



## From the Desk of President Rich Santa: Looking Forward in 2024

Brothers and Sisters,

Happy New Year and thank you to all who worked during the holiday season. Your dedication to our profession kept the flying public safe on the busiest air travel days of the year. The beginning of the year offers a chance for us to reflect on what we hope to achieve in 2024.

2024, like recent years, will present our Union with a number of advocacy challenges. We still face the threat of government and FAA shutdowns, the mounting stress of chronic staffing shortages at our facilities, and media scrutiny of our work as aviation safety professionals. Our leadership, members, and national office staff will continue to tackle each of the hurdles with determination and professionalism.

In addition to continuing to advocate for funding bills to avoid a government shutdown, we also will work to secure a new multi-year extension to FAA authorization, which is set to expire on March 8, 2024. As part of these efforts, we are focused on getting a FAA Reauthorization bill passed into law that includes the staffing targets that were determined by the Collaborative Resource Workgroup (CRWG), which is comprised of the FAA's Air Traffic Organization and NATCA. We are also focused on ensuring max hiring throughout the duration of the bill and improvements to the training process.

At the end of fiscal year 2023, there were 1,160 fewer fully certified controllers and 455 fewer trainees than there were at the end of fiscal year 2012, and the band-aid fix of mandatory overtime and six-day workweeks is taking a toll on our members. Enshrining the CRWG numbers through legislation would ensure that operational staffing targets reflect the true and accurate needs of



each facility and adequately address the staffing shortages.

In 2024, NATCA will be hosting three major events in 2024: [NATCA in Washington \(NiW\)](#), [Communicating for Safety \(CFS\)](#), and our second-ever [Activism and Training Expo \(ATX\)](#). These events provide an opportunity for NATCA members and external stakeholders to discuss our Union's priority issues in the case of NiW and CFS, conduct vital Congressional outreach during NiW, and conduct important training for members at NiW and ATX. Planning is underway for these events and we look forward to sharing details about registration and other updates with you soon. You can save the dates today if you think that you will want to attend any of them.

Last month, the first planning committee for the 20th Biennial Convention also took place in San Francisco. Western Pacific RVP Joel Ortiz and Oakland Center (ZOA) member Charles Howell will lead the planning committee that is made up of other members from Bay Area facilities, experienced activists who helped plan prior NATCA conventions, and NATCA events staff.

Finally, please take advantage of all the programs that your Union has to offer. The schedules for the [2024 Retirement Benefit Briefings](#) have been released, along with the [2024 NATCA Academy](#) programs which include classes on Advanced Legislative Activism Training (ALAT), Drug and Alcohol Training (DAT), Federal Contract Tower Training (FCT), Legislative Activism Training (LAT), Occupational Safety and Health Training (OSHA), Representative Training (RT-1), Safety Advocacy Training (SAT), and Secretary/Treasurer Training (STT). These are invaluable programs that provide critical information and training for every member.

I look forward to seeing all that our Union and our members accomplish this year.

In Solidarity,



Rich Santa  
NATCA President

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## Potomac TRACON Members Meet with U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman

Potomac TRACON (PCT) members Taylor Warren and Andy Rhodes recently attended an event with U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman (Va.-1).

During the meeting, the congressman expressed his desire to get FAA Reauthorization pushed through with as little changes possible. Warren and Rhodes encouraged him to sign onto [the letter to Congressional leadership](#) being spearheaded by U.S. Representatives Rudy Yakym (Ind.-2)

and Dina Titus (Nev.-1). The morning after the dinner, his legislative director confirmed that the congressman signed on to the letter.



## Potomac TRACON Members Meet with U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman

Virginia | Nov. 2023

### **2024 NATCA Scholarship Application Open Until March 1**

The NATCA scholarship fund is established for the spouses, children, stepchildren, and legally adopted children of active, retired, and deceased NATCA members with continuous membership in good standing of at least two years. These scholarships are for full-time attendance at accredited colleges and universities within the United States and its territories for an undergraduate degree program. The deadline to apply is March 1. The application for the scholarship can be found [here](#).

# NATCA SCHOLARSHIP 2024-2025

**OPEN FOR  
APPLICATION**

**APPLICATION CLOSES  
MARCH 1, 2024**



The application process includes an essay submission. This year's prompt asks candidates to examine the effect of artificial intelligence on workers and labor unions:

*The evolution of artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly changing the way we live. Unions across a broad spectrum of occupations are preparing to address the effects of an increased utilization of AI on their membership. As a student who will soon be entering this changing workplace, discuss how you see AI affecting the careers in which you are interested and what you believe unions should do to offer job protections as new AI processes continue to be implemented.*

Please send questions about this process to [scholarshipapps@natca.org](mailto:scholarshipapps@natca.org).

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