

# ORBITER NEWS

News, announcements, and more.

## Celebrating Community and Culture During National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 28, 2023

Aerospace employees from across the corporation are committed to coming together as a community to celebrate and support one another, recognizing strength in diversity. This year, Aerospace Latino Members Association (ALMA) is celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) with a variety of activities and events open to employees, centering around the month's national theme, "Prosperity, Power, and Progress in America".



"This theme acknowledges the positive contributions Latinx Americans have made for our nation's prosperity," said Susana Aguilar, who served as ALMA President in FY23 and, with the start of the new fiscal year, welcomed the group's incoming leadership. "ALMA is an organization that is dedicated to creating a community of members and allies that support the growth of each other, ourselves as professionals and our communities. There is power in our intent and good things happen when we come together. And as I pass the baton to incoming ALMA officers, I am hopeful for ALMA continuing the work of rising each other and our community up with us. Good things happen when we come together."

HHM is celebrated from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 every year in the United States, which is also when Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua celebrate their independence from Spain, with Mexico celebrating this day on Sept. 16 and Chile celebrating on Sept. 18. HHM began as Hispanic Heritage Week in

1968, celebrating of the cultures and histories of Americans with ancestry in the Caribbean, Central and South America, Mexico and Spain, expanding to a month-long celebration in 1988.

“One of the things that many people love about Aerospace is that we are encouraged to bring our true selves to work every day and for all of us, that’s our families and culture that makes up who we are,” said Edeline Rose, President of ALMA. “It’s exciting to be able to share what we know as familiar to others who are experiencing it for the first time. Even with being Latinx, each one of us has a different cultural background and being from different countries also makes us different within the Latinx community, so even between each other, we have an opportunity to learn. Diversity in our people means we are fostering diversity of thought and that’s important to the work we do every day.”

## Exploring Cultures as a Community

On Sept. 27, ALMA hosted its annual “Taste Of” event, providing Aerospace employees and leaders, such as NSG Vice President Tanya Pemberton, in Chantilly and El Segundo the opportunity to experience the sights, tastes and sounds of Latin America.

In Chantilly, employees enjoyed various traditional foods, including chicha morada, empanadas and arroz con leche, giving employees a taste of Peru, Cuba and Argentina. Throughout the event, employees made traditional crafts, including weaving rugs from Peru, making gaucho belt buckles from Argentina, and crafting yarn dolls from Cuba. The piñata, which has roots in Mexican culture, was a crowd favorite, filled with sweet treats for guests to enjoy.

In El Segundo, traditional Cuban foods, including black beans, fried plantains and ropa vieja, were enjoyed by the more than 50 attendees. During the event, employees had their knowledge of Latin American culture tested while they played a special HHM themed Kahoot quiz game where the top three winners took home special prizes celebrating Latinx heritage. After each round, the correct answer was explained, allowing employees to learn more about the diverse cultures that make up Latin America.



*Throughout HHM, employees have the opportunity to celebrate and learn more about the 21 countries that make up Latin America.*



*At Chantilly's "Taste Of" event, employees showed off their design and coloring skills while making crafts showcasing Latinx traditions.*



*ALMA's "Taste Of" events provided an opportunity for employees to enjoy the rich heritage and traditions of Latin American countries through food.*

"It's fun to see people come down to the space and see what we have planned for them," said Rose. "Since we highlight different countries every year, it's a different experience every year in the activities we do and the food we present. So, they come to the event to see what they'll get to be a part of, and that's exciting to see, that we have co-workers that are interested in learning and experiencing new things, and more importantly, learning about their fellow coworkers."

## Heritage Month Continues

This year, ALMA is also hosting two virtual events open to all employees. "The Importance of Unplugging" event, which serves a wellness reminder, was held on Oct. 3, and "Thinking Traps," a guided exploratory process on defining thinking traps and overcoming them, will be held on Oct. 12. Christine Walchuk, a subject matter expert on the topic, will present best practices on how to unplug from work and screens.

Throughout HHM, ALMA is hosting a [giving campaign through Aerospace Cares](#). One of ALMA's priorities is mentoring the next generation of Latinx scientists and engineers in order to continue the prosperity, power, and progress of Latinx Americans across the country. This year's giving campaign supports organizations that align with that mission, including Los Angeles Team Mentoring, STEM Advantage, and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

"Hispanic Heritage Month is so important because it further reinforces for our ALMA members that Aerospace is a place of inclusion and belonging and that's important to everyone in a workspace regardless of your background," said Rose.

## Celebrating Excellence

Following HHM, ALMA will be hosting their inaugural Spirit of Excellence Award ceremony. The event will take place in El Segundo on Oct. 19, honoring the exceptional contributions of one Aerospace employee while celebrating the dedication to excellence demonstrated across the corporation.

*The Aerospace Latino Members Association (ALMA) is an Aerospace Employee Resource Group (ERG). Membership and participation in all ERGs are open to all employees, regardless of identity.*



# Framing the Future Commercial Human Spaceflight Environment

September 28, 2023

As the pace of space activities—from launches to reentries—and commercial innovation continue to accelerate, the U.S. government will be assessing how to evolve its current safety oversight of commercial human spaceflight (chSF) for crews and participants.

To avoid stifling innovation in the nascent commercial human spaceflight industry with regulation, Congress instated a learning period in December 2004 within the Commercial Space Launch Amendments Act. Since that law was passed, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has licensed SpaceX, Virgin Galactic, and Blue Origin to perform commercial human spaceflight missions for orbital and suborbital flights, however, without safety regulations for the participants.

With the learning period slated to expire in October 2023 after several extensions, anticipation has heightened across the space enterprise on what the future of chSF will look like. To support the FAA’s Office of Commercial Space Transportation (AST) in drafting its Congressional Report, The Aerospace Corporation applied its technical expertise in researching, analyzing, and making recommendations on a commercial human spaceflight safety framework. The recommended safety framework principles are guiding the government as it considers next steps for advancing the safety of commercial human spaceflight.

“There’s an industry desire to move quickly, but safety cannot be overstated — at the end of the day, we all want access to space for all participants to be safe and sustainable,” said Danielle Bernstein, Principal Director of Federal and Commercial Programs. “Aerospace’s support to the U.S. government is important in getting it right and ensuring that the space industry continues to move space innovation forward safely. Our experts worked side-by-side with the FAA, and their efforts are ensuring decisionmakers have the latest scientific expertise available to evaluate the commercial space industry in a holistic manner.”

Read the full article on [Aerospace.org](https://www.aerospace.org).



*As the need for space-based capabilities increases, an operational focus on speed will continue to be emphasized. Having the right safety framework and solving these hard problems upfront will facilitate that velocity into the future. (Pictured: A NASA astronaut of Expedition 63 conducts a spacewalk as part of an ISS installation. Credit: NASA)*



*A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carrying the first ever crewed mission with exclusively private citizens launches from Launch Complex 39A at Kennedy Space Center, Fla., Sept. 15, 2021. (Credit: U.S. Space Force)*

# Dr. Allyson Yarbrough Exemplifies Excellence in Aerospace With Lifetime Achievement Award

September 27, 2023

At the 2023 Aerospace Systems Conference Gala, Aerospace Technical Fellow Dr. Allyson Yarbrough was presented with the Lifetime Achievement in Aerospace Award by the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) Aerospace Special Interest Group (SIG).

After joining Aerospace in 1989, Yarbrough utilized her expertise to make an impact across a variety of staff and management positions

including in the Physical Sciences Laboratory, Electronic Systems Division, Communications, Cyber and Networking Division, MILSATCOM Program Office and Corporate Chief Engineering Office. Thanks to her dedication and leadership she was named the 1992 Robert H. Herndon Black Image Award recipient and was presented with BEYA's Modern-Day Technology Leader award in 2020.



In September, the NSBE Aerospace SIG hosted their gala at the 2023 NSBE Aerospace Systems Conference in Houston, Texas. Attendees gathered from across the country for the event to honor the awardees. At the ceremony, the Lifetime Achievement in Aerospace Award was presented by the SIG to leaders in the industry whose career demonstrates creating innovative solutions over at least 25 years.

Yarbrough was selected for her technical acumen, broad-based strategic technical leadership, project management experience, and for influencing the direction of technology and decision-making through external publications, driving innovation, and engagement in technical symposia and conferences. Her impact on the professional community, work as a key communicator on strategic corporate communications and public engagement, and history of operating as an advisor to several college advisory boards as since 1992 also made her stand out when being considered for this award.

Congratulations Dr. Allyson Yarbrough!

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# Press Release: Aerospace Announces Significant Organizational Changes

September 21, 2023

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Sept. 21, 2023 – To align with changes within the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and its focus on end-to-end operations, The Aerospace Corporation (Aerospace) announced today that it will be making significant changes to its organizational structure. Aerospace also announced several key hires, including a new Senior Vice President for its National Systems Group.



On Oct. 1, 2023, Aerospace will combine its Space Systems Group and its Defense Systems Group, creating a unified organization to support all of Aerospace’s DoD customers. Senior Vice President Marty Whelan will lead this new organization, which will retain the name of Defense Systems Group. This new structure will better align Aerospace with the structure and strategic direction of its DoD customers and will strengthen the company’s ability to operate at the enterprise level to integrate systems of national importance.

“The space domain is undergoing rapid and profound change. By unifying our support to our largest customer, Aerospace will be well positioned to deliver end-to-end capabilities to outpace the threats we face in space.” said Aerospace President and CEO Steve Isakowitz. “These new leaders bring extensive experience with our customers and a deep understanding of the needs of our end users, enabling Aerospace to drive greater integration from acquisitions to operations.”

Within the Defense Systems Group, our new leaders are:

- **Dr. Lara Schmidt** has been selected to succeed Jay Santee, who is retiring at the end of 2023. Dr. Schmidt will serve as vice president of Defense Architectures and Integration, where she will lead Aerospace’s efforts on space warfighting, future space architectures, operations, and integration. Dr. Schmidt has been a valued leader at Aerospace since 2019, and previously held several senior positions at RAND Corp.
- **Todd Nygren** will head up the new Defense Space Acquisition organization, with a focus on acquisition and integration of space and ground systems to rapidly deliver capabilities to the end-user ahead of the threat. His organization will primarily support Space Systems Command.
- **Randy Kendall** will lead Launch, Missiles and Mobility, with a focus on the emerging high-priority mission area of Space Access, Mobility and Logistics, including Aerospace’s launch support, as well as



Aerospace's support of the Missile Defense Agency and nuclear enterprise customers.

- ♦ **Dr. Jamie Morin** will lead Defense Strategic Space, which provides support to all Pentagon leadership. He also continues as Executive Director of the Center for Space Policy and Strategy, supporting senior leadership decision making across the civil, commercial, intelligence, and defense space sectors.

Senior vice president **Kevin Bell** will transition from leading Space Systems Group to head up Engineering and Technology Group, previously led by Nygren. In this role, Bell will bring his program expertise to the group which serves as the technical backplane for the space enterprise, delivering critical skills to rapidly changing programs and technologies.

Aerospace has also selected **Kevin Keating** as senior vice president for the National Systems Group, effective Jan. 1, 2024. At a time when experience with integrating end-to-end effects with end-users and warfighters is paramount, Keating comes to Aerospace after a long and distinguished career in the intelligence community, at the National Reconnaissance Office and most recently at the Central Intelligence Agency Directorate of Science and Technology.

### **ABOUT THE AEROSPACE CORPORATION**

The Aerospace Corporation is a national nonprofit corporation that operates a federally funded research and development center and has more than 4,600 employees. With major locations in El Segundo, California; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and the Washington, D.C. region, Aerospace addresses complex problems across the space enterprise and other areas of national and international significance through agility, innovation, and objective technical leadership. For more information, visit [www.aerospace.org](http://www.aerospace.org). Follow us on X: [@AerospaceCorp](https://twitter.com/AerospaceCorp).

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## Aerospace's Dr. Debra Emmons Featured on SWE Podcast

September 12, 2023

Aerospace Vice President and Chief Technology Officer Dr. Debra Emmons was recently featured on *Diverse*, a podcast by the Society of Women Engineers.

Emmons was interviewed by SWE CEO Karen Horting, sharing advice to aspiring scientists and engineers, and discussed the commitment Aerospace, and other industry leaders are taking on with Space Workforce 2030 to



create a more inclusive and vibrant future for the nation's space enterprise. You can listen to the episode on [Apple](#) and [Spotify](#).

In addition, Aerospace's Erin Hong, Senior Member of Technical Staff in ETG, recently guest authored a post for SWE's *AllTogether* blog. The post, "[\*No Education is Wasted\*](#)," highlights how Hong's unique education and work experience shaped her engineering journey, along with her networking tips and mantra for success.

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## Project Phantom: Furthering Space Exploration With Virtual and Augmented Reality

September 06, 2023

Recent advancements in Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies have led to wider adoption of cutting-edge tools that have become increasingly vital across industries such as medicine, education, architecture, and gaming. VR is the digitally generated re-creation of realistic environments, allowing users to feel as though they are immersed in virtual surroundings, while AR uses the real world as a framework within which objects, images and other virtual items are placed.

While both technologies are forms of mixed reality, their convergence can create environments in which VR incorporates elements of AR to build interactive experiences integrating the real world with the digital, offering up a host of potential applications. The space industry is investigating the potential for this technology to assist with space operations and change the way humans explore the solar system.

An example of this potential is The Aerospace Corporation's patent-pending Project Phantom prototype, which employs VR and AR to allow scientists and engineers (aka "Phantoms") to investigate digitized 3D renderings of extraterrestrial terrains obtained by crew members in the field (aka "Explorers"), enabling deeper analysis and collaborative research.

"Project Phantom connects the real and virtual worlds together, so we can bring the scientific world into the operational space for astronauts on the Moon or Mars," said Trevor Jahn, Engineering Specialist in the Space Architecture Department. "Although turnaround time for communication is a factor, it's arguably an improved form of bi-directional communication between astronauts or users on location and whoever is accessing the virtual model. Its potential is undeniable."



*Aerospace's Project Phantom leverages VR and AR to enable a digital ecosystem for scientists to communicate and collaborate in a variety of ways with their mission counterparts on the ground.*

*Read the [full article on Aerospace.org](#).*



# Aerospace's Shawne' Raiford Recognized as Finalist For Prestigious Award

September 05, 2023

On Aug. 25, people from across the country gathered in Washington, D.C. for the 2023 Admin Awards to celebrate industry colleagues who have demonstrated the highest standards of the administrative profession. Among this year's finalists was Aerospace's Shawne' Raiford.



As a current member of Aerospace's office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), Raiford has shown a true

commitment to our people during her 12 years at Aerospace. She has previously been recognized for her contributions as a recipient of the Robert H. Herndon Black Image Award, Women of the Year Award and the Commitment to our People: Diversity and Inclusion Corporate Award. Raiford was nominated by Terita Norton, Senior Project Leader in the Vehicle Engineering Department in ETG, for exemplifying excellence and all of the core values of the award, including high proficiency, being passionately committed to one's organization's cause or purpose, and having a heart for employee advocacy.

The Admin Awards is the world's first public recognition program for administrative professionals and was created in 2012. Nominees and guests attended the "Good as Gold" Awards Gala, including Raiford's family and friends and Glenn McKeown, Aerospace Senior Vice President General Counsel and Secretary.

The Colleen Barrett Award for Administrative Excellence is The Admin Awards' most prestigious award. It is presented to the admin that best demonstrate a variety of qualities including values that reflect those of their organization, a deep commitment to legendary customer service both internally and externally, and making sure the company always does right by its employees.



Congratulations Shawne' Raiford!

# September 2023 Obituaries

September 01, 2023

*Sincere sympathy is extended to the families of:*

- ♦ James E. Gidney, member of technical staff, hired May 25, 1981, died June 2, 2023
- ♦ Daniel Anderson, member of technical staff, hired Oct. 1, 1979, died April 20, 2023
- ♦ Keith Bagge, member of technical staff, hired April 11, 1977, died July 12, 2023,
- ♦ Marjorie Edelen, hired Nov. 13, 1961, died Feb. 7, 2023
- ♦ Joseph Estrada, member of technical staff, hired Oct. 30, 2000, retired Aug. 1, 2018, died June 22, 2023
- ♦ Gordon Fox, member of technical staff, hired June 5, 1961, retired Oct. 1, 1986, died July 11, 2023
- ♦ Roberta Gleiter, member of technical staff, hired Aug. 18, 1980, retired Aug. 1, 2004 died July 22, 2023
- ♦ Harold Greenberg, member of technical staff, hired Aug. 20, 1979, retired Aug. 1, 2003, died June 27, 2023
- ♦ Dale Gunn, associate technical support, hired Jan. 2, 1962, retired Nov. 1, 1991, died July 5, 2023
- ♦ Coleman Hacker Jr., member of administrative staff, hired May 7, 1984, died July 2, 2023
- ♦ Robert Hebblewhite, hired Nov. 19, 1962, died May 29, 2023
- ♦ Stanley Heller, member of technical staff, hired June 19, 1989, retired Jan. 1, 2000, died April 14, 2023
- ♦ Beverly Knowles, office of technical support, hired Jan. 18, 1969, retired Oct. 1, 1997, died July 5, 2023
- ♦ Walter Leverton, hired Aug. 22, 1960, retired April 1, 1979, died Feb. 28, 2023
- ♦ Robert, Mc Neal hired Sept. 14, 1964, died July 17, 2023
- ♦ Benjamina Millado, member of administrative staff, hired Nov. 28, 2005, retired Feb. 1, 2011, died May 15, 2023
- ♦ Harold Mirels, member of technical staff, hired July 25, 1961, retired Oct. 1, 1993, died July 2, 2023
- ♦ Nancy Nelson, member of administrative staff, hired Sept. 5, 1962, retired July 1, 1994, died July 1, 2023
- ♦ Alva Nims, member of technical staff, hired Nov. 3, 1980, died May 31, 2023
- ♦ Carl Pearlston Jr., hired Aug. 17, 1964, died July 25, 2023
- ♦ Elliot Silverstein, member of technical staff, hired June 30, 1981, died July 3, 2023
- ♦ William Tighe, member of technical staff, hired Nov. 17, 2014, retired July 1, 2023 died July 20, 2023
- ♦ Gerald Wallmark, member of technical staff, hired June 20, 2005, retired June 1, 2012, died July 5, 2023
- ♦ Judy Austin, member of administrative staff, hired July 2, 1984, retired Oct. 1, 2002, died July 26, 2023
- ♦ Robert Doeblor, member of technical staff, hired May 8, 1962, retired June 1, 1990, died Aug. 10, 2023
- ♦ Naomi Jean Gray, Office Support, hired May 5, 1980, retired July 1, 2004, died Aug. 13, 2023
- ♦ Paul Guzman, hired Dec. 6, 1960, died July 26, 2023
- ♦ William Huber, member of technical staff, hired Oct. 4, 1971, retired Jan. 1, 2007, died Aug. 7, 2023
- ♦ Richard Merritt, technical support staff, hired April 30, 1979, died June 10, 2023
- ♦ John Oien, hired Oct. 3, 60, died July 28, 2023
- ♦ Maureen Sie, member of administrative staff, hired Nov. 5, 1979, retired Jan. 1, 2000, died Aug. 1, 2023
- ♦ John Travis, member of technical staff, hired March 5, 1963, retired Oct. 1, 1993, died Aug. 6, 2023
- ♦ Lloyd Yuan, member of technical staff, hired Oct. 14, 1985, died July 27, 2023

*Please note: Due to a previous technical issue, this edition of the In Memoriam includes notices for August and September. We appreciate your understanding.*

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