



## NATCA This Sunday Marks 35th Anniversary of FLRA Certification

On Sept. 23-24, 1986, 72 delegates attended NATCA's founding convention in Chicago including provisional representatives from each of the FAA's nine regions. John Thornton, the founding father of NATCA, announced that NATCA had collected more than 4,200 signatures calling for an election on whether to form a union. However, the group decided to wait in order to get more signatures before filing them with the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) to help ensure a "big win."

Less than nine months later, on June 11, 1987, with 84 percent of controllers voting, seven out of every 10 of them chose NATCA. The news was announced before a packed room of journalists.

Eight days later, on June 19, 1987, the FLRA certified NATCA as the exclusive bargaining representative of FAA air traffic controllers, and the birth of a new Union to give a voice to the nation's controller

workforce was complete. Today, NATCA represents nearly 20,000 aviation safety professionals in 17 different bargaining units.



We invite you to view a timeline of notable events and milestones throughout NATCA's proud and rich history. You can view that [here](#).

Happy anniversary, NATCA!

## House Passes Advanced Air Mobility Bills; Includes NATCA Input

This week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a version of the Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Coordination and Leadership Act (H.R. 1339/S. 516) and the Advanced Aviation Infrastructure Modernization Act (H.R. 6270). These two bills seek to bolster current planning, coordination, and implementation of AAM technologies and infrastructure in the United States.



AAM is a newly developing form of aviation to move people and cargo between places not currently or easily served by surface transportation or existing aviation assets. This includes new entrants to the National Airspace System (NAS) such as electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and air taxis. Sometimes AAM is also referred to as urban air mobility (UAM), although potential applications for

this form of transportation could extend beyond high-density urban centers to local and regional transportation, as well as rural areas. These aircraft will likely range in size from single-passenger aircraft to shuttles carrying multiple people, and in some cases, the potential for autonomous operations without a human pilot.

Specifically, the AAM Coordination and Leadership Act establishes a new federal working group to examine planning and coordination issues surrounding the eventual deployment of AAM. The measure included key language at the request of NATCA to ensure that the working group engages directly with the frontline FAA workforce, including NATCA representatives, when developing recommendations. Similar legislation was passed by the Senate earlier this year, and this new version the House passed is based on a bipartisan, bicameral compromise which increases the likelihood of the bill becoming law. However, the Senate must now pass the bill in its current form before it can be sent to the President's desk.

Meanwhile, the Advanced Aviation Infrastructure Modernization Act would authorize federal funding for grants to state and local entities that wish to plan or construct new infrastructure to support AAM deployment. NATCA secured several critical changes to the bill before it moved to the House floor, including language to ensure that safety remains a top priority when evaluating grant submissions and requiring that plans for new AAM "vertiport" infrastructure must consider any potential conflicts that could arise

with respect to existing aviation infrastructure in the NAS. The measure now awaits consideration in the U.S. Senate, where similar legislation has also been introduced.

NATCA will continue to engage directly with federal lawmakers to ensure our Union's priorities are reflected on Capitol Hill. NATCA thanks the bipartisan Members of Congress and staff who worked with us to ensure NATCA's concerns were addressed, which strengthened the bills as they moved forward in the legislative process.

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## **NATCA Members & Staff Represent our Union in the Capital Pride Parade**

To commemorate Pride Month, nearly 40 NATCA members and staff and their family members represented our Union in the Capital Pride Parade in Washington, D.C. The group included Executive Vice President Andrew LeBovidge, New England Regional Vice President Mick Devine, NATCA Safety Committee Chair Chrissy Padgett (Washington Center, ZDC), National Training Representative Jamaal Haltom (Las Vegas ATCT, LAS), National Requirements Representative Mark Ostronic (Seattle TRACON, S46), and Dulles ATCT (IAD) FacRep Peter LeFevre. NATCA staff and member Kristena Jones (ZDC) organized and built the float with a 6' tall tower.

Parade organizers described the event as the largest Pride Parade to ever take place in our nation's capital. It attracted hundreds of thousands of spectators who cheered NATCA as our group marched by.

About the parade, LeBovidge stated, "It is great to participate in this parade to demonstrate NATCA's amazing solidarity and show support for LGBTQ+ people and their allies in our Union, the communities where we live, and our workplaces. Solidarity means no one gets left behind. By joining together, we can work for a better, brighter future for everyone. Happy Pride 2022!"





## Thank you to Deputy Director of Public Affairs Doug Church!

Deputy Director of Public Affairs Doug Church is leaving NATCA's staff after more than 22 years of dedicated service. NATCA's staff, past and present, and many NATCA members have had the opportunity to get to know Doug during his tenure with our Union. Doug joined NATCA's staff on Aug. 24, 2000. From 2006 to 2017, he led our Union's Communications Department. Since 2017, he has served as a deputy director of the Public Affairs Department. His last day will be June 24.

Doug's work touched just about everything that our Union did publicly over the last two-plus decades. He helped draft and edit NATCA's member communications. He has always helped NATCA have a leading public voice, especially with our media contacts. This stemmed from Doug's years as a news reporter in Bakersfield, Calif., Palm Beach, Fla., and Detroit, and it was critical during the government shutdown in 2019. Perhaps Doug's most influential legacy is helping develop the



Archie League Medal of Safety Awards and garnering public acclaim for their recipients.

Doug said about his work, "I am pleased with our work and the improvements that were continuously made to better reach and inform our members. I always prided myself on being quick to respond to members' needs, questions, and concerns, and I valued each interaction I had with them. I leave having made many personal friendships that I will continue to treasure."

About Church leaving our Union, President Rich Santa said, "Doug has been a valuable NATCA employee and an enthusiastic supporter of our Union and its members for many years. Doug, thank you for your time with us. You will be missed."

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## Today at Noon CDT: Archie League, NRX Awards Presentation to be Live Streamed



Today, June 17, NATCA will be honoring members at noon CDT in New Orleans with the prestigious 2020 & 2021 Archie League Medal of Safety Awards & the Region X Commitment to Safety Awards. Plan to watch as we live stream this event on our Union's [website](https://www.natca.org).

We have produced a book about each 2020 and 2021 award winner and the great work that they did to earn these honors. [View a PDF of the book here](#).

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