

# ORBITER NEWS

News, announcements, and more.

## Press Release: Aerospace Named One of America's Best Midsize Employers by Forbes

February 12, 2021

**EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Feb. 12, 2021** –

The Aerospace Corporation (Aerospace) was named one of *America's Best Midsize Employers 2021* by *Forbes* magazine, ranking 162 out of 500 midsize employers overall. Previously, *Forbes* recognized Aerospace as one of the *Best Employers for Diversity 2019*.

"This exciting recognition is a testament to our employees' outstanding efforts to foster an innovative, mission-driven culture that helps us solve the hardest

problems in space," said Steve Isakowitz, Aerospace's President and CEO. "Aerospace is committed to its people and to ensuring an inclusive workplace where everyone is empowered to do their best work on behalf of our nation's space programs."

The *Forbes* America's Best Midsize Employers list was compiled through an independent survey among 50,000 Americans who worked for businesses with at least 1,000 employees. Participants were asked to rate their willingness to recommend their own employers and to nominate other organizations, and the rankings were based on number of recommendations a company received.



## **About The Aerospace Corporation**

The Aerospace Corporation is a national nonprofit corporation that operates a federally funded research and development center and has approximately 4,000 employees nationwide. With major locations in El Segundo, Calif.; Albuquerque, N.M.; Colorado Springs, Colo.; and Washington D.C., Aerospace addresses complex problems with agility, innovation, and objective technical leadership across the space enterprise and other areas of national significance. For more information, visit [www.aerospace.org](http://www.aerospace.org). Follow us on Twitter: [@AerospaceCorp](https://twitter.com/AerospaceCorp).

# Four Aerospace Employees Recognized With Herndon Awards

by **Conor Shine**

February 03, 2021



Four Aerospace employees were recognized for their outstanding professional and personal achievements Monday at the 40<sup>th</sup> annual Robert H. Herndon Black Image Award ceremony.

The awards honor the legacy of the late Robert Herndon, a trailblazing engineer who joined Aerospace in 1961 and rose to the position of group director of the Advanced Mission Analysis Directorate, where he was responsible for carrying out system studies for NASA. Herndon also played a critical role in helping Aerospace define early policies and practices for equal opportunity, and he was widely recognized as a humanitarian and champion for his fellow colleagues.

“We are proud to celebrate Robert Herndon’s legacy annually by recognizing our best and brightest colleagues, who exemplify Mr. Herndon’s exceptional work ethic, humanitarian spirit and tireless dedication to the community...in their outstanding work for The Aerospace Corporation and for the community at large,” said Dr. Sherrica Holloman, National President of the Aerospace Black Caucus.

This year’s Herndon awards went to Dr. Brianne Williams, Stephen Blanchette Jr., Rosalind Harden and Sherreth Vaughan, recognizing their impactful contributions to Aerospace and to their communities. Monday’s virtual ceremony was attended by more than 100 Aerospace employees, as well as Robert Herndon’s granddaughter Jessica Herndon and her family.

It served as the kick-off for a series of events and activities planned throughout African American History Month by the Aerospace Black Caucus. This year’s theme, “Lift Every Voice ‘Til Victory is Won,” is based on the Black national anthem “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” a song of hope and liberation that characterizes the continuing efforts toward equity and inclusion, Holloman said.

Here's a look at the four award recipients honored Monday:

**Dr. Brianne Williams** is a project leader in the Nuclear Operation Directorate in the Defense Systems Group.

She graduated from West Virginia University and obtained her master's and Ph.D. in aerospace engineering from Old Dominion University.

Williams joined Aerospace in 2010 as a member of the technical staff in the Fluid Mechanics Department, where she made significant contribution to numerous programs, including ULA's Atlas V, Delta IV and Vulcan programs and SpaceX's Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy program, and was recognized for her technical expertise in aerodynamics. In her current role, she supports the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent program, working with customers on system level requirements, contractor designs, test plans and data.

She is a mentor to young engineers and interns and encourages students' interest in STEM fields. She's also been involved in university academic advisory committees and doctoral committees.

"One thing my father has always told me is [Army] Rangers never quit. While he loved military quotes, it has always meant quitting in the face of adversity is not an option," Williams said when accepting the award. "No one can tell you your education, hard work and dedication doesn't pay off. This accomplishment is not something I did alone, and there are many others who deserve to share in this award."



**Stephen Blanchette Jr.** is director of the Software Systems and Acquisition Department in the Engineering and Technology Group.



He is a graduate of Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and has a master's in diplomacy from Norwich University.

He began his career at McConnell Douglas Helicopter Company and later worked at Stanford Telecommunications, United Defense and the Software Engineering Institute.

At Aerospace, Blanchette has worked across NSG, DSG, CSG and SSG to deliver outstanding technical support, including on a number of classified programs. He's also played important roles on sequestered source selection teams, leading cross-FFRDC studies, contributing expertise as part of independent review teams and consulting on agile acquisition for domestic and international customers.



Blanchette is the author or co-author of more than 40 publications and is an Associate Fellow of the AIAA and a senior member of IEEE. He's long been involved in giving back, particularly at Embry Riddle, where he has endowed a scholarship for under-represented students and is involved in other scholarship and student project activities. Blanchette and his wife are avid travelers and enjoy spending time with family. He is also a keen genealogist and enjoys playing softball with the Aerospace Orbiters.

"As we all work to better ourselves...remember to reach back and help somebody else. Do whatever you can, at whatever point you are in your career, to reach back," Blanchette said in his acceptance remarks. "We'll all be better off for it."

**Rosalind Harden** is a contracts lead in Civil and Commercial Contracts in the Civil Systems Group.

She is a graduate of American InterContinental University and obtained a master's degree in business administration from Webster University.

Harden joined Aerospace in 1988 as a casual employee in the Human Resources Record Management Department and later transitioned to the contracts directorate, where she's worked on both the FFRDC and civil and commercial contracts. In her current role, she's a key contributor to the management of the recently awarded NASA NSEETS contract.

Harden is an active member and volunteer with the Aerospace Women's Committee and the Aerospace Black Caucus, serving for two years as the chair of AWC's clothing drive, and holding several leadership positions with ABC.

Harden is also an active member of First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Los Angeles, where she's a leader and instructor for various youth activities and programs. Harden and her husband enjoy traveling and spending time with family, including game nights, Zoom parties and Sunday afternoon dinners.

"It is my sincere hope that my work and my volunteerism can serve as an inspiration to others...Remember, we all make a difference," Harden said during her acceptance remarks.



**Sherreth Vaughan** is an administrative specialist in the Space Development Division in the Space Systems Group.



*Sherreth Vaughan*

Prior to joining Aerospace, she worked as a contracts administrator for the Screen Actors Guild, and at Boeing on the GOES weather satellite program. She's taken classes and specialized training at Webster University, West Los Angeles College and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Vaughan joined Aerospace in 2010 as a member of the Resident Office for the NASA Tracking and Data Relay Satellite program, where her work included serving as logistics manager responsible for the movement of equipment from the Boeing factory to Cape Canaveral for launch. In her current role, she runs the front office for the Space Development Division, as well as serving on the division's quality management system team, coordinating office space needs with the customer and supporting division awards processes.

Vaughan is deeply involved in the Aerospace Black Caucus, including serving as National President for two years beginning in 2018. She is also active in her community, supporting STEM events and participating in school career days.

"Receiving this award is very special to me. It's rewarding to be recognized along with those who display stellar character in addition to brilliant minds," Vaughan said Monday.

### **African American History Month Activities Throughout February**

In addition to the Herndon awards, the Aerospace Black Caucus is hosting a number of events throughout February in recognition of African American History Month.

Retired Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, an Aerospace Board of Trustee member, will deliver a keynote address on Feb. 10.

ABC will host the "Finding Your Voice" professional development session on Feb. 17. And on Feb. 23, ABC is hosting a cultural festival with the theme, *The Black Family – Representation, Identity, Diversity, and Resiliency*, in lieu of its traditional jazz brunch.

"This year's theme, 'Lift Every Voice 'Til Victory is Won,' is especially timely, reminding us of the long struggle for equality that has been promised but not yet realized and of the resolve and hope that has sustained generations on their march toward justice," Aerospace President and CEO Steve Isakowitz said in his closing remarks at Monday's award ceremony. "I am particularly moved by the phrase 'Til Victory is Won' because of the way it clarifies the charge we are faced with and calls upon us to continue forward with purpose."

# February Obituaries

February 01, 2021

*Sincere sympathy is extended to the families of:*

- **Leslie Bean**, office of technical support, hired June 1, 1964, retired Nov. 1, 2010, died Dec. 25, 2020
- **Diana Brashears**, office of technical support, hired Sept. 11, 1961, retired Oct. 1, 1997, died Nov. 17, 2020
- **Michael Chernick**, member of technical staff, hired June 2, 1980, retired April 1, 2012, died Jan. 1, 2021
- **Eugene Demitruk**, member of technical staff, hired Sept. 29, 1980, retired Dec. 1, 1990, died Jan. 7, 2021
- **Bruce Edgar**, member of technical staff, hired Dec. 10, 1973, retired July 31, 2007, died Jan. 14, 2021
- **Ralph Folsom**, member of technical staff, hired April 17, 1989, retired July 1, 2020, died Jan. 19, 2021
- **Marla Hinkey**, office of technical support, hired Oct. 22, 1979, retired Oct. 1, 1993, died Oct. 11, 2020
- **Edmund Jones**, member of technical staff, hired Jan. 16, 1967, retired July 1, 1993, died Jan. 18, 2021
- **Lynn Ketner**, office of technical support, hired July 10, 1989, retired Nov. 1, 2018, died Jan. 27, 2021
- **Dolores McClure**, office of technical support, hired Sept. 19, 1977, retired April 1, 1989, died Dec. 15, 2020
- **Dolores Modolo**, member of technical staff, hired Oct. 4, 1965, retired Aug. 1, 2003, died Dec. 23, 2020
- **Jacqueline Tardif**, member of technical staff, hired June 30, 2014, died Jan. 21, 2021
- **Harry Tippins Jr.**, member of technical staff, hired Dec. 26, 1961, retired Dec. 1, 1993, died June 18, 2020
- **Shawn Toumodge**, member of technical staff, hired Aug. 19, 1985, retired Nov. 1, 2007, died Nov. 3, 2020
- **Frances Wainwright**, member of administrative staff, hired June 30, 1975, retired April 1, 2013, died May 1, 2020
- **Joseph Wambolt**, member of technical staff, hired Dec. 12, 1960, retired July 1, 2014, died Dec. 29, 2020
- **Roy Williams**, member of technical staff, hired May 27, 1976, retired Oct. 1, 1993, died Jan. 6, 2021
- **James Yakura**, member of technical staff, hired Aug. 2, 1966, retired Oct. 2, 1993, died Dec. 7, 2020
- **Frank Yates**, member of technical staff, hired Aug. 13, 1970, retired Feb. 1, 1996, died Nov. 26, 2020

*To notify Aerospace of a death and have it included in the Orbiter, please contact People Operations at (310) 336-5107.*

*These articles are reprinted from The Orbiter, a publication of The Aerospace Corporation 2310 E. El Segundo Blvd., El Segundo, CA 90245-4691 310-336-5000*

*Visit: [Aerospace.org](http://Aerospace.org)*

*Contact Orbiter staff: [Orbiter@aero.org](mailto:Orbiter@aero.org)*