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Every March, we celebrate Women's History Month to remind ourselves of the accomplishments of women throughout the years to our culture and society. From science to politics, and everything in between, it's a chance to reflect on the trailblazing women who lead the way for change.

Women's History Month was initially just International Women's Day, a day that commemorated the Feb. 28 meeting of socialists and suffragists in 1909. In March 1980, after celebrations spread across the country, President Carter declared that March 8 was officially the start of National Women's History Week. By 1987, Congress declared the entire month of March, Women's History Month.

In the United States almost 50% of the workforce are women and yet the number of women air traffic controllers still is less than 17%. Despite this fact, our Union's leaders are proud to have more than 80 women serving in the over 250 NATCA national committee positions (35%).

To recognize International Women's Day and the start of Women's History Month in 2021, NATCA's National Executive Board (NEB) joined the Global Air Traffic Controllers Alliance, the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), and the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) in the #ChooseToChallenge awareness campaign against gender inequality. By joining with our international colleagues representing aviation safety professionals worldwide, NATCA is demonstrating its belief that diversity, inclusion, and equity strengthen our profession and our union!



In addition to NATCA's NEB making this pledge, other NATCA regional leaders and committees are also taking the pledge to challenge gender inequality and celebrate the strength that women bring to our union. Throughout Women's History Month, NATCA will continue to feature these regional leaders and committees making this commitment in our social media. You also can see these pledges [here](#). #NATCAStrong #ChooseToChallenge

NATCA Leaders Give Words of Wisdom in Honor of Women's History Month

In celebration of Women's History Month, many of NATCA's female leaders from locals around the country shared their responses to a series of questions. We will feature their statements in this and the next issue of the NATCA Insider, the Team Update, our Union's social media, and on our website. In this issue, we are featuring selected responses to the following question:

What advice would you give to women with an interest in aviation careers, who may be intimidated by a male-dominated field?

To view all the responses to this question, [please visit the NATCA website](#).

As a woman, it can be daunting to pursue a career in a male-dominated industry. Being a part of NATCA has helped me realize that we're all a family working towards a common goal. I've had the privilege of working with some incredible role models, both male and female, who have inspired me and helped me become the controller I am today. I would love to be able to do the same for the next generation of women in aviation. Put in the time to hone in on your skills (it will take time and hard work), and your abilities will speak for themselves. Seek out the positive and don't let the negative drag you down!



- Amanda Reimann, Vice President, Anchorage ATCT (ANC)

There are many aviation careers besides pilots and air traffic controllers. There are engineers, technicians, manufacturers, safety personnel, and so on. You aren't at a disadvantage in any of these fields just because you're a female. Find the path you're interested in, keep focus on your goals, and surround yourself with people who support you. - **Nichole Surunis, FacRep, Atlanta TRACON (A80)**



My advice to women interested in aviation careers would be to follow your dreams, chase your passions, and never let anyone discourage you. Set your goals and be prepared to put in the work to achieve them. While there may be more men in the aviation industry than women, don't let that intimidate you. Women are just as capable as their male counterparts. Hard work, determination, and dedication will help lead you to a successful career in the aviation industry. Let your knowledge, skills, and ability speak for themselves! - **Jaime Lentz, Area Rep, Kansas City Center (ZKC)**

I would tell them not to feel intimidated by being part of a male-dominated field. All they need is the passion for the job and to believe in themselves. In the aviation field, as a woman, you will always be surrounded by men but we need to show them that we can do the job as good as they can. - **Aleriber Aviles, FacRep, White Plains Westchester ATCT (HPN)**



My advice would be to power through your fears. Though aviation is male-dominated, it is very diverse



and inclusive. People from all backgrounds work in aviation. You will find people you connect with. Air traffic control is an even smaller niche. Through work and events, you will build relationships that you will carry through your career and beyond. One look at the Union Synergy page and you will see that NATCA stands for an inclusive environment. The only thing worse than failing is not trying. - **Dawn Suffern, FacRep, Fort Worth-Alliance ATCT (AFW)**

Celebrating Women in the Field of Aviation: Interview With First Female Blue Angels Pilot

In honor of Women's History Month, NATCA is honored to introduce the start of a four-part conversation between two incredibly inspiring women in the world of aviation.

NATCA's own Jamie Sanders, an air traffic controller at Denver/Centennial ATCT (APA), who is also an experienced pilot, recently sat down for a virtual interview of Major Katie Cook, the first female pilot in the storied history of the great Blue Angels team of the United States Navy.



Major Cook is a third-generation military aviator. Her paternal grandfather served during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Her father had a 26-year long career in the Navy and was an F-18 fighter pilot. Carrying on the family legacy, she joined the Marine Corps after graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 2008. She made the choice to go into the Marine Corps, after spending time training with Marines in Quantico, Va.



During her time in the Marine Corps, Cook was one of the few female pilots to fly combat missions during her deployment to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom. After that, she spent time on assignment in Uganda, and had already accrued over 400 combat flight hours. It was during her

time in Africa that she was approached by a Blue Angel pilot, who encouraged her to apply for the coveted flight demonstration team. Following an extensive interview process, Maj. Cook was officially the first female Blue Angel, and

became the pilot of the Lockheed C-130 Hercules named "Fat Albert."

Sanders grew up in an aviation family as well. Her father was an American Airlines pilot and her great aunt, Emily Howell Warner, was the first female commercial airline pilot. At 15 years old, Jamie began flying lessons out of Denver Centennial and got her private pilot license when she was 16. She had planned on flight instructing. However, the tragic events of 9/11 froze all hiring of flight instructors. She decided to take out a loan and partner with another pilot, flying all over the country to build flight time.

After a little over a year, Sanders came back to Colorado to finish her degree in Aviation Technology and began flight instructing. She got her first airline job flying for Great Lakes Aviation, out of Denver International Airport in 2003. In 2009, Jamie was hired to work with Allegiant Air. In 2011, Sanders was hired by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to start training at the Academy in Oklahoma City. At the time, her husband had been furloughed from United Airlines for seven years and she was pregnant with her first child. She was ready for a career change, and air traffic control was the perfect fit. Sanders worked at Pueblo ATCT (PUB), then Colorado Springs ATCT (COS), before transferring in 2019 to APA.



In this first episode of the four-part series, Jamie and Major Cook discuss their careers and their background.

[Click here](#) to listen.

Other ways to listen to The NATCA Podcast:

[Apple Podcasts](#) | [iHeart Radio](#) | [Google Podcasts](#)

Federal Facility Face Mask Mandate Reminder

On Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021, NATCA and the FAA signed an updated [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) that modifies the existing July 23, 2020 MOU regarding the use of face masks while in Agency buildings and in physical worksites. The updates were made to comply with President Biden's Executive Order (EO) 13991 dated Jan. 20, 2021, which mandated the wearing of face masks in all federal buildings, and the accompanying Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance regarding the implementation of EO 13991.

The following are highlights of the changes of the newly effectuated MOU on face masks:

- All bargaining unit employees (BUEs) must wear face masks while in federal buildings in all common areas, which includes elevators and hallways, and any shared workspace, which includes floorplan office space, cubicles,

Wear a mask.

Practice social distancing.

Protect yourself & others from COVID-19.



- conference rooms, and operational areas.
- Face masks should also be worn in outdoor areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Exceptions may be provided that are consistent with the CDC guidelines, including when an individual is alone in an office with floor to ceiling walls and a closed door or for a limited time when eating or drinking and maintaining distancing. (Please note, the FAA Administrator alone grants exceptions, not individual managers.)
- The type of face mask shall be at the election of the employee, but the face mask must cover the nose and mouth, and the face mask must be in accordance with current CDC and OSHA guidance
- Upon request, the Agency will make cloth face masks available to NATCA BUEs.

Members with questions about this guidance should contact their regional leadership.

- [Alaskan \(NAL\)](#)
- [Central \(NCE\)](#)
- [Eastern \(NEA\)](#)
- [Great Lakes \(NGL\)](#)
- [New England \(NNE\)](#)

- [Northwest Mountain \(NNM\)](#)
- [Southern \(NSO\)](#)
- [Southwest \(NSW\)](#)
- [Western Pacific \(NWP\)](#)
- [Region X \(NRX\)](#)

16th Annual Archie League Medal of Safety Award Winners' Spotlight

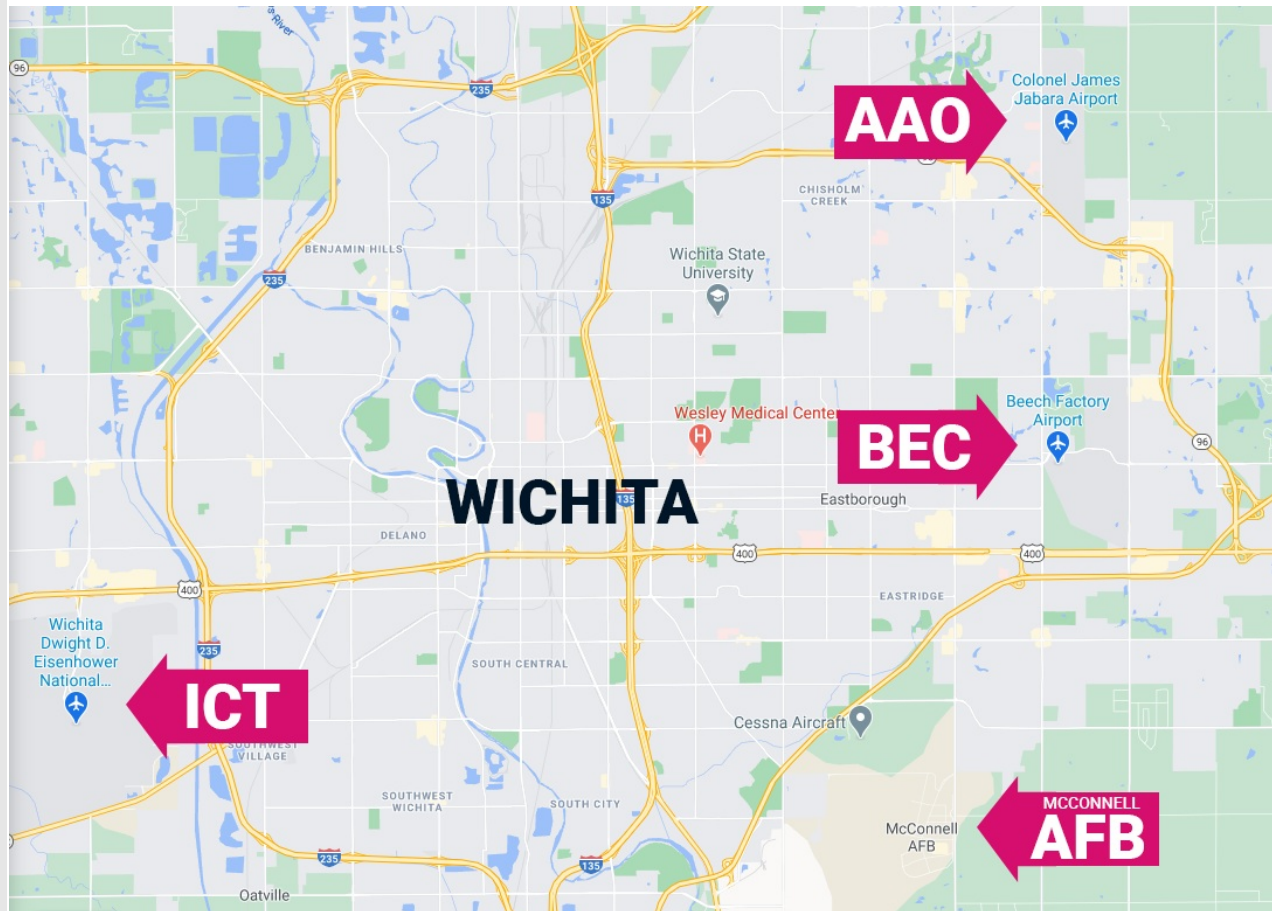
Central Region: Daniel Hittner, Hunter Rubin, and James Smart, Wichita ATCT (ICT)



In 1929, the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce dubbed Wichita, Kan., the “Air Capital of the World.” Nearly a century later, with a world-leading total of aircraft manufactured, it could be argued that Wichita’s busy-and-getting-busier airspace above six airports and McConnell Air Force Base makes it a strong candidate to keep that title. That presents clear situational awareness responsibilities and unique challenges for the air traffic controllers at Wichita ATCT (ICT).

ICT sits on the western edge of the city. On the eastern side, there are three airports lined up in a row, north to south, including two — Colonel James Jabara

Airport (AAO) and Beech Factory Airport (BEC) — that are only three miles from each other with similar runway layouts. McConnell AFB is only six miles south of BEC. ICT member Hunter Rubin (pictured above, top right) grew up loving aviation as the son of retired controller Barry Rubin, who worked at Fairbanks ATCT (FAI), Albuquerque ATCT (ABQ), and Albuquerque Center (ZAB). Hunter said he found the perfect facility for him in ICT where each day brings the steady rhythm of traffic as volume rises and fills each radar scope.



“Once you start seeing all the VFR targets tagging up, and traffic picking up here and there, we’re like, ‘OK, here they come,’” said Rubin. He notes that they often open up a second and third radar position because “that east side of Jabara, Beech, and McConnell is just so congested. Everybody watches that area a little more carefully.”

AAO was the site of one of the most notable examples of a wrong airport landing in modern aviation history. In 2013, the crew of a massive Boeing 747 Dreamlifter cargo airplane, arriving from the northeast, mistakenly landed at AAO, a non-towered airport, instead of at McConnell AFB which sat just nine miles away in the distance. That was three years before Rubin started his career at ICT, but every controller at the facility knows situational awareness is critical. The rule is, “if you see something, say something.”

Midday on a Wednesday in January last year, Rubin saw something and immediately acted to prevent a wrong airport landing. Toward the end of his shift, Rubin was working the radar data position issuing clearances to aircraft at AAO and BEC. Fellow ICT member Daniel Hittner (pictured above, left) was providing on-the-job training to James Smart (pictured above, bottom right) on the radar east position. A Cessna Citation 680, coming in from the southeast, was being vectored for a visual approach into AAO. It was a clear VFR day and the Citation pilot called the airport in sight from 20-30 miles away.

The Citation was instructed to descend to 3,000 feet and the expectation was that the pilot would follow the established procedure into AAO of crossing the airport at midfield and entering the downwind on the west side. The pilot requested to cancel IFR, which is



common and encouraged so that the one-in, one-out operations with AAO and BEC can proceed efficiently. The pilot also requested to switch to the Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF). Smart approved the request and instructed the pilot to remain clear of the Class Delta airspace at BEC. The tower at BEC called and requested takeoff clearance for Gulf Coast Aviation Flight 94 off runway 1, which Smart approved.

Rubin then saw the data tag on the Citation disappear. Suddenly, the aircraft was rapidly descending to 2,000 feet, which was not normal to him. Worse, the aircraft was now deviating off course and turning to the left, pointing to BEC.

“It just didn’t seem right. It wasn’t feeling right,” Rubin said. “I just think he had the wrong airport at the wrong point. I wasn’t expecting that target to disappear the way it did. That caught my attention.”

Rubin quickly alerted Smart and Hittner and they called BEC to advise them. The controller at BEC canceled the Gulf Coast Aviation flight’s takeoff clearance and broadcast on the CTAF for the Citation to go-around. Rubin saw the Citation’s data tag come back up at 2,300 feet as he passed over BEC. The quick action taken by Rubin, Smart, and Hittner averted both a wrong airport landing and a very dangerous situation of the Gulf Coast Aviation flight taking off into the path of the Citation. There is no taxiway at BEC other than a midfield crossing. Thus, there is normally an aircraft on the runway back-taxiing to the departure end or holding in position. In this event, the Gulf Coast Aviation aircraft had started its takeoff roll when its clearance was canceled.

“They were probably on a collision course,” Rubin said.

Rubin says he is very excited about winning the Archie League Medal of Safety, which he calls, a “really cool honor.” More importantly, he adds, it is validation of the importance to always say something if you see something.

“Whether you’re a trainee or a 25-year veteran, if you see something not right, you say it,” Rubin said. “When you do it, and you get the recognition, you think, ‘people are watching and they do appreciate what I’m doing.’ It’s just a really cool feeling.

“As human beings, we know what should be right and what’s not right, and the same thing with air traffic controllers. If it’s not right, or doesn’t look right, say something. The worst they can say is, ‘that’s how it’s supposed to be.’ But the best thing ever is if you can save dozens or potentially hundreds of lives.”

Hittner, Rubin, and Smart are the first winners of the Archie League Medal of Safety Award from ICT since Mark Goldstein received the honor in both 2005 and

2006. Additionally, the three ICT members won a quarterly NATCA Central Region Safety Award.



Listen as ICT member Hunter Rubin discusses how this event unfolded, and how ICT controllers handle their busy airspace, in this episode of The NATCA Podcast. [Click here](#) to listen.

Other ways to listen to The NATCA Podcast:

[Apple Podcasts](#) | [iHeart Radio](#) | [Google Podcasts](#)

We're currently seeking nominations for the 2021 Archie League Medal of Safety Awards. Any member can nominate another member who was involved in the best saves that have occurred at your facilities since June 1, 2020. [Click here](#) for the nomination form.



National Office Staff Employee Spotlight: John Bressler

We have an amazing National Office staff that our membership can be very proud of. They work hard every day and are committed to providing our members with the very best service and representation in organized labor. Today, we feature our recently promoted Acting Director of Government Affairs John Bressler, who is celebrating five years of service to NATCA. Thank you for all you do, John!

Where are you from, or what places have you lived?

Bressler: I was born and raised in Huntingdon, Pa. Other than Huntingdon, I've lived in Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.

Where did you go to school, or what other education do you have?

Bressler: I graduated from Westminster College with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and English. I also attended the University of Pittsburgh where I received a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Management.

How did you come to work at NATCA?

Bressler: NATCA's legislative activists and Government Affairs (GA) staff developed a strong relationship with me while I was a congressional staffer on the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, as well as during my time as Rep. Frank LoBiondo's Legislative Director. After working on Capitol Hill for 10 years, I was thrilled to hear about an opening on NATCA's GA Department, and after interviewing, was offered a position, and



enthusiastically joined the team!

Do you have any hobbies or any other activities you enjoy outside of your work for NATCA?

Bressler: Family is important to my wife (Caroline) and me, and we are blessed to have three healthy young boys (Hans-7, Jack-3, Leo-1) that are constant entertainment and full of joy. Other than enjoying family time, fishing is my favorite hobby, while skiing, running, hiking, and skeet shooting are close seconds.

Has there been a favorite moment for you while at NATCA?

Bressler: Many favorite moments have come from NATCA in Washington (NiW)! Every year, priceless memories are made at NiW that last a lifetime, and I cannot wait for the next one.

Limited Spots Remain for March 31
NCF Wine Tasting Event with Paul Rinaldi

RED THREAD
NAPA VALLEY
www.redthreadwines.com

Located on
Top of Howell Mountain
Angwin, Napa Valley, CA

Red Thread
Vineyard

Virtual Wine Tasting

March 31st, 2021 - 7pm EDT/4pm PDT

Cost \$165

Register between March 5th and March 19th
Space is Limited

Included in each shipment
three Wines from Red Thread Wines
and Food Pairing Menu for each wine



Rosé of Zinfandel / Pinot Noir
Red Wine Blend

Paul Rinaldi has his WSET (Wine & Spirit Education Trust)
Level 2 Certification and is currently working on his Level 3

Hosts



NATCA President
Paul Rinaldi

Wine shipments arrive on, or before March 31st
Limitations - Cannot ship to Alabama, Illinois or Utah

World Central Kitchen, Chef's for America
wck.org/chefsforamerica

#ChefsForAmerica

is making a key connection between people who need meals and
restaurant workers and drivers who need to earn a living.



Red Thread
Winemaker/Owner
Brian Brakesman
and Business
Partner/Wife
Gretchen Brakesman



www.bit.ly/WinewithPaul

Each Registration Supports NCF
with Portions of the Proceeds to Benefit WCK

Join us for a virtual wine tasting with Paul Rinaldi and Red Thread owner and wine maker, Brian Brakesman. At this event, you will learn about three of Red Thread's fantastic wines, the winemaking process, food pairings, and life on top of Howell Mountain, Calif. Proceeds for this event go to the NATCA Charitable Foundation and to the World Central Kitchen, Chefs for America.

Hurry, registration is limited and ends March 19. [Click here](#) to register.

Purchase NCF COVID-19 Relief Coins

At the end of last summer, with crazy schedules and uncertainty regarding the future of aviation, Houston TRACON (I90) member Andrew Stachowiak began to think about the impact that COVID-19 has had on us all. He recognized a need to honor the hard work and dedication that has pulled the aviation community through this pandemic. Whether at home or at work, everyone played a role to help keep each other safe.

Stachowiak thought the best way to capture this moment of pain, suffering, sacrifice, and loss in a positive and hopeful light would be through a challenge coin. The idea being that anyone who purchases one of these coins will reflect on it with ultimate pride and reverence.

COVID RELIEF COINS

\$25 Each (\$20 each on 10 or more)
Use **PROTECT20** at Checkout

Proceeds to Benefit
**World Central Kitchen and the
NATCA Charitable Foundation**

NATCA Charitable Foundation

WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN

"PROTECT"
Represents All Our Members
Protecting Each Other,
No Matter the Challenge
"We Are NATCA"

Compass Rose
Signifies the
Passage of Time and
Directions Away
from the Virus

Baby Blue Airplane
Silhouettes Depict
Our Flight Path to Safety
Vectored Away from
the Pandemic

NATCA
NATIONAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS ASSOCIATION
AFL-CIO

COVID-19
Represents the
Active Runway

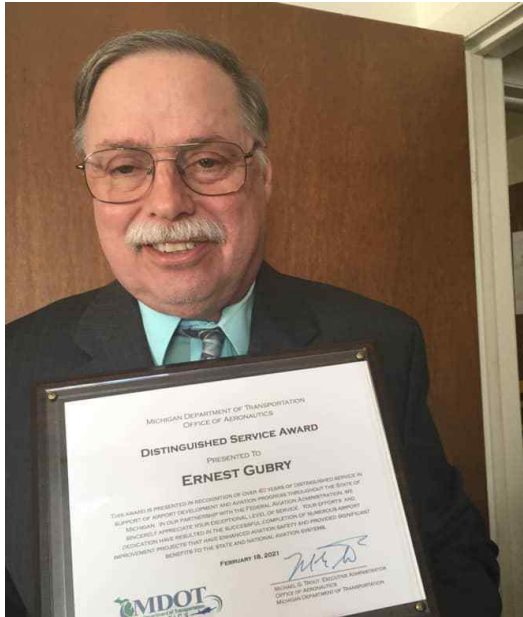
Runway Hold Short Bars
For The Tower Peeps

To help make a difference in the lives of others who were not able to keep their jobs or are struggling to meet their basic needs, proceeds from the purchase of this coin will benefit the [NATCA Charitable Foundation](#) and [World Central Kitchen](#).

May this memento remind you of NATCA's continued unity and symbolize our ability to persevere, even through the toughest of times.

[Click here](#) to purchase your Challenge Coin.

Region X Member Recognized for Distinguished 40-Year Career



The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Office of Aeronautics recently presented a Distinguished Service Award to Region X member Ernest Gubry, a civil engineer in the Great Lakes Region. The award recognizes Gubry's 40 years of distinguished service in support of airport development and aviation progress throughout the State of Michigan.

"I've had the great pleasure to work with a lot of good people within the FAA and local communities in both Michigan and Ohio to advance airport development," Gubry said. "I'm proud of all the things we've accomplished together for aviation safety and the flying public. I also extend my

thanks and love to my wife Sally and my sons for their support over my career."

"In our partnership with the Federal Aviation Administration, we sincerely appreciate your exceptional level of service," Executive Administrator of MDOT Office of Aeronautics and Director of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission (MAC) Michael Trout wrote as part of the award. "Your efforts and dedication have resulted in the successful completion of numerous airport improvement projects that have enhanced aviation safety and provided significant benefits to the state and national aviation systems."

Congratulations to Gubry upon his retirement and this well-deserved accolade.

NATCA Virtual Academy Courses Available

NATCA Academy classes for virtual learning are scheduled through the end of March. We hope that you will take this opportunity to learn more about your Union, your rights, and how you can become more active in the areas that interest you.

Visit the [NATCA Membership Portal](#) to sign up for any of the NATCA Academy Virtual Learning courses. Once you have logged in, select "List of Events" from the Events menu tab, then select "NATCA Academy Virtual Learning." If you have any questions, please contact [Chrissy Padgett](#).

NATCA ACADEMY VIRTUAL LEARNING



Sign up at
portal.
natca.org



THU
MAR 18

11:00 am EDT Building a Stronger Local
(60 min)

TUE
MAR 23

3:30 pm EDT Critical Thinking
(60 min)


SAT
MAR 27

1:00 pm EDT Online Drug
and Alcohol Basics Training
(2 hours)

WED
MAR 31

1:00 pm EDT OSHA Rep Basics
(60 min)

Attend the Next NATCA 101 Course



THE ORIGINAL VIRTUAL LEARNING

NATCA 101

SIGN UP AT [PORTAL.NATCA.ORG](https://portal.natca.org)

A basic understanding of our Union is the foundation for personal involvement.
This is the first step toward creating a **STRONGER UNION** and a **BETTER FUTURE** for you and your family!

**FREE
NATCA
STICKERS!**

This interactive course is taught via Microsoft Teams

Questions? Contact your Regional Reloaded Rep
Or Kristi Perigo at mia_kinshasa@hotmail.com

**MAR 15
11 AM**

EASTERN TIME

NATCA 101 is an interactive learning course used to introduce our new members, as well as those looking to get more involved, to the organization and structure of NATCA. This class provides a foundation with information about NATCA that will help members understand and become more involved with the organization that is working on their behalf every day.

Having the basic knowledge and background of our Union and then building on it with personal involvement are the first steps toward a stronger local, a more powerful national Union, and a better future for your family.

[Click here](#) to register.

Union Members Feature: UNI Global Union

NATCA continues to highlight our union sisters and brothers who are also essential workers during the COVID-19 national emergency. Today we highlight and thank our union siblings of UNI Global Union. Based in Nyon, Switzerland, UNI represents more than 20 million workers from more than 150 different countries in the fastest growing sectors in the world – skills and services. UNI has 50 global agreements with multinational companies that have set fair standards and conditions for their more than 10 million workers around the world.



Recently [UNI released a guide with key principles for collective bargaining to advance remote workers' rights](#), in light of the rise of remote work during the global pandemic. [Read more](#) about what UNI is doing to advance workers' rights around the world.

Operation Traffic Counts Across the U.S.

Aviation System Performance Metrics (ASPM)

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021

ASPM77 Airport Ops

-25.4%

37,319 CURRENT OPS

50,011 SEASONAL AVG

Core Airport Ops

-30.4%

22,299 CURRENT OPS

32,039 SEASONAL AVG



Center Ops

-23.2%

var from baseline

83,159 CURRENT OPS

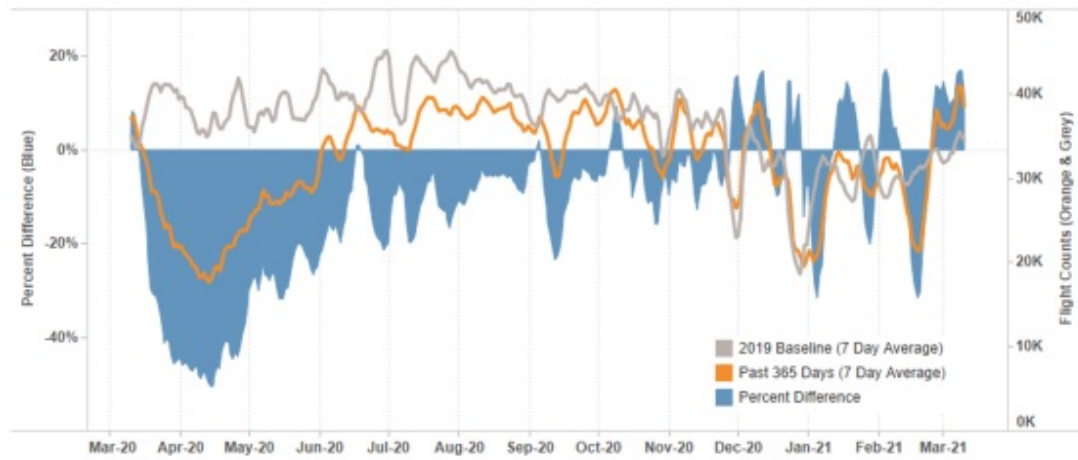
Top 7 TRACONs

-28.2%

var from baseline

19,505 CURRENT OPS

SOURCE: Federal Aviation Administration



3



Federal Aviation
Administration

