls International
Wings Credit Union
Wings For Val Foundation
Women in Aviation International
Women in Corporate Aviation
Women Military Aviators

THURSDAY,
MARCH 19

EXHIBIT HALL PREVIEW HOUR 10–11 a.m.

The first hour of Exhibit Hall access on Thursday, March 19 will be reserved exclusively for attendees who participate in the Opening General Session that morning for at least 50 minutes.

Eligible attendees will receive a special wristband, which—along with their conference badge—will grant early access to the Exhibit Hall during the Preview Hour. This new initiative is designed to recognize and reward our most engaged participants by giving them first access to connect with our exhibitors.

Beginning at 11:00 a.m., the Exhibit Hall will be open to all registered conference attendees during regular hours. **Every person entering the exhibit hall will be required to wear a WAI Conference badge at all times.**

WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 18

Explore Dallas with Guided Local Tours!

8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.

American Airlines
SOLD OUT

11 a.m.–2 p.m.

CAE
SOLD OUT

1–5:30 p.m.

Line Dancing Lessons at
Billy Bobs & Ft. Worth
Stockyards

3–8 p.m.

Southwest Airlines
(3 options) SOLD OUT



WAI2026

Braindate Connection Lounge

Exclusively offered to WAI2026 conference attendees—discover a new way to network using Braindate. This innovative networking platform transforms casual conversations into meaningful connections by matching you with fellow attendees who share your interests, challenges, and goals. Whether you want to exchange ideas, seek advice, or share expertise, Braindate makes it easy to spark one-on-one or group discussions that matter most to you.

Braindate Connection Lounge Hours:

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
7:30–8:45 a.m.
10:15 a.m.–4 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
7:30–8:45 a.m.
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
2:30–5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
7:30–10:30 a.m.

Chapter Events

WAI members are invited to participate in special events organized for our chapter network during WAI2026. Questions? Email Summer Cole, manager, chapter relations, scole@wai.org.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

Chapter Leadership Workshop

1–5 p.m.

(Registration required)

Join us for an interactive and engaging session designed specifically for WAI chapter leaders! This workshop will explore the unique challenges you face, introduce essential chapter management tools and resources, and highlight innovative ideas to strengthen your chapter's operations.

Key topics include:

- Effective succession planning between chapter boards
- Onboarding strategies for new chapter leaders
- Engaging and retaining volunteers
- Fundraising tips for your chapter

Participants will also receive the latest updates on chapter programs, resources, and upcoming opportunities. Whether you're a new leader or a seasoned one, this is the can't-miss session to elevate your chapter's impact and success!

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

Plan & Host an Outstanding GIAD Event

1–2:30 p.m.

Girls in Aviation Day is a cherished global initiative led by WAI chapter and corporate members dedicated to inspiring the next generation of aviation enthusiasts. Designed for youth ages 8–18, this annual celebration opens young minds to the exciting world of aviation and aerospace through hands-on activities, interactive learning, and unforgettable experiences.

Join us as seasoned event hosts share their expert tips on how to plan and deliver a memorable GIAD on Saturday, September 19, 2026!



Chapter Connect Reception

(for chapter members only; must select during registration)

(Sponsored by Cirrus Aircraft)

6:30–7:30 p.m.

Kick off your conference experience with one of the most anticipated chapter events of the year. Enjoy light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar as you mingle with fellow members across the globe.



FRIDAY, MARCH 20

How to Start a WAI Chapter

10:30 a.m.–noon

Thinking of launching a WAI chapter in your community? Starting a chapter is simpler than you think and we're here to guide you every step of the way. From the initial setup to building a thriving, inclusive aviation network, you'll gain practical insights and proven strategies to make your local chapter a success.

Student & Collegiate Chapter Leadership Workshop

2:30–3:45 p.m.

Student and Collegiate chapters offer a vibrant, hands-on gateway into the world of aviation, unlike any other. In this lively and insightful session, a panel of passionate chapter leaders will share their real-world experiences—the triumphs, hurdles, and everything in between. Whether you're starting out or looking to elevate your existing group, this discussion will empower you to build a thriving, engage community that reflects the spirit of WAI.



WAI2026

WAI Board of Directors



Michaela Lucas
Chair



Sandra Pineau-Boddison
Vice-Chair



Christine Bohl
Treasurer



Andrea Berry
Secretary



Kandy Bernskoetter
Board Member



Alison Faddis
Board Member



Dana Kirchmar
Board Member



Dawit Lemma
Board Member



Jackie Rios
Board Member



Bart Roberts
Board Member



Julie Schell
Board Member



Col. Julie Tizard
(USAF Retired)
Board Member



Brittney Tough
Board Member



Kathy Yodice
Board Member

WAI Staff



Lynda Coffman
CEO



Christy Bares
Director, Conferences
and Events



Cassandra Bosco
Strategic Partnerships



Summer Cole
Manager, Chapter
Relations



Christine Gainsley
Specialist, Member
Services and Events



Lovella Herrero
Operations
Administrator



Suprina Kaur
Coordinator,
Communications



Molly Martin
Director, Member
Engagement



Jennifer Moore
Art Director



Kelly Murphy
Director,
Communications



Olivia Lisbon Stancil
Coordinator,
Member Relations



Patricia Steineke
Specialist, Conferences
and Events



Annie Stikeleather
Manager, Education
Programs



Donna Wallace
Coordinator, Exhibits
and Scholarship

WAI2026 SPONSORS

(as of January 16, 2026)

DIAMOND

WAI STRATEGIC PARTNERS

amazon

100 American.
WAI2026 Official Airline

UNITED

GOLD

Alaska AIRLINES HAWAIIAN AIRLINES HORIZON AIR

CIRRUS

DELTA EAA

envoy

PSA AIRLINES

Republic Airways Southwest Airlines[®] Destination 225[®] Pilot pathways for all

SILVER

ATS RANGER AIR Dallas Love Field Dallas Executive Airport

Global Medical Response

GoJet AIRLINES Wings Credit Union

BRONZE

- ALPA
- Avery Lane
- CAE
- FedEx
- Grapevine
- Havard Professional & Executive Development
- JetBlue
- Meds-Global
- NATCA
- NBAA
- PASS
- SUN 'n FUN
- UND Aerospace



WAI2026