

CONFERENCE CONNECT

37th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference



WAI2026

EXPERIENCE CONFERENCE

Download the #WAI2026 App

Navigate your conference experience by using the official conference app. Scan the QR code and enter your email and badge ID to create your profile. Use the app to reference the master schedule, submit your session survey responses, or schedule a Braindate. You can also



view conference and exhibit hall maps and the digital issue of this *Conference Connect*.

Join the Conversation

Share the excitement of attending the 37th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference and use these hashtags on your social media.

#WAI2026 #IamWAI #WeAreWAI
#WomeninAviation
#WomeninAviationInternational



Watch WAI On Air

Sponsored by GoJet Airlines and Global Medical Response

Meet inspiring WAI members from around the world pursuing their personal aviation dreams and interests by viewing video interviews on the exclusive WAI On Air channel. Like, share, and follow @WAIOnAir.



Ask SKYE Chatbot your questions

Meet WAI's exclusive Skye Chatbot available on the WAI website (WAI.org) and the official WAI2026 conference app. She can answer questions about this week's events, registration, directions, weather, Wi-Fi, and more!



WAI Celebrates a Powerful Year of Growth



WAI CEO
Lynda Coffman

As I look ahead to this week's WAI2026 gathering, I can't help but feel energized. We're expecting almost 5,000 attendees to join us for three incredible days filled with the networking, mentoring, and inspiring speakers that make this conference so special. I hope you'll join me on Thursday morning at 9 a.m. for our Annual Membership Meeting, where I'll share highlights from a remarkable year of progress, global expansion, and new opportunities for women across every corner of aviation.

One of the moments I'm most proud of this year is celebrating our milestone of surpassing and sustaining 20,000 members worldwide. That number represents far more than membership growth—it reflects the strength of our mission and the power of this community. Because of our continued financial stability, we've been able to broaden our programs and invest in initiatives that directly support our members. And this week, thanks to the generosity of our funders, we will award more than \$610,000 in scholarships, opening doors for women around the world.

Our global footprint continues to grow in meaningful ways. From vibrant international chapters to our dedicated ambassador network, our reach is expanding every day. The WAI Together app has become a true hub for connection, mentorship, and resources—helping members stay engaged and supported no matter where they are. Programs like the Harvard Emerging Leaders partnership and our expanding On Air podcast offerings continue to strengthen our impact and deepen our sense of community.

Looking ahead, I'm excited about the new initiatives we're launching in 2026. Among these is a new global membership program that will be announced during our Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday morning, one that will expand pathways into aviation for women worldwide. We will also introduce new WAI Together offerings that include moderated discussions and will continue our launch of biweekly On Air podcasts. Both of these programs will enrich professional development and bring our members even closer together.

This year, we're also celebrating our 2026 award winners for their outstanding mentorship, volunteerism, and service (see Page 4). Their dedication reminds me every day that WAI's success is built on generosity, leadership, and the spirit of community.

And as we gather this year, we honor a significant milestone: the 50th anniversary of women flying in the U.S. Air Force and Coast Guard. It's a moment to reflect with pride and gratitude for the pioneers who opened doors for generations to come.

As we move into 2026, one message is clear to me: our community is vibrant, growing, and ready to reach even greater heights together. The year ahead promises expanded programs, deeper connections, and a renewed commitment to empowering women across the global aviation industry.

New Members Breakfast

Registered attendees for Thursday morning's New Members Breakfast will be welcomed by sponsors Alaska Airlines, Hawaiian Airlines, Horizon Air.



Pioneer Hall of Fame

Congrats to the 2026 Pioneer Hall of Fame inductees who will be celebrated on Friday evening starting at 6:30 p.m.



Olga Custodio



Joan Sullivan Garrett



Nadine Berniece Ramsey

This issue of *Conference Connect* is sponsored by



5 Tips To Maximize Your In-Person Connections!



Marla Faison

If you missed the recent WAI Together Virtual Meetup on conference prep and how to connect in person, keep reading! As a seasoned WAI conference attendee and aviation science program coordinator for Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina, I offer these tips to help you make the most of your WAI2026 experience this week.

Remember—preparation eases nerves and fuels confidence in large, unfamiliar environments.

1. Build Confidence & Set Goals

- Set specific goals for your time at conference (networking, gaining knowledge, career advancement).
- Review the conference agenda in detail and select sessions that align with—and expand beyond—your current interests.
- Attend at least one session outside your comfort zone for broader learning.

3. Research and Prepare for Networking

- Research speakers, attendees, and companies to identify strategic connections.
- Use LinkedIn for pre-conference introductions, update your profile, and explore helpful online resources such as Spitfire Elite's Nic Fiakla's podcast Ready 4 Pushback.
- Download and use the WAI2026 conference app and social media tools to reach out to people and stay updated on conference developments.
- Review the Exhibitor List and prepare meaningful, informed questions for booth visits.

3. Craft and Practice Elevator Pitches

- Focus on who you are, what you do or aspire to do, your passions, and what you're looking for.
- Avoid reciting your résumé—add personal flavor, humor, or unique anecdotes to be memorable.

4. Effective Networking Techniques & Etiquette

- Initiate conversations confidently with open body language and simple starters like, "What brought you to the conference?"
- Join group conversations using eye contact and polite timing.
- Share digital or print contact details as you professionally exit a conversation.

5. Follow Up & Maximize Connections

- Take notes after conversations to remember key details and personalize your follow-up messages.
- Send thoughtful follow-up emails referencing specific conversations, ideally within 36-72 hours.
- Use multiple touchpoints—introduction, conversation, follow-up—to make yourself memorable.
- Volunteer at WAI events throughout the year to position yourself as a contributor, not just an attendee.
- Use the organization's app features to find and connect with people by occupation or interest.
- Don't let shyness prevent you from reaching out—many opportunities arise simply by starting a conversation.
- You'll find many opportunities and connections during conference—take full advantage of this week's gathering and let your personality shine!

— Marla Faison, WAI 136882

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Girls in Aviation Day Dallas
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 30 stations. In addition, participants will participate in an Exhibit Hall scavenger hunt and hear from a variety of aviation female role models during a career panel. During lunch, participants will meet **Shaesta Waiz**, a pilot, entrepreneur, and founder of Dreams Soar Inc.

Shaesta Waiz

Thank you to our generous GIAD Dallas sponsors!

Amazon, American Airlines, American Airlines Cadet Academy, Embraer Foundation, Future of Aviation Initiative, Gaylord Texan Resort & Conference Center (parking), OneWorld, United

Conference Connection is a publication of Women in Aviation International, published during the annual conference.

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Kudos to the WAI 2026 Award Winners!

New this year, WAI will honor **Samantha Bowyer**, WAI 42632 as the Mentor of the Year, and **Liz Booker**, Lifetime 17175, with the Spirit of Service Award. These two dedicated members will be recognized during the Annual Membership Meeting during Thursday's Opening General Session starting at 9 a.m.

Ximena Mendez, WAI 151639, of the WAI Chicago Leading Edge Chapter is this year's recipient of The Dorothy Hilbert Chapter Volunteer of the Award.

Samantha Bowyer



Liz Booker

Ximena Mendez



Frontier's de Havilland Twin Otter



Capt. Emily Howell Warner

Happy 50th Anniversary to Trailblazer Capt. Emily Howell Warner

In June 1976, Emily Howell Warner again made United States aviation history by becoming the first female to upgrade to captain for Frontier Airlines. In 1973, Emily was the first woman hired to fly for Frontier. Emily not only opened the airline flightdeck for other women, but she also invited them to join her. According to retired airline Capt. Billy Walker, who often flew with Emily at Frontier, "Emily's first flight in the left seat was on the Otter, with Steve Rosevear as her first officer. Between 1973 and Frontier's demise in 1986, Emily would fly as first officer and captain on the DHC-6, Convair 580, and Boeing 737."

Frontier's fleet included the de Havilland Twin Otter turboprops because of their Short Landing & Takeoff capabilities. Denver-based Frontier served smaller airports in Colorado, Montana, Utah, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and Kansas. As Emily's seniority increased, she moved eventually to the Boeing 737 routes.

Capt. Emily Warner continued a distinguished aviation career with Continental Airlines, UPS, and with the FAA as a flight examiner/aircrew program manager for United's Boeing 737 fleet. During her years in the sky, she logged over 21,000 hours, earning the FAA Wright Brothers Award. She was inducted into the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame,

named a Legend of Aviation, is in the National Women's, National Aviation, and Irish American Halls of Fame. In Colorado, her home state, she is included in the Women's and the Aviation Halls of Fame. In 2015, her mountain home airport, Granby-Grand County airport (KGNB), was renamed Emily Warner Field. Emily was always proud of her 99-roots. The 2011 Ninety-Nines Award of Achievement for Contributions to Aviation held special meaning for her.

Author, Ann Cooper Lewis, described the late Emily Warner as a "Modern First Lady of Commercial Aviation." In *Weaving the Winds* she wrote, "Emily wove the winds of chance, of change, and of opportunity into her career." In 2026, approximately 9,000 women are airline pilots across the United States. Emily Warner and her airline sky sisters of the International Society of Women Airline Pilots (ISA+21) opened the flightdeck for today's professionals. Their motto then and now, almost 50 years later still rings true. "We are the global voice to inspire, support, and advocate for female airline pilots."

Visit Frontier Airlines (**Booth 628**) and ISA+21 (**Booth 805**) in the Exhibit Hall.

— Penny Rafferty Hamilton, WAI 44535



Connect Virtually At Conference and Beyond!

Join WAI's member-only online community, WAI Together! This exclusive platform is available for member-to-member individual and group conversations, and is a safe-place to share resources and support—year-round.

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Meet the Keynote Speakers



Nicole Malachowski
Former U.S. Air Force Officer, Fighter Pilot, Thunderbird Pilot, and Presidential Appointee
Opening General Session and Membership Meeting
Thursday | 9–10 a.m.



Alex Marren
Air New Zealand Chief Operating Officer, United and Hertz C-Suite Leader
Morning General Session
Friday | 9–10 a.m.



The Honorable Jennifer Homendy
15th Chair of the National Transportation Safety Board
Morning General Session
Friday | 9–10 a.m.



Stephanie Chung
Private Aviation Executive, Author, Speaker, and Leadership Trainer
Closing General Session
Saturday | 10:30–11:45 a.m.



Sarah Kalmeta
International Leadership Strategist and Trainer
WAI2026 Emcee

Learn How to Network Like a Pro

Are you a student ready to master the art of networking? Join Stacey Dickson, American Airlines human resources generalist, on **Thursday, March 19** from **11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.** in **Grapevine A** for an insightful session on building and leveraging your professional network. Learn how to be intentional with your connections and make your netWORK. Attend and engage for a chance to win exciting prizes.



Stacey Dickson

They Didn't Ask to Be First. They Just Flew.



Jessica Rutenber



Cathyrine Armandie

In a moment when women's and minority histories are being quietly scrubbed from the record, a new campaign is doing the opposite: amplifying, archiving, and making sure the world never forgets they flew.

There's a moment in the opening clip of a bold new campaign filming this week at WAI2026 that stops you cold. The screen goes dark and a single voice cuts through:

"When you're pulling 8Gs in enemy territory... no one cares who's flying. Only that you fly well."

Behind every voice in this campaign is a woman who flew in places most people will never see, done things most people will never understand and cleared obstacles both deliberately and inadvertently that were placed in her path. These women didn't seek history. They sought the sky. History simply followed.

The project, a series of short-form videos and social media content filmed this week at the conference, captures intimate, unfiltered interviews with some of military aviation's most historic figures. Produced by Jessica Rutenber, Level Up Aviation president, and Cathyrine Armandie, GauxMax LLC CEO, the campaign is designed to reach far beyond the walls of WAI2026. These aren't stories meant to sit on a shelf. They're built for the formats today's audiences live in—punchy, shareable, and impossible to scroll past.

The lineup of featured voices is extraordinary. This conference's opening keynote speaker, **Nicole "FIFI" Malachowski**, a combat-proven F-15E pilot and the first

woman selected to fly with the USAF Thunderbirds, sets the tone. **Sharon "Betty" Preszler**, the first female F-16 pilot, stood at the Pentagon podium the very day women were legally permitted to fly combat aircraft, before going on to a career as an airline pilot. **Olga Custodio**, the first Hispanic female Air Force pilot and first Hispanic female captain at American Airlines, spent years championing aviation education. **Theresa Claiborne**, the first African American woman to become a pilot in the U.S. military, carried the weight of both race and gender at a time when the world was watching. And **Merryl Tengesdal**, who piloted the U-2 Dragon Lady at the edge of the stratosphere, the first and only Black woman ever to do so.

Each interview is a chapter. Each clip, a call to action. What makes this campaign so vital is not only the history it preserves, but the future it points toward. Somewhere right now, a young girl is looking up at the sky and wondering if there's a place for her in it. These women are the answer. Their stories become the runway for every aspiring aviator who comes after them. Legacy isn't just what you leave behind—it's what you make possible.

Want to go deeper? Join producer Jessica Rutenber on Thursday at 1:30 p.m. for "Beyond the Glass Ceiling," then return at 3 p.m. where she and Cathyrine join a panel on "Funding Your Flight Training Through Military, Scholarships, and Side Gigs." Visit Level Up Aviation in the Exhibit Hall (**Booth 822**).

— Cathyrine Armandie

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WomenVenture®

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T-SHIRT REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 2.

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EXHIBIT HALL

Exhibitors

(as of March 8, 2026)

- 425 Abingdon Co.
- 729 Advanced Air
- 430 Aeris Aviation Apparel
- 931 AeroStar Training Services
- 509 Aeroview Design Co.
- 315 AerSale, Inc
- 532 Air Commando Outreach Squadron
- 429 Air Force Reserve
- 701 Air Line Pilots Association International
- 721 Air Methods
- 302 Air Race Classic
- 100 Air Transport Services Group, Inc. (ATSG)
- 614 Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)
- 904 Aireon LLC
- 809 Airline Dispatchers Federation
- 707 Airline Professionals Association-ABX Air Pilots
- 914 Airlines on Autopilot
- 229 Airshare
- 927 Alaska Airlines
- 101 Amazon
- 107 American Airlines
- 209 American Airlines Cadet Academy
- 106 American Airlines Credit Union
- 308 Association for Women in Aviation Maintenance (AWAM)
- 820 Atlantic Aviation Corporation
- 626 Atlas Air
- 621 ATP Flight School
- 708 Auburn University School of Aviation
- 201 Avery Lane, LLC
- 821 Aviation Technical Services
- 403 AviationJewelry.Com
- 205 BH MED SOLUTIONS
- 830 Bose Corporation
- 221 CAE Inc.
- 528 California Aeronautical University
- 906 Cape Air
- 827 Capitol Technology University
- 521 Cirrus Aircraft
- 815 Clear Skies Ahead
- 124 Coast Flight Training
- 506 CommuteAir
- 909 Contour Aviation
- 925 Dallas College
- 332 Dallas Love Field
- 322 David Clark Company
- 801 Delta Air Lines
- 531 Elevated Access
- 910 Embraer
- 421 Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- 313 Empire Airlines
- 901 Endeavor Air
- 112 Envoy Air
- 702 Epic Flight Academy
- 508 Executive Jet Management
- 412 Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA)
- 312 FedEx
- 314 FedEx Employees Credit Association
- 121 Flexjet
- 126 Flight Uniform
- 513 FlightSafety International
- 609 Fly Girls Aviation

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.

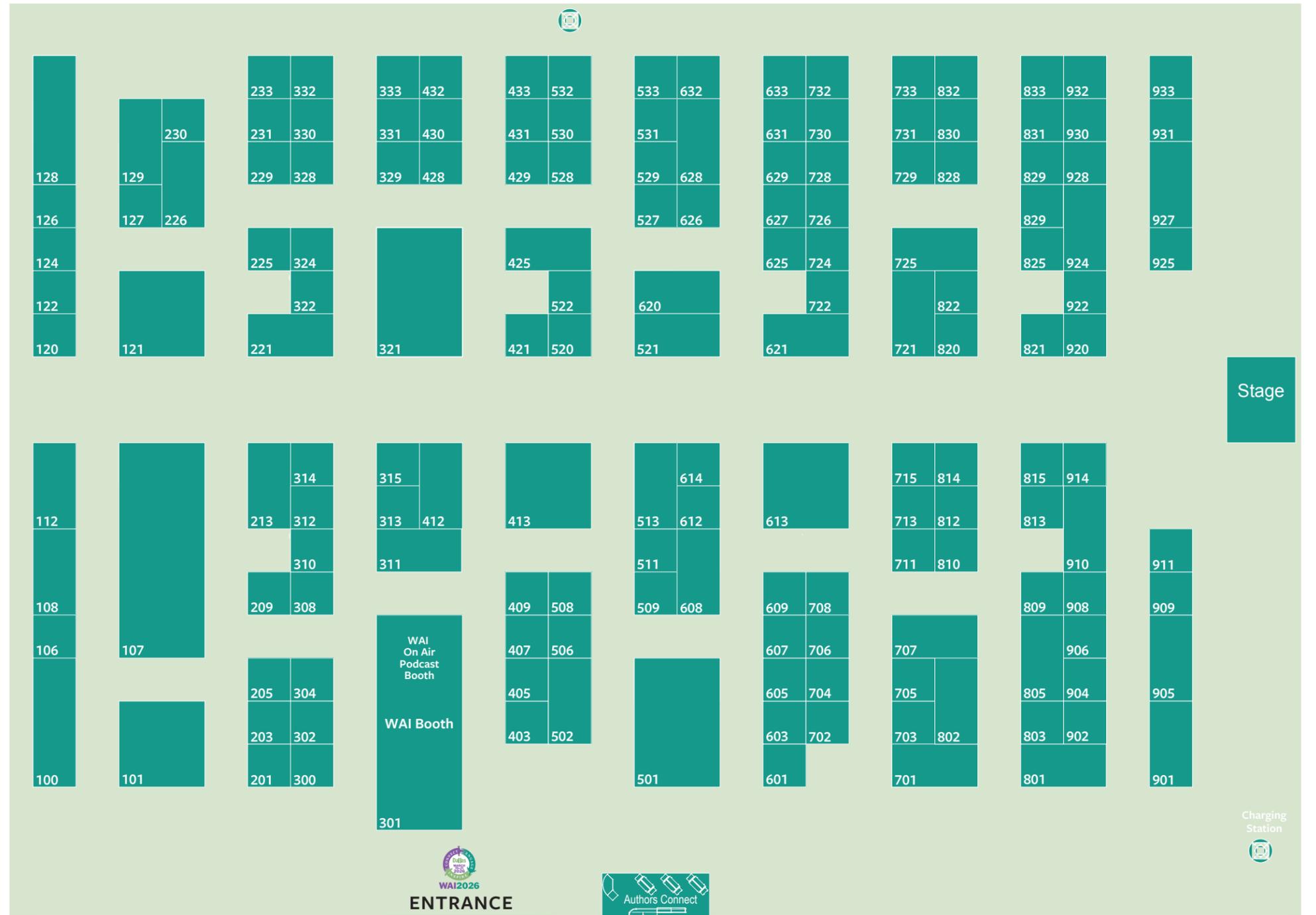
Saturday, March 21

Exhibit Hall Open | 8–10:30 a.m.

Coffee & Conversation | 8–9:30 a.m.

(Girls in Aviation Day attendees visit the hall 8–9:30 a.m.)

- 731 Freedom Aviation Network
- 628 Frontier Airlines
- 631 Global Aviation Data
- 127 Global Crossing Airlines Inc
- 924 Global Medical Response
- 502 GoJet Airlines
- 613 Gulfstream
- 324 Hartzell Propeller LLC
- 330 Harvard Division of Continuing Education
- 328 IFOD Institute of Flight Operations and Dispatch
- 813 Indiana Wesleyan University Aviation
- 805 ISA+21
- 120 JAZ Medical
- 832 Jeppesen ForeFlight
- 533 Jet Linx Aviation
- 625 JetBlue
- 629 JSfirm.com
- 608 JSX
- 705 Kalitta Air
- 730 Latino Pilots Association (LPA)
- 428 Leading Edge Financial Planning
- 822 Level Up Aviation Nonprofit
- 333 Liberty University School of Aeronautics
- 711 Life Flight Network
- 902 Life Link III
- 226 LogTen by Pilotbase
- 706 M&H Uniforms
- 511 Meds-Global
- 409 Metro Aviation, Inc.
- 203 Middle Tennessee State University
- 703 National Air Traffic Controllers Association
- 725 National Airlines
- 300 Neptune Aviation Services
- 413 NetJets
- 522 NGPA
- 732 NHCFAE
- 304 Ninety-Nines
- 831 NOAA Aircraft Operations Center
- 726 Northwest Aviation Medicine
- 627 Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals (OBAP)
- 331 Phoenix Air Group, Inc.
- 812 Phoenix East Aviation/Superior Flight School/MzeroA Online Ground School/A&P Maintenance Institute/Wayman College of Aeronautics
- 108 Piedmont Airlines
- 713 PlaneSense, Inc.
- 530 PreFlight Aviation Camp
- 908 Pro Aviation Safety Specialist
- 612 Procter & Gamble
- 231 Professional Asian Pilots Association



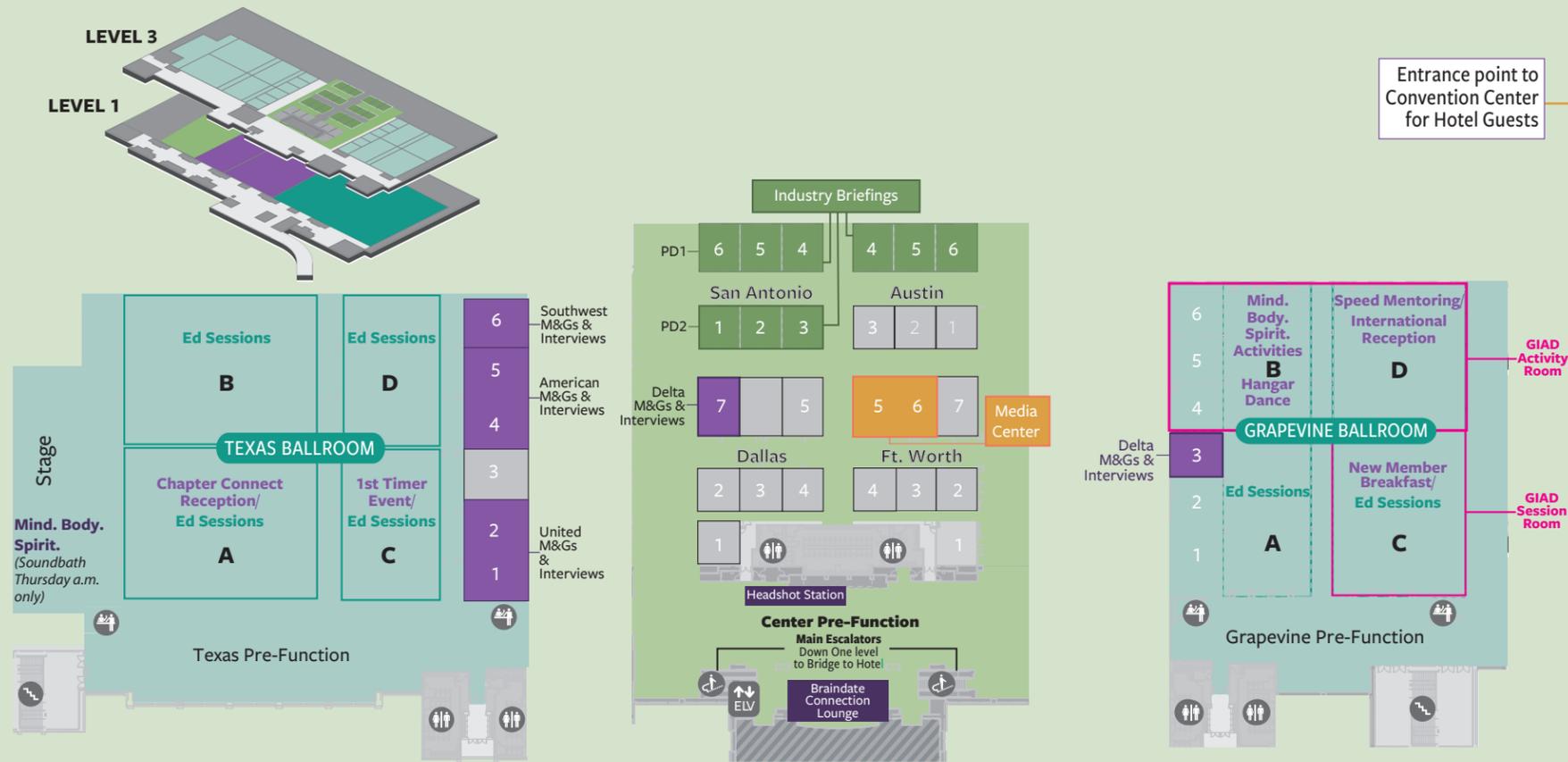
Visit the WAI Membership Booth 301 and get connected with your community and learn about all the WAI programs and resources.

- 930 ProNOVA BG LLC
- 213 PSA Airlines
- 814 Real Clean Aircraft Detailing NE Dallas
- 527 Rendezvous App
- 905 Republic Airways
- 733 Sisters of the Skies
- 633 Skyborne Airline Academy
- 129 SkyWest Airlines
- 825 Sling Pilot Academy
- 632 Southern Utah University
- 321 Southwest Airlines
- 432 Southwest Airlines Pilots Association
- 620 Spartan College of Aeronautics & Technology
- 128 Spitfire Elite Consulting

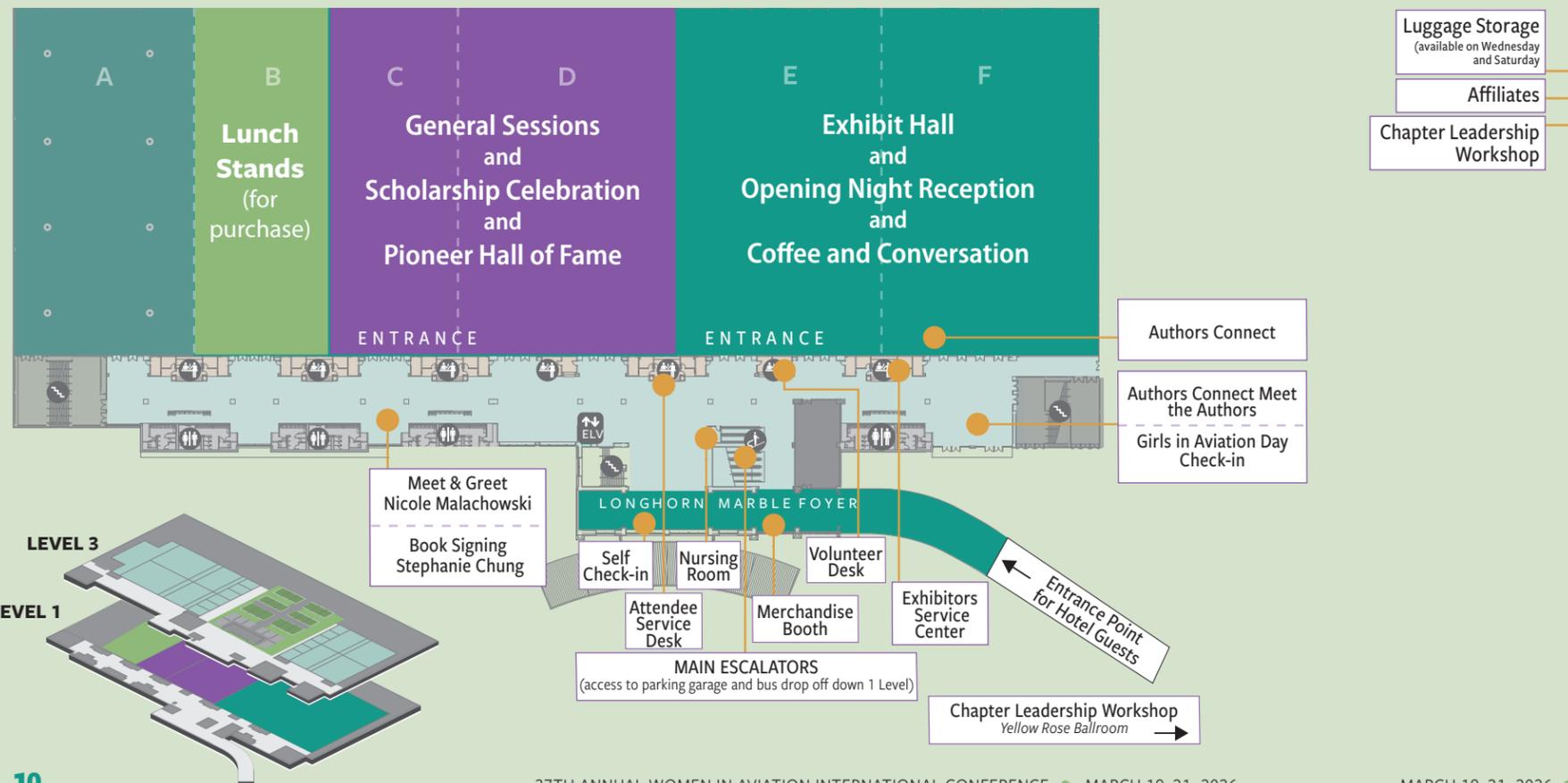
- 329 Sun Country Airlines
- 722 Surf Air Mobility
- 715 Techinnovation
- 122 Telex Aviation
- 311 TeroMed
- 802 TES
- 803 Texas Woman's University
- 230 Textron Aviation
- 233 Thomas Edison State University
- 704 Travelpro
- 728 True North Pilot Consulting
- 928 Unifi Service
- 501 United Airlines
- 607 United Airlines Aviate Academy
- 605 United Network Operations Center

- 603 United TechOps
- 405 University of North Dakota
- 433 UPS Airlines
- 431 US Aviation Academy
- 828 Visionary Training Resources
- 922 Vista America
- 829 West Star Aviation
- 529 Western Michigan University College of Aviation
- 724 Whirly-Girls International
- 520 Wings Credit Union
- 310 Wings For Val Foundation
- 301 Women in Aviation International
- 225 Women in Corporate Aviation
- 407 Women Military Aviators

CONVENTION CENTER LEVEL 3



CONVENTION CENTER LEVEL 1 — LONGHORN EXHIBITION HALL



RESORT MAP



Time to explore the local Grapevine area?

Visit the Grapevine Concierge/Destination Information Desk near Self Check-In for special offers to explore the city on a budget.

Wednesday, March 18 from 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 19 from 7:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Use the Show Your Badge–WAI2026 program for special discounts at local shops and restaurants for WAI attendees. grapevinetexasusa.com/show-your-badge/

Refer to the WAI2026 conference app for more details or the FAQ section at WAI.org/2026-conference.

Hungry? Thirsty?

While you are attending conference this week, in addition to the numerous restaurants on site, the hotel will also offer a Coffee Stand on the Ballroom Level, across from Braindate Connection Lounge offering basic coffee and tea for purchase during the following hours:

Thursday | 7–9 a.m.

Friday | 7–9 a.m.

Saturday | 7–8 a.m.

A lunch stand will be available in **Grapevine B** on Thursday and Friday from **11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.** offering grab-and-go-style lunch options exclusively for WAI attendees!

Reminder: The Gaylord Texan is a cash-free resort.



37th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



WAI2026

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

WAI2026

7-8 a.m.	8-9 a.m.	9-10 a.m.	10-11 a.m.	11-noon	noon-1 p.m.	1-2 p.m.	2-3 p.m.	3-4 p.m.	4-5 p.m.	5-6 p.m.	6-7 p.m.	7-8 p.m.	8-9 p.m.	9-10 p.m.	10-11 p.m.
Registration Open 7 a.m.-4 p.m.															
WAI Store Open 7 a.m.-6 p.m.															
Authors Connect Open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. - Exhibit Hall															
Self-Defense 7-7:45 a.m. Grapevine 8					Sound Bath and Mindfulness 12-12:45 p.m. Grapevine B										
Authors Connect Meet the Authors 7:15-8:45 a.m. Longhorn F Prefunction	Morning General Session 9-10 a.m. Longhorn D					General Session: Scholarship Celebration 1-2 p.m. Longhorn D									
Braindate Connection Lounge Open 7:30 a.m.-8:45 a.m. Center Pre-Function					Braindate Connection Lounge Open 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Center Pre-Function				Braindate Connection Lounge Open 2:30-5:30 p.m. Center Pre-Function						
Exhibit Hall Open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Longhorn EF															
				How To Start A WAI Chapter 10:30 a.m.-noon Grapevine A				Student & Collegiate Chapter Leadership Workshop 2:30-4 p.m. Grapevine C							



Pioneer Hall of Fame Ceremony & Celebration Dinner
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Registration Required
Longhorn D

WAI After Party & Dancing
8:30-10:30 p.m.
Longhorn D

All WAI2026
attendees are invited to keep the celebration going with dancing, cash bars, and music. Conference badges are required for entry.

EDUCATION SESSIONS															
Fighter Pilot Forum 10:30-11:30 a.m. Texas A - Panel Room				WCA's Corporate Aviation Career Panel 2:30-3:30 p.m. Texas A - Panel Room				Airline Pilot Panel 4-5 p.m. Texas A - Panel Room							
Allyship in Action: Moving from Awareness to Impact 10:30-11:30 a.m. Texas B				Cleared for Takeoff: Navigating FAA Medicals with Confidence 2:30-3:30 p.m. Texas B				Navigating New Heights: Women, Leadership and AI 4-5 p.m. Texas B							
Emerging Technologies: Net Carbon Zero Emission 10:30-11:30 a.m. Texas C				Women on the Frontlines: Shaping the Future of Electric Aviation 2:30-3:30 p.m. Texas C				"I Can Set the Very Skies Ablaze": Wartime Military Air Evacuation 4-5 p.m. Texas C							
High-Altitude Motherhood: Breaking Barriers in Professional Pilot Training as a Single Mom of Four 10:30-11:30 a.m. Texas D - Panel Room				Civil Air Patrol: Multi-Generational Leadership in Action 2:30-3:30 p.m. Texas D - Panel Room				Sustainability: What Does a Future Sustainable Aviation Industry Look Like and How Do We Get There? 4-5 p.m. Texas D - Panel Room							
Empowering Skies - Women Leading Aviation Innovation in the Caribbean 10:30-11:30 a.m. Grapevine C Panel Room				Empowering Your Inner Gatekeeper: Overcoming External Opinions to Achieve Personal Success 2:30-3:30 p.m. Grapevine A				Rethinking Risks: Embedding Ethics and Human Factors to Elevate Safety Culture 4-5 p.m. Grapevine A							

Aviation Networking Night

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
Starting at 5:30 p.m.

On Aviation Networking Night there will be a wide variety of events hosted by WAI's sponsors, exhibitors, chapters, universities, and other aviation communities. It's an opportunity to gather, network and unite with your "aviation family." Please note: you must be a registered attendee of the conference to attend the events below. Badges required.

Events Open to All Attendees

- Alaska Airlines/Hawaiian Airlines/Horizon Air: Boot Scootin' Bingo | Appaloosa 1 (Lonestar Tower) | 6:30-8 p.m.
- American Airlines Reception | Grapevine Pre-function | 6:30-9 p.m.
- GoJet Karaoke Mixer | Grapevine B | 7-11 p.m.
- ISA +21 Social | Texas 3 | 6-10 p.m.
- Aircraft Dispatchers & Ops Personnel Meet & Mingle | Appaloosa 2 (Lonestar Tower) | 6-7 p.m.
- Networking Event: United Through the Years | Texas Pre-function | 6:30-9 p.m.
- WAI North Texas Chapter Networking Party | Austin 1-2 | 6:30-10 p.m.

Events by Invitation Only

- Air Race Classic: Meet the Racers | Fort Worth 7 | 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- ALPA Social for Air Line Pilots | Dallas 5-6 | 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Behind the Smile: Amazon Aviation Career Connections | Grapevine 1 | 6-7:30 p.m.
- ATP Alumni Association Reception | Grapevine 5-6 | 6-9 p.m.
- Middle Tennessee State University Alumni Networking Night | Austin 3 | 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Republic Airways RJet Social | Grapevine 2 | 6-8 p.m.
- Cowgirls & Cocktails with Southwest Airlines | Texas 6 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

 Open to All Registered Conference Attendees
 Additional fee, registration or invitation required

Education Session Tracks

- Career Development
- Emerging Technologies
- Health & Wellness
- Leadership Skills
- Maintenance and Tech Ops
- Military

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

Thank You!



- Attendee Wi-Fi**
PSA Airlines
- Authors Connect: Meet the Authors**
Sponsored by United
- Charging Stations**
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WEDNESDAY MARCH 18

Abingdon Co. Cocktail Party | Riverwalk Cantina | 6-9 p.m.

All participants must be registered for WAI2026 to attend.



37th Annual Women in Aviation International Conference

WAI2026 QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

7-8 a.m.	8-9 a.m.	9-10 a.m.	10-11 a.m.	11-noon	noon-1 p.m.	1-2 p.m.	2-3 p.m.
Girls in Aviation Day Dallas (Registration Required) 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Grapevine C							
Registration Open 7-10:30 a.m.							
Zumba 7-7:45 a.m. Grapevine 1-3							
Braindate Connection Lounge Open 7:30-10:30 a.m. Center Pre-Function							
Coffee & Conversation in the Exhibit Hall 8-9:30 a.m.							
Exhibit Hall Open 8-10:30 a.m.							
Authors Connect Open 8-10:30 a.m. Exhibit Hall				Closing General Session 10:30-11:45 a.m. Longhorn D			
WAI Store Open 8 a.m.-noon							

Thank You Volunteers!

A heartfelt thank you to the nearly 400 volunteers who worked alongside the WAI staff this week to make the conference a truly memorable experience for every attendee. See you in Savannah, Georgia, for WAI2027 February 25-27.

EDUCATION SESSIONS

Launch Your Aviation Career: Explore Opportunities & Connect with Women Trailblazers
9-10 a.m.
Texas A - Panel Room

Business Ownership as a Working Mechanic
9-10 a.m.
Texas B

From Cockpit to Code: How AI and Cybersecurity Are Shaping the Future of Aviation
9-10 a.m.
Texas C

Public Benefit Flying—Do What You Can, In An Airplane If You Can
9-10 a.m.
Texas D - Panel Room

The Next Revelation: Hybridization and Electrification in Commercial Aviation
9-10 a.m.
Grapevine A

- Open to All Registered Conference Attendees
- Additional fee, registration or invitation required

Education Session Tracks

- Career Development
- Emerging Technologies
- Health & Wellness
- Leadership Skills
- Maintenance and Tech Ops
- Military

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

Apply for a Women in Aviation International Communications Internship

Ready to launch your career in aviation? Whether you're a college or university student—or an emerging young professional—this is your chance to elevate your skills and make an impact with Women in Aviation International (WAI).

The WAI Communications Department is offering several dynamic, virtual internship opportunities supporting the organization's core work in communications, scholarships, outreach, and educational programming. If you're passionate about aviation, creative storytelling, strategic communication, or nonprofit work, this is the perfect runway to build real-world experience.

Applications are due Monday, April 6, by 11:59 p.m. ET.

Interns will collaborate with a dedicated team that drives the messaging and mission of WAI forward—helping inspire the next generation of aviation professionals around the world. This is your opportunity to bring enthusiasm, learn new skills, contribute your ideas, and be part of a supportive, mission-driven community.

- Build your portfolio.
- Learn from industry professionals.
- Connect with the global WAI network.
- Have fun while developing meaningful experience in aviation.

Questions?

Email comms@wai.org or stop by the Media Center this week for details.

Take Your Connections to New Heights at the Braindate Connection Lounge



Sponsored by Gulfstream

Braindate is your tool to find the right people at WAI2026 and discuss what matters most to you. Put yourself out there—we promise you'll make meaningful new connections, exchange ideas, and dive into topics you're passionate about.

Here's how it works: Braindates are one-on-one or small group conversations on topics created by WAI2026 attendees just like you.

- Browse the Topic Market or create your own.
- Book your Braindates and meet in the Braindate Connection Lounge.

Don't miss this chance to go beyond business cards and build real, lasting relationships that energize and inspire your career journey.

What do YOU want to talk about this year? Here are some of last year's most popular Braindate discussion topics:

- Mental Health in Aviation: Strategies for Success
- Learning from Failure: What's One Lesson You've Learned From Taking a Big Risk?
- Navigating Fitness, Nutrition & the Pilot Lifestyle for Better Performance
- Tips & Tricks: Negotiating Strategies



Sign-Up here:
WAI2026.Braindate.com

Braindate Connection Lounge Hours

Center Pre-Function

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.

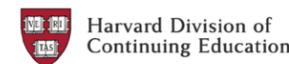
SATURDAY, MARCH 21 | 7:30-10:30 a.m.

WAI Members to Benefit from Education Discount Programs

WAI Corporate members focused on aviation education, aerospace training, and flight instruction are encouraged to join the growing list of organizations offering exclusive discounts to WAI members through a new partnership program. These opportunities can be found in the Member Discounts section of the WAI website at WAI.org/member-discounts, where you can learn more and access full details. Interested in learning more about offering your company's discount to members? Email membership@wai.org. This initiative was led by Harvard's Division of Continuing Education (Booth 330).

In addition to providing the three-day Emerging Leaders on-campus cohorts for selected WAI members since 2023, Harvard is now offering a 10% discount on all DCE programs, including Harvard Extension School, Harvard Summer School, and Harvard Professional & Executive Development.

Also announced at WAI2026 are new education discounts from Capital Technology University in Laurel, Maryland (Booth 827), and St. Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania.



Represent WAI. Wear the Brand!



Show your WAI pride all week long! The onsite WAI Store is stocked with a fresh lineup of WAI branded gear, accessories, and the exclusive WAI2026 T-shirts you can only get at conference. Whether you're looking for apparel to wear during sessions, gifts for your chapter members, or a memento to commemorate your experience, the store has something for every aviation enthusiast.

Wearing WAI gear is more than merch—it's a way to represent your community, spark conversations, and make yourself recognizable to new connections. Don't miss your chance to pick up this year's limited edition items before they're gone!

WAI Store

Longhorn Marble Foyer

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18 | noon-6 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 | 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20 | 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21 | 8 a.m.-noon

Stop by early for the best selection—and show off your WAI spirit all conference long!

SMILE FOR THE CAMERA!

Ready for a fresh professional headshot? No appointment needed — just stop by and get your digital images delivered instantly. Check out the daily hours posted in the 3rd Level Center area.

A big thank you to our sponsor, Envoy!

Professional Headshots

Center Pre-Function

Look for the setup along the wall on the 3rd Level Center area.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18 | 12:30-5 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 | 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20 | 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21 | 7:30-11:30 a.m.



WAI2026

Thank You #WAI2026 Sponsors!

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WAI2026

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18
WAI Chapter Leadership Workshop
 1–5 p.m.
 Yellow Rose Ballroom

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18
WAI Chapter Connect Reception
 Sponsored by Cirrus Aircraft
 6:30–7:30 p.m.
 Texas A
 (by invitation only)

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
Plan and Host an Outstanding Girls in Aviation Day Event
 1–2:30 p.m.
 Texas D

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
How to Start a WAI Chapter
 10:30 a.m.–noon
 Grapevine A

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
Student and Collegiate Chapter Leadership Workshop
 2:30–4 p.m.
 Grapevine C

Vote for your favorite WAI chapter logo by Friday, March 20 at 5 p.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. The Authors Connect Booth will be located just inside the entrance of the Exhibit Hall!

Authors Connect Open:

Thursday, March 19 | 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Friday, March 20 | 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 21 | 8–10:30 a.m.

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)

Meet all of our authors in one place, play Authors Connect Bingo to win gift certificates to the Authors Connect Book Shop, and visit the Party Poet for personalized typewriter poetry!

2026 Author Signing Schedule

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Erika J. Barger, Esq.
Scholarship Hacks: Insider Tips for Winning College Money

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

Jolanda Witvliet
The Airline Transition Manual

12:30–2:00 p.m.
Anneke Bogardus
Aviators United: Building Together

Natasha Gonzalez
Transported Eggventures: The Great 50-State Eggs-pedition

Laura Savino
JET BOSS

2–3:30 p.m.

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

Darcy Guyant, CDR, USCG (Ret.)
Into The Storm: The Adventures of Dolph and Gwen

Tiffany Robinson
Zoe's Big Flight

3:30–5 p.m.

Katherine Sharp Landdeck, Ph.D.
The Women With Silver Wings: The Inspiring True Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II

Merryl Tengesdal, COL, USAF (Ret.)
Shatter the Sky: Tales of Dragon Lady 788

Teri Weber
Fly with Mytai

FRIDAY, MARCH 20
10–11:30 a.m.

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

Captain Lynn Rippelmeyer
Life Takes Flight

Graciela Tiscareño-Sato
Good Night Captain Mama/ Buenas Noches Capitán Mamá

11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
Captain Janet Patton
Riding the Lines: An American's Adventures on the London Underground

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

Judy Tarver
Expert Witness: Wrongful Death

1:30–3 p.m.

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

Flightpath of Fortitude
Caroline "Blaze" Jensen
Thundermouse

Patty Tomich
Latinas in Aviation

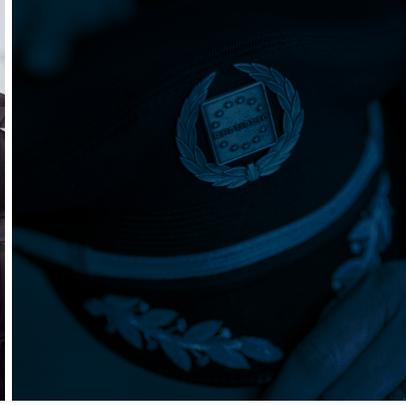
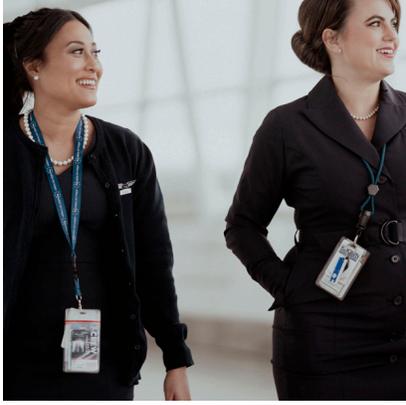
3–4:30 p.m.
Mary Shipko
The First: Women Pilots, and How They Changed The Airlines

Julie Tizard, COL, USAFR (Ret.)
Free Fall at Angel Creek
Marielle Veilleux
The Adventures of an Aviatrix

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
8–9:30 a.m.

Laura Fryar, LTC, USA (Ret.)
Be Something Epic: Aviator
Erin Miller
Final Flight Final Fight

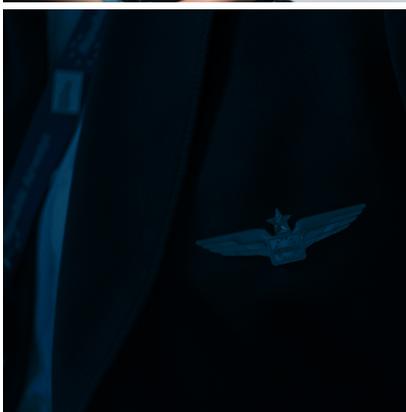
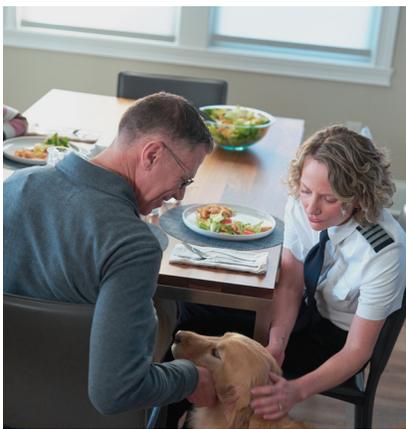
Samantha Arrington Sliney
All The Things Our Mommy Can Do



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