

# METROPOLITAN Airport News™

MARCH 2025

*The Journal of the Metropolitan New York Airport Community*



# 2025

## LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS

Airport leaders share their insights on diversity, workforce, and sustainability.



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March is a wonderful month to reset after a long, cold winter as we prepare for the upcoming renewal of the Spring season. Everyone is coming out of hibernation and shaking off the cold, and the shortest days are behind us as the temperatures begin to rise. The signs are everywhere; for some, it may be the first spring flowers poking up through the ground; I love to take notice of how light it is out at 6:00PM. It feels good to not drive home in the dark. The little things add up to a lot during the change of seasons.

This month is our annual *Leadership Insights* issue, in which we profile local airport and aviation business leaders. As March is Women's History Month, we have selected 14 women to provide a much-needed voice for women in this industry. From terminal executives to entrepreneurs, this diverse group of business leaders represents the best that our airport community has to offer.

The questions we asked were the same for all the women interviewed; it was very interesting to hear their unique responses to the same questions based on their roles and time in the industry. The format of this issue was designed to give the reader an insight into each of the people we highlighted while providing a snapshot of the local market. We delve into their work experiences, challenges, and insights for the future of our industry.

Behind the scenes, I will share that interviewing these women and being with them all together during our cover photoshoot at the Cradle of Aviation Museum was an empowering moment; I could feel the energy in the room. Any event at the Cradle would be impressive, but a private event held just for this powerhouse lineup was out of this world. Everyone got to know each other intimately, connections were made, and appreciation of one another's talents was on full display.

In the words of Amelia Earhart, "The most difficult thing is the decision to act; the rest is merely tenacity." Tenacity is a gift that not everyone possesses.

The women in this issue exhibit tenacity in everything they bring to the table on behalf of our industry, and we thank them for that. I hope you enjoy learning about them and take away something that may inspire you in your own life.

During Women's History Month, I am reflecting on the strong women in my life from generations ago to today. I wouldn't be the woman I am today without the support of many magnificent people who have touched my life. I feel incredibly privileged to have this platform to connect people, highlight businesses, feature worthy charitable ventures, and hopefully encourage people to give back to our local community.

Who can you connect with? Who can you mentor? What cause would you like to support? Who would you like to meet? It all starts with us.

I'll see you around the airports!

**KATIE BLISS**, Publisher  
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**ON THE COVER**

Our special March issue focuses on the leadership insights of 14 phenomenal women at our New York metropolitan area airports. Recently, 11 of these leaders convened at the Cradle of Aviation Museum for a very exciting cover photoshoot beside the PAA Grumman G-21 Goose displayed in the Museum's Golden Age Gallery.

(PHOTO BY BEVERLY HOLDER)

# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## Iris Cummings Critchell, Olympian, Aviator, & Trailblazer



Iris Cummings Critchell poses next to a P-38, many of which she ferried across the U.S. mostly to Newark, N.J.

On January 24, Iris Cummings Critchell, the last living Olympian from the 1936 Berlin Games, died at 104 years of age. Iris competed at the 1936 Games as a 15-year-old in the 200 m. breaststroke. It was at these games that Adolf Hitler wanted to showcase the alleged superiority of Nazi Germany's Aryan athletes.

Upon her arrival in Berlin, Critchell said in a 1988 interview, "Everywhere you went, there were the goose-stepping police and the guards. There was a sense of the impending future, a sense of the wish for dominance by the Germans and Hitler."

However, Hitler was humiliated and proven wrong when African American athlete Jesse Owens, a dominant figure at the Games, won four gold medals in track. His wins were an admonishment to the Nazi claim that Aryans were the superior race.

Although Iris did not medal at the Berlin Olympics, she led the



U.S. women's 200 m. breaststroke as champion from 1936 to 1939.

After the 1940 Tokyo Olympics were forfeited by the hosting country of Japan and later halted at Helsinki, the runner-up host city in Finland, due to the war, Iris turned to her other lifetime passion, flying. While attending USC, she learned to fly through the University's first Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP), graduating from the course in 1940.

In November 1942, Iris became a member of the second Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) class, earning her wings in May 1943. She was assigned to the 6th Ferrying Group at Long Beach, CA, and served with the Air Transport Command until the WASP were deactivated in December 1944. During World War II, she flew dozens of military aircraft across the United States, including the A-20, A-24, B-25, C-47, P-38, P-39, P-40, P-47, P-51, and P-61.

After the war, Iris continued to contribute to aviation education. In 1946, she developed the aviation curriculum and taught at the USC College of Aeronautics in Santa Maria, California.

In 1962, she and her husband, Howard, launched a unique aeronautical program for the Bates Foundation for Aeronautical Education. Until 1990, Iris served as the director of the Bates program at Harvey Mudd College. During her tenure there, she was a faculty lecturer in aeronautics and the chief flight instructor for the program's flight training phase.

In 2015, Iris Cummings Critchell was inducted into the California Aviation Hall of Fame at the Museum of Flying in Long Beach, honoring her over 75 years of work in aviation. ■



*Julia Lauria-Blum*

Julia Lauria-Blum, *Editor-in-Chief*  
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# 2025 LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS

Airport leaders share their insights on diversity, workforce, and sustainability.

(L.-R.): Vidya Ramsammy, Corporate Loss Prevention Associates, Inc.; Monisha Singla, M & R Concessions; Sheti Petro, Fraport USA; Lauren Dascalopoulos, Hawaiian Airlines; Vanita Jagnarain, American Airlines; Coleen DiGiorgio, VRH Construction; Gina Battagliola, JFK International Air Terminal (JFKIAT); Marisa Von Wieding, The New Terminal One at JFK; Elida Espinosa, Duty Free Americas; Sarah Palmer, Delta Air Lines; Karen Ali, JFK Millennium Partners (JMP). PHOTO BY: BEVERLY HOLDER

**T**his March, *Metropolitan Airport News* focuses on women in the aviation industry and at our New York metropolitan area airports. We asked each of these featured women questions about their careers, work in their respective areas of the industry, women in leadership, and sustainability, and here, we offer their one-on-one insight in their own words.

Due to space restrictions, we have selected specific questions and answers from each contributor to share in print. You can find the unedited responses to all questions on our website. In sharing their experience and passion for the aviation and airport industry, their work honors the women who have come before them and today carry their legacy into the 21st Century. ■

# 2025 LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS



## Karen Ali

*Chief Operating Officer (COO) – JFK Millennium Partners (JMP)*

Karen Ali was appointed Chief Operating Officer (COO) of JFK Millennium Partners (JMP) in July 2024. A key senior leadership team member, she oversees Terminal 7 operations, managing customer experience, budgeting, capital projects, risk management, and people leadership. Additionally, she plays a pivotal role during the ongoing construction of Terminal 6, working closely with capital development and construction teams to ensure a seamless transition to the new facilities, coordinating efforts in testing, commissioning, and implementation.

Ms. Ali brings nearly 20 years of experience in operations management, project leadership, and business transformation across multiple sectors, including aviation, to her role. During her tenure at WestJet, she held various senior management roles for nearly a decade. She served as Regional Operations Manager, overseeing the airline's international operations, including the New York airports. As Director of Operations at Lynx Air, she was responsible for implementing and managing all systems, processes, workflows, and procedures during the airline's start-up phase.

### How did you get your start working in aviation?

**Karen Ali:** My journey in aviation began while I was in college, when I took on a summer role as a customer service representative with an airline. That's when I truly caught the "jet fuel" bug! I was immediately drawn to the fast-paced nature of the airport, the constant need to think on my feet, and the collaborative spirit that exists within the airport community—everyone working together to resolve issues and support each other. Over the years, I transitioned into a variety of roles across learning and development, operational excellence, and global operations.

However, no matter where I went, my foundation as a customer service agent remained pivotal. There, I learned valuable lessons in humility, leadership, teamwork, and a deep appreciation for the vital contributions of every member of the airport ecosystem.

### What are the top skills a new airport worker should have to succeed?

**Karen Ali:** The ability to navigate the unknown and think creatively to solve complex problems is absolutely essential. The airport environment is unique—it's fast-paced, highly regulated, and involves constant interaction with various regulatory bodies and stakeholders, often all under the same roof. Being adaptable and comfortable with change is crucial, as no two days are the same.

Additionally, a genuine desire to help people is key to success. Whether it's assisting travelers or collaborating with colleagues, that sense of service and community will always drive success in the airport environment.

### Does your company have internships or other programs to attract young employees?

**Karen Ali:** Yes! Recruitment for our JMP summer internship program begins this month, with several interesting positions available in our T6 project, community outreach, and communications teams. We'll be working closely with York and Vaughn College on

recruitment efforts but are interested in speaking with students from all colleges and universities who have an interest in aviation. One of our talented JMP designers got his start with us as a Vantage Group intern on the LaGuardia Terminal B project, so it's an excellent opportunity to get your feet wet and grow within the company.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Karen Ali:** The insights of women in leadership roles are absolutely critical in fostering innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity. Diverse perspectives drive creativity and open new avenues for problem-solving, and women bring unique approaches to leadership that help challenge traditional thinking. In aviation, where change is constant and complex, having women in decision-making roles allows for a broader range of ideas, which is vital to driving innovation—whether it's in technology, customer experience, or operational efficiency.

Moreover, women leaders are often deeply committed to sustainability and inclusivity, not just as corporate goals, but as essential values that align with the broader needs of society. Their focus on creating inclusive environments ensures that all voices are heard, leading to more equitable and effective solutions. In terms of sustainability, women leaders tend to prioritize long-term thinking, understanding that the health of the planet and the community is key to the continued success of the industry. Ultimately, our leadership helps create an ecosystem where both innovation and social responsibility thrive together. ■



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## Gina Battagliola

*Director Terminal Redevelopment – JFK International Air Terminal (JFKIAT)*

Gina's aviation career began in 1998 at JFK International Airport with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Starting in a clerical role, she quickly progressed to Assistant Office Engineer, gaining experience in various facility construction projects. In 2000, she moved to a Construction Administrator position at 1 WTC. Following the events of 9/11, she transitioned into the private sector, where she became a Senior ANSI-RAB Quality Management Systems Auditor.

Returning to the Port Authority in 2003, she served as Office Engineer for Tenant Construction, overseeing significant airport-wide developments and numerous tenant construction fit-outs. Since 2012, Gina has been with JFKIAT at Terminal 4, culminating in her current role as Director of Terminal Redevelopment. Her goal is to provide global management of construction activities within the Terminal and ensure that planned programming from initial concepts through to closeouts and ORAT align with the company's overall objectives and goals. Her portfolio includes multimillion-dollar commercial construction projects and multiple Delta Expansions, including a comprehensive Transformation Program.

A champion for women's leadership, Gina's contributions have been recognized with awards such as the 2014 Women in Business Award, the 2019 TSA JFK International Airport Partnership Award, and a 2025 Power Women Icon Award. She is passionate about fostering supportive work environments and mentoring female colleagues. Gina is committed to the ongoing redevelopment of Terminal 4 and growth of JFK International Airport community.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Gina Battagliola:** My entry into aviation started with what I jokingly called 'babysitting 40 engineers and inspectors' in a construction clerical role at the Port Authority's JFK Resident Engineers Office. But that experience was invaluable. By actively engaging with the team and learning about their work firsthand, I grew from that initial role to office engineer, project manager, and now Director of Terminal Redevelopment at JFK Terminal 4.

### Was aviation your first choice for your career?

**Gina Battagliola:** No, initially, I was drawn to law enforcement. I even earned an associate's degree in criminal justice and explored opportunities with the PAPD. However, I found the challenges and rewards of working in construction, particularly in the aviation sector, incredibly interesting and very fulfilling. That passion led me to stay in this field and eventually pursue my project management professional accreditation.

### Did you have a mentor at the beginning of your career? Can you tell us about them and how they impacted your career?

**Gina Battagliola:** Absolutely. I have been lucky to have several mentors over the years which have been crucial to my own development. Looking back, I especially appreciate the guidance I received from office engineers **Amir Zandi** and **Komeo Pryor** early on. They were quite different people, but that was their strength. The contrasting approaches and their expertise provided a rich learning environment, while their encouragement and support solidified my commitment to aviation construction.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Gina Battagliola:** While I've seen positive changes in aviation construction, with more women entering traditionally underrepresented roles, there's still much work to be done! Diverse perspectives are essential, and women in leadership bring valuable insights that are critical for fostering innovation, sustainability, and true inclusivity. It's important for women in leadership to not only excel in their roles but also to mentor and inspire the next generation toward continued progress.

As women supporting and empowering other women, we are providing the full potential of a diverse workforce, steering positive change in the industry, and encouraging an environment where everyone can succeed.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Gina Battagliola:** In late 1999, I took a position at the Chief Engineer's Office responsible for overseeing the processing of post-award construction changes for all Port Authority facilities. Working on the 72nd floor of 1 World Trade Center and being in the office on 9/11, surviving this day together with colleagues, has been one of the most memorable days in my career. This day was even more memorable as it was also my 2nd wedding anniversary. ■



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## Lauren Dascalopoulos

*General Manager, Airport Operations – Hawaiian Airlines*

Lauren Dascalopoulos is a passionate and dedicated Airline Manager with more than a decade of experience in the aviation industry. She began her career as a customer service agent and has worked her way up through hard work and a deep commitment to her teams and the industry.

Today, as the General Manager for Hawaiian Airlines at JFK International Airport, Lauren oversees daily operations, driving excellence in customer service, safety, and efficiency while nurturing a culture of collaboration and high performance. Known for her ability to make meaningful connections, Lauren is deeply passionate about empowering her teams and making a positive impact at JFK. Her leadership goes beyond just operational success; she's driven by a genuine desire to foster relationships that bring about change and innovation for the airport and the airline industry. As President of the **Kennedy Airport Airline Managers Council (KAAMCO)**, Lauren advocates for greater diversity and collaboration within the aviation industry. As Chair spokesperson, she leads initiatives that promote innovation and best practices across JFK, further solidifying her reputation as a transformative leader in a male-dominated industry.

Driven by an unwavering passion for her work, Lauren thrives on making a difference, whether through enhancing team dynamics, improving the passenger experience, or contributing to the ongoing growth and success of JFK International Airport.

### Are you a member of any local airport-related civic or business groups?

**Lauren Dascalopoulos:** Yes, I'm the current president of Kennedy Airport Airline Managers Council (KAAMCO).

KAAMCO is a group of airline managers who serve as a respected and influential voice within the JFK airport community. Our collective efforts, conducted in partnership with the Port Authority, foster collaboration, address challenges and advocate for improvements that benefit the airport and its operations.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Lauren Dascalopoulos:** Women in leadership roles at JFK Airport play a crucial part in driving innovation and fostering a culture of sustainability and inclusivity. Their unique perspectives and experiences bring fresh ideas to the table, challenging conventional practices and inspiring transformative solutions in a fast-paced, complex environment. Women succeeding in traditionally male-dominated roles, women at JFK Airport pave the way for others, inspiring the next generation of leaders to continue advancing for a more equitable and forward-thinking aviation industry.

### Did you have a mentor at the beginning of your career? Can you tell us about them and how they impacted your career?

**Lauren Dascalopoulos:** I was fortunate to have a wonderful mentor who left a lasting impact on my career. She was a colleague who always believed in me, even during moments when I doubted myself. Her encouragement pushed me to face challenges head-on—whether it was tackling intimidating tasks or

navigating difficult situations. She had an incredible ability to see potential in me that I couldn't always see in myself. Her unwavering support gave me the confidence to step out of my comfort zone and embrace opportunities that ultimately shaped my career path. I'll always cherish our late-night conversations, where she patiently listened to my fears and reservations, offering wisdom and reassurance.

Her kindness, inspiration, and belief in me motivated me to grow not just professionally, but also as a person. To this day, she remains one of the most inspiring and supportive individuals I've ever had the privilege of knowing, and I am endlessly grateful for her guidance and impact on my journey.

### What makes the New York metropolitan area unique to other aviation/airport markets?

**Lauren Dascalopoulos:** The New York metropolitan area is one of the busiest and most dynamic aviation markets in the world. It serves as a global hub, connecting millions of passengers to destinations across the globe. What truly sets the New York market apart is its incredible diversity—both in the passengers it serves and the workforce that keeps it running.

This creates a vibrant, fast-paced environment where innovation and collaboration are essential to success. Additionally, the unique challenges of managing operations in such a densely populated and high-demand area foster a culture of resilience and adaptability that defines aviation in this region. ■



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# 2025 LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS



## Coleen DiGiorgio

*Marketing Manager – VRH Construction*

Coleen DiGiorgio has dedicated over 35 years to the commercial aviation industry, building a dynamic career that seamlessly bridges airport operations and aviation construction. She began on the front lines at JFK International Airport, serving as a customer service representative for TWA and later American Airlines, where she mastered the complexities of passenger flow management and critical flight scheduling in one of the nation's busiest hubs.

Her deep understanding of airport operations led her to transition into aviation construction, where she has spent the past 24 years with VRH Construction, a highly regarded general contractor and aviation construction specialist. As Marketing Manager, she has played a pivotal role in supporting high-profile projects, including the American Airlines JFK Terminal Redevelopment, the Delta Airlines terminal expansion at LaGuardia, and a state-of-the-art cargo facility at JFK Airport, developed in partnership with the Port Authority of NY & NJ and Realterm.

Coleen continues to leverage her vast industry knowledge and expertise in VRH's marketing and business development sector, helping to shape the future of aviation construction. Her firsthand experience in customer service and management and her ability to foster strong industry relationships make her a key asset in supporting the company's growth.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Coleen DiGiorgio:** I began my career in aviation in 1988 as a part-time agent with TWA—a perfect fit at the time as a stay-at-home mom looking for work close to home. When American Airlines acquired TWA in 2001, I transitioned to American Airlines, but during the transition period, I was offered an opportunity with VRH Construction to support the American Airlines JFK Terminal Redevelopment project. That decision set me on a new path in aviation construction, and all these years later, I retired from American Airlines but continued to build my career in the airport industry, where my passion for aviation remains stronger than ever.

### Would you use a pilotless, autonomous aircraft such as an electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft for short trips?

**Coleen DiGiorgio:** Absolutely, this is the future of aviation. The rise in flying taxis and aerial ridesharing represents one of the most exciting innovations in the industry. Having started my career in commercial aviation, I've had the privilege of traveling frequently, and I can't wait to see if we truly evolve into a world that feels like The Jetsons! Beyond the excitement of new travel possibilities, this advancement also presents incredible opportunities for VRH Construction to contribute to the development of vertiport infrastructure, shaping the next era of air mobility.

### Is there an airport redevelopment project that you are most interested in seeing completed?

**Coleen DiGiorgio:** I would have to say the \$19 billion JFK Redevelopment Program is the project I'm most excited to see completed. This massive transformation will turn JFK into a modern,

21st-century airport, with four major terminal projects reshaping its future. VRH is proud to be involved in several key components, including The New Terminal One, Delta/JFKIAT's Terminal 4, and JMP's Terminal 6. Additionally, we have a long history with Terminal 8, having built the first newly constructed passenger terminal there in 2001, and we're excited to return for upgrades and to enhance the food concession space.

It's an incredible time to be part of JFK's evolution, and I look forward to seeing how these projects redefine the airport experience for passengers and the aviation community alike.

### Do you want to tell us about any sustainability initiatives your company has implemented?

**Coleen DiGiorgio:** VRH is deeply committed to sustainability and environmental conservation. Through our VRH Sustainability Program, we strive to maximize operational efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and promote awareness through education and training. As a proud member of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), VRH actively supports initiatives that enhance environmental responsibility in aviation construction. We require all project teams to engage with USGBC's LEED accreditation programs, ensuring sustainable practices are integrated into our work.

A milestone in our commitment to green building was achieved in 2022 when VRH celebrated the LEED-certified renovation and completion of our headquarters in New Jersey—a testament to our dedication to sustainability in our projects and operations. ■



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## Elida Espinosa

*Regional General Manager, Airport Division – Duty Free Americas*

Elida Espinosa's career trajectory is an excellent example of growth and dedication in the travel retail industry. With over three decades of experience, she has clearly made a strong impact at Duty Free Americas. Her journey from a part-time sales associate to her current leadership role demonstrates a deep understanding of the business's operational and customer service aspects.

As the Regional General Manager of the airport division, her responsibilities not only span overseeing 19 stores, but she also plays a key role in maintaining high operational standards and fostering relationships with airport authorities and partners. Elida's customer service, visual merchandising, and team leadership skills are central to her success. Her ability to guide and support her team to consistently exceed goals speaks to her effectiveness as a manager. Her long-standing commitment to the industry and her position of responsibility offer a wealth of insights into the challenges and opportunities in the travel retail sector.

### Was aviation your first career choice?

**Elida Espinosa:** Initially, I wanted to pursue a career in the health professions. However, when I began working in travel retail 36 years ago, I never anticipated how much it would shift my career path. I quickly became captivated by the environment, the community, and the opportunity to learn various aspects of business, which eventually led me into management.

Once I discovered my strengths in customer service, visual merchandising, coaching, and development, I decided to change direction. Duty Free Americas has provided me with incredible opportunities for growth within the company. I have never regretted that decision, and my drive to continue learning and enjoying each experience is as strong today as it was back then.

### What steps has your company taken to attract qualified workers?

**Elida Espinosa:** Over 60% of the Duty Free Americas workforce at JFK consists of employees who have been with the company for anywhere from 8 to 35 years. This is a testament to the strong culture of teamwork, customer service, training, and dedication we've fostered within the JFK community. We actively recruit from the surrounding Queens area by participating in outreach efforts and career job fairs.

However, we also attract applicants from other parts of New York City. Our close partnership with the Council for Airport Opportunity (CAO) at JFK has been instrumental in helping us attract customer-service-oriented and highly qualified workers.

### What are the key skills a new airport employee should have to succeed?

**Elida Espinosa:** The airport is a dynamic, proactive, and fast-paced environment that demands a resilient workforce willing to go the extra mile to provide travelers with an exceptional and efficient experience. Travel retail, in particular, requires strong

customer service skills and the flexibility to work nights, weekends, and holidays.

There are countless job opportunities at the airport for individuals with diverse skill sets. I believe it's essential for those of us in the industry to engage with the broader workforce and encourage them to explore the many opportunities John F. Kennedy International Airport offers.

### How has networking or involvement in the airport community benefited your career?

**Elida Espinosa:** Being a part of the JFK Airport Rotary Club and the JFK Chamber of Commerce has allowed me to support and participate in numerous events and initiatives. The leaders of these organizations are dedicated, passionate, and selfless, with a strong commitment to giving back to the community, with JFK Airport at the heart of their efforts. Working alongside these individuals and engaging with the airport community has been personally and professionally enriching, constantly inspiring me to do more.

### Is there an airport redevelopment project you're particularly excited to see completed?

**Elida Espinosa:** As I drive through JFK Airport, I'm reminded of how much it has changed over the years with each redevelopment project. It's difficult to pick just one project, but I am most excited about the entire transformation of JFK.

The modern, technologically advanced, sustainable, and much-anticipated redevelopment will be absolutely incredible, and it's something we've all been waiting for. ■



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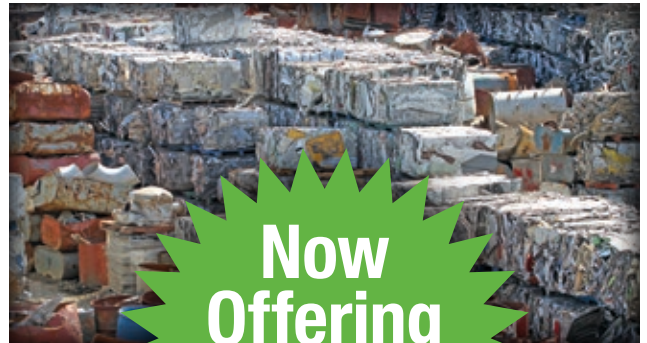
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## Vanita Jagnarain

*Manager, Customer Care – American Airlines*

With more than 15 years in the aviation industry, Vanita is a champion of change who enhances the overall customer experience. Vanita serves as a Manager for Customer Care at American Airlines, located in John F. Kennedy International Airport's Terminal 8, where she helps to lead the customer care organization toward new heights, ensuring that every passenger's journey is marked by efficiency and satisfaction. Before her tenure at American, Vanita served as the General Manager for Travelspan, a charter airline & tour operator. Beyond her career, Vanita channels her passion towards humanitarian endeavors and traveling the world.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Vanita Jagnarain:** Shortly after graduating from CUNY Baruch College, I was offered the role of general manager for an airline and tour operator that provided chartered services to Guyana and the Caribbean from New York. There, I had the unique opportunity to live and work in Guyana. During my 5-year tenure with the company, I learned the foundation of airline operations and was exposed to a variety of industry challenges; this laid the foundation for my passion and love of aviation. When the opportunity presented itself to join one of the legacy carriers, I transitioned to American Airlines in 2014.

### Was aviation your first choice for your career?

**Vanita Jagnarain:** My original plan was to pursue an accounting career path far from aviation. Once my eyes were opened to the world of aviation and the airlines, there was no turning back. Having spent the last 15 years in this industry, I cannot imagine working in any other field.

### Are you a member of any local airport-related civic or business groups?

**Vanita Jagnarain:** American Airlines currently has 20 Employee Resource Groups, and I currently sit on the executive board for our JFK Caribbean Employee Resource Group. Our members educate team members about the importance of the Caribbean markets and raise awareness about Caribbean culture. Over the years, we have made meaningful contributions to both our local community and the Terminal 8 environment, from organizing humanitarian mission trips to the Caribbean to hosting toy & canned food drives to launching unique events like our first T8 Caribbean Heritage Month Celebration and our first-ever Holi and Diwali Celebrations.

### How has networking or involvement in the Airport Community benefited your career?

**Vanita Jagnarain:** Networking and active participation in the airport community is something I wholeheartedly support. I meet

incredible people, foster collaborations, and stay in tune with the industry. Through my role with our American Airlines Caribbean Employee Resource Group, we have collaborated with the Port Authority, other airlines, and business partners. Networking played an integral part in our involvement with the Port Authority Girls in Aviation event, where we saw over 100 young aviators tour one of our 777 aircraft last fall. These experiences have not only enriched my professional network but have also instilled a deep sense of fulfillment by contributing positively to the lives of others.

### What makes the New York metropolitan area unique to other aviation/airport markets?

**Vanita Jagnarain:** The New York Metropolitan area is one of the most culturally diverse places in the world, with dozens of ethnic enclaves and neighborhoods and hundreds of different cuisines and languages. It is a melting pot where you meet people from various countries around every corner, including at the airports. These diverse backgrounds bring countless viewpoints and experiences to the table, which inspires creative thinking and innovation.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Vanita Jagnarain:** The insights of women in leadership roles in aviation are crucial for fostering innovation by illuminating diverse perspectives, experiences, and thought processes, which lead to more comprehensive solutions and improved decision-making that ultimately drive the industry forward.

Studies have shown that diverse leadership teams make better decisions. When diverse minds come together, a wider range of solutions can be explored, leading to more well-rounded innovations and approaches to challenges. ■



American Airlines  
JFK Airport, Terminal 8  
Jamaica, NY 11430  
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## Jane Mrosko

*Sr. Director of Program Services – Travelers Aid International*

For more than twenty years, Jane Mrosko has dedicated herself to the mission of Travelers Aid International, a nonprofit organization focused on improving the travel experience for passengers. Through a network of airport programs and social service agencies, Travelers Aid provides a vital safety net for travelers in transit or distress. Since 2001, Jane has served as the Program Manager at JFK, leading a team of over 100 volunteers and staff to ensure the smooth operation of daily services.

Recently promoted to Director of Program Services, Jane now oversees the development and growth of Travelers Aid programs across the country, extending their impact far beyond JFK. Her deep passion for her work, along with her unwavering commitment to supporting her colleagues, helps foster the continued success and sustainability of these vital programs.

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### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Jane Mrosko:** After earning my MSW from the University of Minnesota, I began my career in medical social work, where I had the privilege of working alongside an exceptional team of healthcare providers. Together, we guided immigrants and refugees through the complexities of the healthcare system, ensuring they received the care they needed.

A move from the Midwest to Queens, NY, led me to the program manager position at John F. Kennedy International Airport, where I now help fulfill Travelers Aid's mission of supporting people in transit and distress.

In this role, I am fortunate to lead a dedicated team of volunteers and staff who offer their time, compassion, and expertise to make a meaningful difference in the lives of passengers. Each day, I am inspired by their selflessness and the positive impact we can have in such a unique and dynamic environment. It is truly a privilege to be part of a community of individuals committed to helping others and uplifting the human experience.

### Does your company have internships or other programs to attract young employees?

**Jane Mrosko:** Travelers Aid proudly welcomes and hosts students seeking to explore the aviation field while developing crucial skills for both their professional and personal growth. Our current roster includes students from local colleges, high schools, and middle schools, all passionate about aviation and eager to gain valuable exposure in the airport environment. Through their volunteer work, students learn about diverse career opportunities, build essential job skills, and earn community service hours—all while pursuing something they truly care about.

We are proud to partner with several local high schools and New York City's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which connects students to career exploration opportunities, and with Cultural Vistas, an organization that fosters meaningful international exchange experiences.

For several years, we have had the privilege of hosting students from Korea, interested in aviation and hospitality, enriching our program with their unique perspectives.

These students, both locally and globally, bring fresh insights that not only enhance our work but also create a more impactful and meaningful experience for everyone involved.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Jane Mrosko:** Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working alongside many inspiring women whose perseverance, hard work, and leadership have greatly influenced my own professional journey. I firmly believe that a diverse workforce, one that reflects the community we serve, is key to our collective success. I am deeply grateful to be part of such an incredible group of peers and leaders at JFK, within the Travelers Aid International organization, and in the broader industry—each of whom is dedicated to fostering inclusivity and innovation. The impact of their contributions to Travelers Aid and JFK is immeasurable, particularly their resilience and compassion for others.

I am especially proud to witness the growing presence of women in aviation, with students and frontline workers being trained and mentored to become the next generation of leaders in this field.

On behalf of Travelers Aid, I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, as well as to the JFKIAT team, for their unwavering support and for creating opportunities that allow our program to enhance the experience of all those who pass through JFK Airport. Thank you for being part of this journey. ■



**Travelers Aid International**  
JFK International Airport – Terminal 4  
Jamaica, New York 11430  
[www.travelersaid.org/jfk](http://www.travelersaid.org/jfk)



## Sarah Palmer

*Deputy Program Director – Delta Air Lines*

Sarah Palmer joined Delta Air Lines in March 2020. She began her career with Delta by working on the new LaGuardia Terminal C project, where she served as General Manager. In October 2021, she moved to John F. Kennedy International Airport and serves as the Deputy Program Director for the Phase 2.5 Redevelopment Project at Terminal 4.

With more than 15 years of experience working on complex construction projects throughout New York City in the Aviation, Waterfront, Higher Education, Healthcare, Private, and Landmarked sectors, she continues to shape the landscape of New York City. She has a proven track record in directing project-wide operations, coordinating with internal and external stakeholders, leading multi-billion-dollar construction budgets, negotiating contracts, controlling expenses, and boosting efficiency and productivity from the start of the project through certificate of occupancy and closeout.

Previous construction projects she worked on include Moynihan Station, various projects at New York University, New York Presbyterian Hospital, Mount Sinai Hospital, multiple New York City Ferry landings, and the Manhattan Cruise Terminal.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Sarah Palmer:** As a native New Yorker, I had always been interested in working on projects that helped shape New York. I knew I wanted the projects I worked on to have meaning, so I initially found myself working on healthcare or higher education projects. I always felt a sense of pride knowing that these projects would help the lives of many people for many years to come. When I was asked to join Delta in 2020, I found a new opportunity to continue to help my community and beyond. I knew that building facilities that could help people connect with the world was something that I could truly feel proud of.

### Was aviation your first choice for your career?

**Sarah Palmer:** I never really saw myself in aviation when considering my career path. I went to college for Civil Engineering, and I knew that I wanted to go into the Construction Management field, but I always thought that meant I would be building skyscrapers in a city. Being able to foster the skillset that I have learned throughout my years in construction to build facilities that help connect people around the world is extremely rewarding, and I am proud that my career choices have led me here.

### Did you have a mentor at the beginning of your career? Can you tell us about them and how they impacted your career?

**Sarah Palmer:** I have been fortunate to have a few mentors throughout my career. Having someone who looks out for your best interest and can help you think outside the box is the main reason I am where I am today. I still have mentors I trust to bounce off ideas, and I believe it is vital to keep those relationships alive while also looking at the future for opportunities you may not have known existed. When I was with my past company, we started a women's network. One of the programs we sponsored was a

mentorship program where we had mentees and mentors submit their bios with what each was looking for from the program. We paired them together for a few months to help foster mentor relationships. Formally or informally, it is very important to find people who you can trust to guide you in your career.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Sarah Palmer:** All of the large project openings have been extremely memorable. From LaGuardia Terminal C to the new Delta One Lounge at John F. Kennedy Airport, each has significantly impacted the community, and I am proud to be a part of these programs. I worked on the LaGuardia Terminal C redevelopment for the first year and a half of my career at Delta, which is now recognized as a World Class Airport. At JFK, we opened the first Delta One Lounge, which is not only the largest lounge in Delta's portfolio but was rated the Best U.S. Airline Lounge by *Forbes* magazine in their 2024 Travel Guide's Inaugural Luxury Air Travel Awards.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Sarah Palmer:** All diversity in the workplace leads to the ability to foster new ideas and innovation. Women in leadership roles are bringing their diverse skills, experiences, and alternate perspectives to the aviation industry, which is helping shape not only the workplace but the ability for travel to be accessible to all. Our work to build facilities that are conducive to all people is paramount. ■



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# 2025 LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS



## Shetl Petro

*Regional Operations Manager – Fraport USA*

In her current role at Fraport USA, Shetl Petro oversees leasing, contract compliance, and business intelligence functions for John F. Kennedy Airport Terminal 5 and Newark Liberty International Airport Terminal B, ensuring that all airport operations, commercial agreements, and performance metrics align with organizational goals and contribute to the growth of the business.

Shetl previously worked as a Concessions Manager for JFKIAT Terminal 4 at JFK Airport and has more than 15 years of experience in the aviation industry. Her background spans finance, airline management, terminal operations, safety & security, and commercial oversight, making her a seasoned professional skilled at navigating all of the aviation industry's complexities.

### How did you get your start working at airports or in aviation?

**Shetl Petro:** I developed a passion for the travel industry at a young age, which led me to an early career in transportation while studying in Germany, working for Deutsche Bahn AG. After moving to the United States to pursue a Finance degree at York CUNY College, I transitioned into aviation, gaining foundational industry experience with international carriers such as Lufthansa, Air Berlin, and Etihad Airways. My time in passenger services provided valuable insights into airline operations, customer experience, and the broader aviation landscape. I later joined JFKIAT Terminal 4, where I gained experience managing the daily operations of a busy international terminal. Throughout my 10-year tenure with JFKIAT, I took on various roles, including Safety & Security Manager and Concessions Manager, further deepening my airport operations and commercial management expertise.

### What are the top skills a new airport worker should have to succeed?

**Shetl Petro:** To succeed in an airport environment, new workers must excel in customer service to assist a diverse range of travelers. Attention to detail is crucial for ensuring safety and security, while time management helps maintain efficiency in a fast-paced setting. Additionally, adaptability and flexibility are essential, as airport operations can change quickly due to weather, delays, or unexpected events.

### Is there an airport redevelopment project that you are most interested in seeing completed?

**Shetl Petro:** One airport redevelopment project I am particularly excited to see completed is the ongoing expansion and modernization of John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK). This ambitious project aims to transform JFK into a world-class hub featuring more modern and spacious terminals and upgraded amenities. Given JFK's importance as a major international gateway, the completion of this redevelopment will not only increase

the airport's capacity and operational efficiency but also boost its competitiveness on a global scale. I am eager to see how these improvements will enhance the passenger experience and streamline airport operations.

### How has networking or involvement in the Airport Community benefited your career?

**Shetl Petro:** Networking and involvement in the airport community have been incredibly beneficial to my career, especially because it's a smaller, tight-knit community where relationships truly matter. What's interesting is that in this small community, it's not about who you work for but the relationships you build. You never know who you might end up working with or for in the future, and these connections can often lead to unexpected opportunities. Over the years, I've created valuable relationships that have supported my growth and opened doors to new experiences, proving the importance of collaboration and trust in this industry.

### Did you have a mentor at the beginning of your career? Can you tell us about them and how they impacted your career?

**Shetl Petro:** Throughout my career, I have been guided by incredible mentors and met great leaders who have shaped my professional journey. Their support and leadership have shown me the power of building and maintaining strong relationships, both personally and for the success of an organization. Inspired by their influence, I mentor college students who aspire to join the aviation industry, sharing my knowledge and experiences to help them navigate their own paths. It's my way of giving back to the community and helping the next generation of professionals succeed. ■



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## Vidya Ramsammy

*President – Corporate Loss Prevention Associates, Inc.*

Vidya Ramsammy began her career in the finance department with Corporate Loss Prevention Associates (CLPA) in 2003 and, during that time, has developed the knowledge and experience to become one of the foremost experts in the aviation industry. As the current president of CLPA, she has proven herself in many advanced training programs, including the TSA, Department of Homeland Security, and Explosive Trace Detection, and she is a New York State certified security officer trainer. Vidya's experience has allowed her to develop and implement security policies, manage security personnel, and conduct risk assessments. Throughout her career at CLPA, she has embraced opportunities for professional growth to adapt to the various changes in our security-minded environment. Vidya graduated from New York City College of Technology and is certified as a New York State Instructor and a Private Investigator by the NYS Division of Licenses. She recently completed the Airport Certified Employee (ACE) certified training program that is recognized by the American Association of Airport Executives.

### Was aviation your first choice for your career?

**Vidya Ramsammy:** Aviation was not my initial career choice; I originally wanted to become a teacher. I believed teaching was a safe and stable career path based on benefits such as summers off, holidays, retirement plans, etc. I also wanted to make a difference by assisting students in succeeding academically and personally.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Vidya Ramsammy:** My journey at the airport began unexpectedly in 2003 when I took a temporary position at CLPA while attending school. Initially, I worked in the finance department; however, as opportunities arose in the security department, I was ready for the challenge. I then discovered numerous career possibilities that encouraged me to shift my career path. Although security was challenging, I embraced the challenge of learning something new each day. Managing CLPA and focusing on customer relations has shaped me into the individual I am today.

### Did you have a mentor at the beginning of your career? Can you tell us about them and how they impacted your career?

**Vidya Ramsammy:** When I was promoted to Security Manager, I had the privilege of having a mentor, then President of CLPA, **Joseph Clabby**. He has guided me throughout my career at CLPA and shared his extensive knowledge and network in the security and aviation industries. His mentorship has allowed me to gain insights into various aviation security-related topics and regulations that I would have taken years to learn independently.

### What are the top skills a new airport worker should have to succeed?

**Vidya Ramsammy:** Some of the fundamental skills that a new worker should have to succeed is to be punctual and have a positive

attitude. Effective communication is crucial in any career as it can help prevent potential disasters. If you see or hear something concerning, it's always essential to over-report rather than under-report. Teamwork is an invaluable asset in the workplace; collaborating with your coworkers can enhance your overall efficiency.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Vidya Ramsammy:** Women in leadership roles are crucial in mentoring and inspiring the next generation of leaders, particularly young women aspiring to become aviation leaders. Women often demonstrate their skills in facing daily challenges and finding practical solutions. Many women can uniquely balance their careers and family life, demonstrating their capability to manage financial and social responsibilities. A supportive working environment that includes men and women fosters innovation and enhances employee engagement.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Vidya Ramsammy:** My most memorable moments are from when CLPA provided essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. We developed safety programs that helped our employees and clients feel more at ease in their work environments. I was also greatly impressed by the dedication of our employees, who showed remarkable teamwork in support of CLPA during that challenging time. ■



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## Mercedes Rendon

*Chief Financial Officer – LaGuardia Gateway Partners*

As the Chief Financial Officer, Mercedes Rendon oversees all of the company's corporate finance and manages stakeholder obligations connected to the terminal redevelopment and management. Prior to her role as CFO, Mercedes was LGP's Controller, with responsibility for the company's accounting operations and financial planning and reporting. A skilled finance executive, Mercedes has more than 25 years experience, including her role as SVP, Financial Controller of SmartStream Technologies. Mercedes is a graduate of Baruch College.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Mercedes Rendon:** After 20+ years in private accounting and fintech, I was looking for a change, a place where I could bring my professional expertise and find renewed passion in a discipline that I love. The opportunity to join LaGuardia Gateway Partners and work alongside the team behind the monumental redevelopment of LaGuardia Terminal B presented itself. The prospect of being part of the transformation of such an iconic landmark was exciting. As a native New Yorker, I could not pass on the opportunity to work on this project, not only to reshape the airport but to also play a role in redefining the travel experience. Eight years later the journey in aviation continues.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Mercedes Rendon:** The most memorable moment of my career by far has been the reopening of Terminal B at LaGuardia Airport. I joined LaGuardia Gateway Partners in 2017 in the early stages of the redevelopment program, and I witnessed the terminal landscape change on an almost daily basis. The new terminal opened in phases, and we had our first milestone with the opening of our eastern concourse in late 2018. That first concourse was transformational and built up even more excitement for the headhouse opening. However, no one could have predicted we'd be opening the headhouse in the midst of a global pandemic in 2020. During an incredibly challenging time for aviation and NYC, the headhouse was a moment of pride. We completed the terminal in 2022—on time and on budget, and the following year, we won World's Best New Airport Terminal from Skytrax.

### Can you tell us about any sustainability initiatives your company has implemented?

**Mercedes Rendon:** LaGuardia Gateway Partners has an unwavering commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship in aviation infrastructure. In fact, Terminal B is the recipient of two LEED® Gold certifications, the first for design and construction and the second in 2024 for its operations and maintenance (O&M) practices.

While we've set numerous sustainability initiatives in place, one of our marquee programs involves waste diversion. Our annual waste audit helps yield an understanding of what comprises our terminal waste and enables us to develop plans to increase our waste diversion in the coming year. In 2024 we started a food donation program with our commercial partners and Gotham Pantry, which both reduced waste and provided food to neighbors in need.

We also installed new AI-powered trash receptacles in the terminal called Oscar, which help guests understand what they can and can't recycle. Guests can hold up their trash items to a camera and the Oscar screens instruct them on what bins to use. As recycling laws differ by state, this system is especially useful to our airport terminal which welcomes guests from all over the world.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Mercedes Rendon:** Women in leadership are an important element toward the prosperity of organizations committed to inclusivity and fostering success in valuable initiatives. At LaGuardia Gateway Partners, our devotion to inclusivity is underlined by our now majority-women-led executive leadership team flanked by myself, CEO **Suzette Noble**, and COO **Klaudia FitzGerald**.

In the past couple of years, we've led Terminal B toward receiving a perfect 5-star rating from Skytrax, the first terminal in North America to achieve a perfect score and recognition as the world's best new airport terminal. In 2024 we were honored to receive Terminal B's second of two LEED® Gold certifications and launched our B-INSPIRED STEM Grant program in collaboration with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which will award an annual \$15,000 grant to a local organization providing STEM programming to Queens residents. LGP continues to be an example of a women-led organization that drives innovation and gives back to the community to whom we love serving. ■



**LaGuardia Gateway Partners**  
LaGuardia Airport Terminal B,  
Flushing, NY, 11371  
[www.laguardiab.com](http://www.laguardiab.com)



## Elizabeth A. Schuette

*President & CEO – The ARK Import Export Center, LLC*

Elizabeth A. Schuette oversees daily operations, strategic and financial planning, and marketing for JFK International Airport's animal health, reception, and quarantine center at The ARK at JFK. Opened in January 2017, The ARK provides necessary, safe and humane animal care services to airlines and their ground handling agents, shippers and brokers, corporate accounts, rescue organizations, and individuals for the import and export of all animals arriving or departing from JFK – including horses, goats, pets, zoo animals, exotics and laboratory animals. All handling staff have received extensive training in the transportation and handling of live animals. The ARK's operations have been certified by IATA's prestigious Center of Excellence for Independent Validators (CEIV) for Live Animal Logistics.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in the aviation industry?

**Elizabeth A. Schuette:** My background and education are in finance/banking and real estate; I began working on the ARK at JFK project in 2015 for ARK Development (the entity that owns ARK's cargo facility in Cargo Area D), creating financial models and drafting the business plan and SOPs for ARK's operations.

### Was working in the aviation industry or at airports your first choice for your career?

**Elizabeth A. Schuette:** No, my previous positions were with financial institutions and private equity. Now, after nearly 10 years in the aviation industry, I have discovered an affinity for this unpredictable yet engaging world of aviation in general and air cargo in particular. I appreciate the unique opportunities for success that the airport offers so many individuals without advanced education. The JFK community has become an extended family.

### How has networking or involvement in the Airport Community benefited your career?

**Elizabeth A. Schuette:** Networking and involvement in the airport community have allowed me opportunities and helped me establish connections. Initially, as an outsider to the aviation industry, it was critical to create strong working relationships with all the stakeholders at JFK—from PANYNJ officials to federal government agencies to airlines and ground handling agents—all played a part in improving the efficiency of ARK's operations.

### How are the insights of women in leadership roles important in fostering innovation and the commitment to sustainability and inclusivity?

**Elizabeth A. Schuette:** While I believe that women provide a uniquely collaborative style and emphasize teamwork, I think it is the interaction among male and female leaders that yields the optimum results in an organization. This approach fosters an environment where diverse voices are heard and valued. Women hold

four out of six senior managers at The ARK. However, we believe that these women were the most qualified for their positions regardless of their sex.

My goal is to encourage greater numbers of young, ambitious women and men to assume leadership positions throughout the JFK community. The future of the aviation industry depends on automation, connectivity, and communication – these skills are embedded in the education and development of the younger workforce. It is incumbent upon current airport leaders to train and develop the next generation.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Elizabeth A. Schuette:** Every day is an adventure at The ARK. We never know what might happen that impacts animals in transit. One memorable event was a shipment of hibernating honey bees that was inadvertently placed next to a heat source at another cargo facility.

The bees awoke from their slumber and were escaping the travel container. The ARK received a panicked call from the ground handler, and we were able to assist.

### How has your company/institution adapted to the sustainability initiatives at our airports?

**Elizabeth A. Schuette:** The ARK actively participates in collaborative efforts to reduce the environmental impact of its operations. The ARK's facility was designed as an environmentally sustainable building. The ARK uses environmentally friendly cleaning and disinfection agents, and we are evaluating the introduction of electric equipment into ground operations. ■



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## Monisha Singla

*Chief Operating Officer – M & R Concessions LLC*

Monisha Singla embarked on her journey as the founder of M & R Concessions in 2013. During her formative years, Monisha honed her skills by contributing her time and talents to her father's restaurants, savoring the flavors of the food service industry. However, her insatiable thirst for knowledge led her down a different avenue, where she pursued a dual degree in Economics and Computer Science from New York University.

Monisha established her own successful enterprise in the fast-paced IT consulting world. Yet, deep within her entrepreneurial spirit, Monisha wanted to return to the airport environment.

Driven by her profound love for both food service and management, Monisha took the bold step of founding M & R Concessions. Since its inception, M & R has flourished under her stewardship, boasting a multitude of concepts at New York's JFK Airport. Monisha manages operations, human resources, and IT infrastructure and spearheads the development of innovative new concepts.

Her passion for the venture has remained unwavering, with each new challenge serving as a wellspring of inspiration to elevate M & R into a veritable powerhouse. Monisha's dedication continues to shine, ensuring that M & R Concessions stands as a beacon, proudly showcasing the finest food offerings New York has to offer at JFK.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Monisha Singla:** I grew up in the airports! My father had stores in JFK since the 90's and I worked with him in the old Terminal 8 and 9. I remember what airports were like before TSA, and I still have my old AA (American Airlines) badge, which was laminated and oddly had my social security number on it. I didn't think I'd end up in aviation, but it seems to be an industry that just pulls you in.

### Was aviation your first choice for your career?

**Monisha Singla:** No! After graduating from NYU in 2004, I became a consultant and did web development for years. Then an opportunity came up, and I figured I'd give it a try, and I haven't looked back since.

### Is there an airport redevelopment project that you are most interested in seeing completed?

**Monisha Singla:** We are very excited about the entire JFK redevelopment. Each terminal is so unique in its own way that as each gets updated, it is amazing to see how an old terminal can become fresh and a new terminal can be built all at the same time.

### What steps has your company taken to attract qualified workers?

**Monisha Singla:** We offer flexible schedules, paid time off, and, most importantly, consistency and the ability to grow. Most of our management has grown from within. We have team members who have been with us for over 10 years, and we plan to keep that going. We know the front lines bring in the money that pays us all. We have a "we all get our hands dirty" policy, and there is no job that we won't all do.

### How has networking or involvement in the Airport Community benefited your career?

**Monisha Singla:** John F. Kennedy International Airport is big, but our community is small! We are like a family and help each other out during weather events and other events like COVID. Being within the airport community has helped us to meet others and find potential opportunities.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Monisha Singla:** Opening our first full post security Dunkin' in Terminal 8. It took a lot of time and planning, but it came out looking great and busy from day one! It was a challenging space for construction and operationally, but we have made it work with tight systems.

### What is the most significant barrier to finding an airport job in our area?

**Monisha Singla:** There are many jobs at the airport, from working at concessions to working with airlines and many other positions in between. Badging is incredibly important for airport safety and security but adds complexity to the hiring process. Initially, the employee must take a security class and test and wait for a badge before starting their position. Following the initial issuance of a badge, they need to be renewed over time and always kept securely. ■



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## Marisa Von Wieding

*Vice President of Operations – The New Terminal One at JFK*

Marisa Von Wieding is Vice President of Operations at The New Terminal One at JFK, the developer and operator of a new all-international terminal in New York. She oversees the operations and customer experience at the terminal, which will transform the international travel experience to and from New York.

Prior to joining The New Terminal One, Marisa led operations and guest experience at the successful redevelopment of LaGuardia Terminal B. She played an integral role in ensuring the operational readiness of the terminal and served as the key liaison with airline partners and the Port Authority of New York and

New Jersey. LaGuardia Terminal B was recognized with a Skytrax 5-star award for World's Best New Airport

Terminal. In addition, Marisa has served in senior roles in operations at major US carriers Delta Air Lines and JetBlue Airways. She spent seven years at JetBlue, where she led all aspects of the New York-based airline's operational performance as Vice President of System Operations. Earlier in her career, Marisa served as Director of Delta's New York JFK operations.

### How did you get your start working at the airports or in aviation?

**Marisa Von Wieding:** My career began while I was in college. I initially interviewed to work in reservations at Pan Am, but they froze hiring. They later offered me a position in the airport cleaning aircraft. I worked the midnight shift and attended school during the day. That opportunity allowed me to grow within the airport environment and gave me a front-row seat to learning everything that goes on behind the scenes.

### What makes the New York metropolitan area unique to other aviation/airport markets?

**Marisa Von Wieding:** There is simply no aviation market like New York. We are home to the world's biggest metropolitan economy, and JFK Airport is the largest international air gateway to the United States. It is an extremely competitive market and as they say, if you can make it here, you can make it anywhere.

The New Terminal One is uniquely positioned to serve the region's growing demand for international air travel in a way that no one else can. Our terminal's widebody capacity will enable our partner airlines to upgauge their aircraft serving this important market while elevating the experience they offer to their customers. I am immensely proud to be a part of this landmark project and to help build something so monumental for New York.

### What is the most memorable moment during your career in aviation or at the airports?

**Marisa Von Wieding:** One of the most memorable moments that left a lasting impression on me was when I participated in *Wings for Autism*. We invited families with autistic children to the airport to help familiarize them with the environment and make future travel easier.

The event made me aware of the importance of accommodating people with different needs and how important it is to offer accessibility programs.

### Did you have a mentor at the beginning of your career? Can you tell us about them and how they impacted your career?

**Marisa Von Wieding:** I was fortunate to have great leaders early in my career. I grew up in the industry in a primarily male-dominated environment. My leaders offered me great opportunities, introduced me to different departments, and treated me as an equal individual and member of the team.

Most importantly, they recognized and valued my contributions which allowed me to grow.

### Are you a member of any local airport-related civic or business groups?

**Marisa Von Wieding:** I am an active member of the Kennedy Airport Airlines Management Council (KAAMCO), which provides an important forum for aviation professionals working at JFK to network and exchange ideas.

### Is there an airport redevelopment project that you are most interested in seeing completed?

**Marisa Von Wieding:** I am biased but my colleagues and I are excited about our progress at the New Terminal One, scheduled to open in June 2026. As the largest standalone airport terminal in the United States, the New Terminal One will anchor the \$19 billion redevelopment of JFK Airport and offer a travel experience like no other.

My team is overseeing all aspects of the operations and guest experience, and we are looking forward to delivering a world-class terminal that will set a new benchmark in global aviation. ■

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# AIRPORT EMPLOYMENT

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**Ground Handling**  
*Internship*  
EWR Airport, NJ

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The CNC Programmer / Machine Shop Lead plays a key role in overseeing machine shop personnel, machinery, and processes to optimize quality, schedule, and cost.

**East/West Industries Inc.**  
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We are looking for Mechanical Assembler to build small/large assemblies and kits using manual and automated tools performing a variety of operations while working from blueprints, manufacturing specifications, procedures, and work instructions under limited supervision.

**East/West Industries Inc.**  
Job No.: 000243  
**Manufacturing**  
*Part-time*  
Ronkonkoma, NY 11779

## AIRFIELD SUPERINTENDENT

This position has overall responsibility for administrative, technical, and supervisory work in the airfield operations of the Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

**Niagara Frontier**  
**Transportation Authority**  
Job No.: 000242  
**Airport & Terminal Operations**  
*Full-time*  
BUF Airport, NY

## ARK AT JFK PET OASIS OPERATIONS MANAGER

The Manager will interact with corporate staff, airport stakeholders and Federal agencies. This individual must be able to effectively manage high-volume and potentially stressful interactions with poise and a calm demeanor.

**ARK Pet Oasis**  
Job No.: 000241  
**Flight Operations**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## ASSOCIATE PROJECT MANAGER

The Associate Project Manager, will play a crucial role in managing their projects as well as supporting the Planning and Development Director and the Business Service Team in effectively managing project portfolios, labor resources, reviewing invoices, change orders, contracts, and more.

**United Airlines**  
Job No.: 000239  
**Janitorial & Facility Services**  
*Full-time*  
EWR Airport, NJ

## INFLIGHT SERVICES SUPERVISOR

The Supervisor - Inflight Services comprises of engaging and supporting a complementary team of flight attendants, encouraging trust with our flight crew members, working closely with other operational teams to deliver outstanding customer service while demonstrating our Core4 values.

**United Airlines**  
Job No.: 000238  
**Flight Operations**  
*Full-time*  
EWR Airport, NJ

## HR COORDINATOR AT JFK

The HR Coordinator provides assistance with and facilitates HR support tasks and activities within the branch.

**HMSHost**  
Job No.: 000237  
**Office & Administrative Support**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## SOHO BISTRO - COCKTAIL SERVER

The Cocktail Server is responsible for taking food and beverage orders; entering orders; serving food and beverages for guests; coordinating with the kitchen to ensure timely service.

**Soho Bistro**  
Job No.: 000236  
**Food Service & Hospitality**  
*Full-time/Part-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## STARBUCKS – SHIFT MANAGER I

The purpose of the Manager I (MGRI) position is to assist Branch management in tactically executing QSR or similar restaurant management operations.

**Starbucks**  
Job No.: 000235  
**Food Service & Hospitality**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## STARBUCKS BARISTA AT TERMINAL 5

The Barista creates a great experience for our customers by providing quality beverages and products, quick service and providing a fun and memorable experience for our guests.

**Starbucks**  
Job No.: 000234  
**Food Service & Hospitality**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABILITY

We are looking for a driven Director of Sustainability that will develop, direct, manage, and implement comprehensive strategic policies for the New Terminal One in environmental compliance with government and stakeholder requirements and commitments.

**The New Terminal One**  
Job No.: 000230  
**Office & Administrative Support**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

# AIRPORT EMPLOYMENT

## **SOHO BISTRO SHIFT MANAGER II**

The purpose of the Manager II (MGR II) position is to assist Branch management in tactically executing complex QSR or Casual Dine or similar restaurant management operations.

**Soho Bistro**  
Job No.: 000233  
**Food Service & Hospitality**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## **EXECUTIVE CHEF**

The Executive Chef is responsible for all culinary operations of multiple restaurants with difficult to complex operations.

**HMSHost**  
Job No.: 000232  
**Food Service & Hospitality**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## **COMMERCIAL HANDYMAN WITH CDL LICENSE**

Street sweeper driver with experience as a maintenance person or in a similar role.

**Aqueous Solutions**  
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**Janitorial & Facility Services**  
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JFK Airport, NY

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**United Airlines**  
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EWR Airport, NJ

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**United Airlines**  
Job No.: 000228  
**Flight Operations**  
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EWR Airport, NJ

## **FLIGHT ATTENDANT**

Endeavor Air Flight Attendants provide a safe and memorable on-board experience for every customer, every day, on every flight by creating a warm and welcoming environment for our guests.

**Endeavor Air**  
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**Passenger Services**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## **REGIONAL AIRPORT SERVICES MANAGER**

Responsible for ensuring that airport operations under your jurisdiction run smoothly, cost-effectively, and in accordance with safety and security requirements.

**Qatar Airways Group**  
Job No.: 000217  
**Airport & Terminal Operations**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## **SHIFT MANAGER I (MGRI)**

The MGRI ensures the restaurant is clean, ready for business, staffed, and operates to high operational standards. The MGRI uses prescribed policies and procedures to make management decisions.

**Starbucks**  
Job No.: 000200  
**Food Service & Hospitality**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## **FACILITY CLEANERS NEEDED**

Technicians to perform janitorial services, high-end facility cleaning, window washing, and floor care.

**Aqueous Solutions**  
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**Janitorial & Facility Services**  
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JFK Airport, NY

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**American Airlines**  
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**Aircraft Maintenance**  
*Full-time*  
JFK Airport, NY

## **FLEET MECHANIC**

Diagnose, service, and repair systems found on heavy equipment, including mechanical and computer electronic controls, air brake systems, transmissions, computer-controlled automatic and manual transmissions, and pneumatic systems.

**DH2 Chauffered Transportation**  
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Sud Aviation SE 210 Caravelle VIRin United livery.

JON PROCTOR

# United Airlines and La Belle Caravelle

## French Twin-Jet Becomes the First to Operate in the U.S.

**BY ROBERT G. WALDVOGEL**  
robertw@metroairportnews.com

As the 1960 decade dawned, jets appropriate for short ranges did not yet exist. But there was always a “first” for everything, and United Airlines took that distinction when it became the first US carrier to order the first short-haul jet just rolling off of the production line. Added to its gamble was the fact that it did not come from the US, but from France, where it was dubbed ‘la belle Caravelle’—or “the beautiful Caravelle”—by its own engineers.

### Design Origins

The aircraft traces its origins to the French Ministry of Civil Aviation’s November 5,

1951 specification for a “moyen courier”—or “medium range”—airliner capable of carrying a 12,000- to 14,000-pound payload at speeds of between 380 and 435 mph on sectors of up to 1,200 miles in length.

The X-210, submitted by then-designated SNCASE, or, simply Sud-Est, most closely conformed to the requirements with three aft-mounted, 6,600-thrust-pound SNECMA Atar turbojets and a 60-passenger capacity.

Progressive iterations resulted in design changes: more powerful Rolls Royce RA.16 Avon engines provided sufficient power so that only two were needed and passenger capacity increased. Designed by Pierre Satre, the resultant and redesignated Sud-Est SE.210 was named “Caravelle” after the

small 15th- and 16th-century sailing ships that connected cities by sea—the same role the intended airliner would fill by air.

### Design Features

The aircraft essentially established the configuration of most of the small-capacity, short-range twinjets that followed it.

In order to reduce program risk and development costs, it employed the de Havilland Comet’s cockpit and forward fuselage, which was the world’s first commercial jetliner. The wings, at a 20-degree sweep, were joined at the fuselage centerline but were devoid of engine mountings to achieve maximum lift on takeoff and therefore be able to use shorter runways.

**Continued On Page 32**



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**Continued From Page 30**

Power was provided by two 10,500 thrust-pound Rolls Royce RA.29 Mk 522 Avon engines mounted on either side of the aft fuselage, thus reducing internal noise, and a cruciform tail eliminated exhaust interference from them.

The cabin, equipped with appropriate galleys, lavatories, and garment storage closets, was wide enough for five-abreast seating and had an 80-passenger, single-class capacity. Vision was through fuselage-lined, Caravelle-signature, triangular shaped windows.

The SE.210 I's prototype first flew on May 27, 1955, and delivery to Air France, its launch customer, occurred four years later, on March 19. It subsequently began service with it on the Paris-Rome-Athens-Istanbul route.

Sparked by an order from Alitalia, the Caravelle III introduced uprated engines, a greater fuel capacity, and higher weights.

Of even greater capability were the Caravelle VIN and VIR versions, the latter of which was ordered by United Airlines.



### United's Caravelle Operations

In order to satisfy passenger demand for jets on both short and long ranges, United made a landmark, \$68 million order for 20 Caravelle VIRs in February of 1960, after its engineers traveled to France to experience its flying characteristics.

“Once the public’s appetite had been whetted by the speed, comfort, and outstanding reliability of the new jet airliner, the operators began to sense the pressure to extend such service to all of their route systems, including the shorter-range

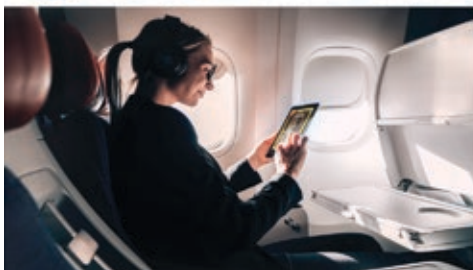
segments,” advises R. E. G. Davies in *Airlines of the United States since 1914* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996, p. 517).

What remained to be demonstrated was such an aircraft’s ability to exploit its speed on very short routes and justify its higher operating costs compared to those of the piston airliners like United’s Convair 240s.

Nevertheless, the order was significant in many ways,

- It represented the first short-haul jet purchase by a US carrier.
- It was for a foreign, and not US, design.
- United represented one of the then “Big Four” US carriers, resulting in a major breakthrough for the French manufacturer.
- It was the third time in as many years that United had introduced a jet type to its fleet, the others having entailed the Douglas DC-8 in September of 1959 and the Boeing 720 in January of 1960.

It later emphasized its status by advertising, “United serves the nation with the world’s largest jet fleet and provides jet service to more US business and vacation cen-



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ters than any other airline.”

Its order for the French twinjet, however, was contingent upon manufacturer Sud-Aviation’s (which Sud-Est had become after its merger with Sud-Ouest), incorporation of numerous modifications. These included higher-capacity, thrust reverser-equipped Rolls Royce Avon 532R (hence the Caravelle “VIR” designation) engines; wing spoilers to immediately transfer the aircraft’s weight from its wings to its wheels after touchdown; a cockpit and windshield redesign to more closely conform to that of its other jet aircraft; new wheels and brakes; larger, but still-triangular-shaped passenger windows; and higher weights.

Its aircraft accommodated 64 in an all-first class, four-abreast arrangement and had a 2,765-pound cargo capacity. They were slated to operate routes of between 200, and 1,000 miles no further west than Omaha, Nebraska, replacing its piston airliners.

Despite the need for ferry flights, they were maintained and overhauled in San Francisco, and their crews were given



instruction at the Flight Training Center in Denver.

United took delivery of its first Caravelle VIR, registered N1001U and named “Ville de Toulouse”—or “City of Toulouse” to reflect the location of its production--on June 12, 1961 and it was inaugurated into service the following month on July 14 on the all-important New York-Chicago route. Its importance, in fact, was multifaceted. It was on it that it offered its highest daily frequency. When operations were later mostly transferred from New York-Idlewild to Newark, the type became the first jet to land there ahead of TWA’s 707s and

Eastern’s DC-8s. And it offered Red Carpet Service on it. The latter was described as “Cocktail service for first-class passengers on all Red Carpet flights.”

Its eventual, 20-strong fleet of French twinjets carried registrations N1001U through N1020U and all but three entered service in 1961.

By early the following year, it operated 67 daily sectors to 16 cities with the type, roughly divided into three areas of concentration: the northeast (Hartford, Newark, New York-Idlewild, and Pittsburgh), the Midwest (Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Des Moines, Milwaukee, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Omaha), and the south (Atlanta, Birmingham, Jacksonville, Miami, and Tampa).

According to its August 15, 1963 timetable, in which it identified the aircraft with the three-letter “CVL” code, it operated sectors such as Hartford-Milwaukee, New York-Cleveland, Philadelphia-Cleveland, Philadelphia-Chicago, Chicago-Cleveland, and Chicago-Des Moines. A multiple-stop

**Continued On Page 34**

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flight entailed a New York-Detroit-Milwaukee-Chicago-Minneapolis routing.

Small-capacity jet economics were not immediately known.

“Initial statistics show that the Caravelle had a total direct operating cost of 152.7 US cents per revenue aircraft mile,” according to the “Untied Caravelles with 227 Changes” article in Key.Aero (June 23, 2021). “The cost per seat-mile of those 64-seaters worked out at 2.40 cents at a load factor a fraction under 60-percent in the first three months of operation. The cost per passenger-mile was 4.02 cents.”

In many ways, the Caravelle’s economics were residual in value.

Passenger acceptance of jet aircraft, first and foremost, was overwhelming due to their speed and comfort, resulting in high load factors, and the draw it provided from competing airlines that still operated piston types.

Pure-jet engine simplicity and lack of propeller-caused vibration reduced downtime and maintenance costs.

And finally, the cost of kerosene that jet

engines burned was half that of the high-octane gas that piston ones used.

### Service Withdrawal

Although United will be forever credited with introducing pure-jet aircraft on short-haul routes in the US, it did not always view the type as having met its expectations and withdrew the last from service in 1972—or a decade after it had entered it. Nevertheless, its fleet had carried more than 10 million passengers over some 117 million miles.

The operation alerted US aircraft manufacturers of the need for indigenous short-range twinjets, which led to the Douglas DC-9 and the Boeing 737, the latter of which United ultimately ordered.

While most of its Caravelles were subsequently acquired by the likes of Transavia Holland and Sterling Airways of Denmark, one, finally passing into the hands of Airborne Express, was displayed at the New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, after the carrier had donated it to it.

“(Nevertheless), the Caravelle

established the French aircraft industry as a major force in airliner manufacturing,” sums up the “Trendsetter: Sud-Aviation’s Caravelle” article in Key.Aero (September 10, 2020). “It was France’s first turbine-powered production aircraft and the first jet-powered short- to medium-haul airliner. The jet’s strong performance sparked collaboration between its manufacturer and other European aviation industries—first on Concorde and then with Airbus, now one of the two predominant airliner manufacturers in the world.” ■



**ROBERT G. WALDVOGEL** spent thirty years working at JFK International and LaGuardia airports with the likes of Capitol Air, Midway Airlines, Triangle Aviation Services, Royal Jordanian Airlines, Austrian Airlines, and Lufthansa in Ground Operations and Management. He has created and taught aviation programs on both the airline and university level and is an aviation author.



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# NON-REV TRAVELER

## COVID Escape from Lima, Peru

BY JONATHAN KATZ

[jkatz@metroairportnews.com](mailto:jkatz@metroairportnews.com)

After having traveled on 21 flights within two months, most of which were roundtrips to Europe, this was going to be our last trip before what was anticipated to be the closing of international travel as we knew it in March of 2020.

Traveling to Lima would be wonderful and a great city to visit; however, I was concerned that, at any time, the news of the COVID-19 virus would come out and restrict our return to the United States. I was worried about potential travel limitations and the potential of having to stay in Lima during an unexpected lockdown.

With the potential of having no control over this non-rev trip, it made me very nervous. I could not sleep well as I constantly listened to the worldwide news about the Pandemic. The ironic twist was that we were convinced by another Delta agent to go to Lima, Peru!

During a lighthearted dinner discussion, my wife Maureen and I told this other agent that, while we were upset with him for suggesting that we go to Lima, we loved and thanked him for the suggestion because if not for him, we would have instead gone to Portugal (Lisbon and Porto) and found ourselves in a much worse situation.

Lima itself was great but not a perfect city by any measure. With an inefficient airport in a terrible area and no rapid public transportation from the airport to the central city, there was absolutely “drop dead” traffic everywhere. But at the same time, Lima is a beautiful city with a spectacular tourist area that is virtually restricted and protected for tourists.



Jorge Chávez International Airport (LIM) is the main international airport serving Lima, the capital of Peru.

The city's tourist area is Mille Flores, which has the best hotels, restaurants, shopping, and beaches. There are actually three major areas of the city; Mille Flores, the Old Historic Central City, and San Isidro – the business center of Lima.

We stayed at the beautiful J.W. Marriott Hotel Lima, a gorgeous 5-star hotel at a great rate overlooking the beaches in Mille Flores. The other Delta agent stayed at a very lovely Ibis Hotel (Accor brand), one block from our hotel, at about half the cost of our hotel. We ate in restaurants with views of the beaches each night, and the trip was wonderful. Temperatures in March were in the low 80s each day and in the low 70s at night... perfect.

Our trip was a 3-day, 2-night vacation (unlike most of our other trips, which are typically 2-day, 1-night trips to Europe). After touring Mille Flores during our first day in Lima and the Old Historic Central City

during our second day, I tried to convince the others that we had seen what we came to see and the last day would only be a duplication of other days. I suggested that we should leave one day early, but they couldn't be convinced.

On March 12th, I listened on the internet that Dr. Fauci was in discussions with then President Trump and that there was going to be an announcement coming at 9:00 p.m. (8:00 p.m. in Lima). The news that I had most feared came over my iPhone: the United States would close all air transportation entry from Europe to the United States. I suddenly had the awful feeling of being a citizen locked out of my own country, and it was a truly terrible feeling.

All I could think about was that flights from Europe to the United States would sell out immediately, which they did, and that travel from Europe to the United States would shift to go via South America and sell

out. All flights did sell out once Peru announced that the country would also ban all flights to and from the United States within the next one to one and a half days.

We immediately paid the bill for dinner, ran to the hotel across the street, packed the limited clothes we brought on the trip, changed our non-revenue reservations to revenue reservations, and grabbed a taxi to the airport (while some others took a bigger gamble and kept their non-revenue status).

The traffic in the central city was awful, as in the past. Lima Airport requires a minimum of three hours for check-in, and we were way under this time limit, but we checked in quickly and then were stuck on what seemed like a “Disney World Line” in order to get through Immigration and Customs.

The Delta Air Line flight was still wide open due to the general Covid threat but with five flights leaving at virtually the same time (American Airlines to Miami, United Airlines to Newark, Delta Airlines to Atlanta, Latam Airlines to JFK, and Jet-Blue Airways oversell or cancellations) inconvenienced passengers would be moved to other planes. Thus, a non-revenue passenger could not take the chance of being left behind.

I couldn't relax until the aircraft door was closed, the flight took off for Atlanta, landed in Atlanta, and our feet were on U.S. soil. Another ironic twist for Delta non-revs was that our flight from Atlanta to JFK was absolutely empty, something at the time that we had never seen before. We knew then that this Pandemic and the travel environment were changing how the world would travel very soon and in the future.

**Note from the Author:** Peru closed all of its air travel to the United States so quickly that travelers who went to the famous area of Machu Picchu and the other regions of Peru were stranded for a general period of 28 days until major U.S. airlines were allowed repatriation flights to transport stranded passengers home. I remember that Delta Air Lines announced later that it had transported more than 28,000 passengers worldwide who had not made it out to their home countries before air transportation to the United States was halted. Of these 28,000 passengers, 5,000 were non-rev travelers. ■



## WINGS OF LEGACY

PRESENTED BY THE AVIATION HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Honoring Our Legacy & Celebrating the Future.

# Join Us for the Aviation High School Street Renaming Ceremony & Reception

## Sunday, March 30, 2025

Alumni, Staff, Industry Partners, Community Members, and Friends of Aviation High School are Welcome to Join in the Celebration!

### Street Renaming Event

1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Aviation High School

The intersection of  
36th Street & Queens Boulevard

### Reception & Celebration

5:30 pm to 11:30 pm

Russo's on the Bay

162-45 Cross Bay Boulevard,  
Howard Beach, Queens

Tickets can be purchased online at:  
[www.aviationhsef.org](http://www.aviationhsef.org)



# UPCOMING EVENTS

The most comprehensive listing of New York & New Jersey airport and aviation events available anywhere online. [www.metroairportnews.com/airport-events](http://www.metroairportnews.com/airport-events)

## **March 5**

**JFK Airport Rotary Club Dinner Meeting**  
Patrizia's of Long Island  
Massapequa Park, NY 11762  
[www.jfkrotaryclub.org](http://www.jfkrotaryclub.org)

## **March 10 & 24**

**Civil Air Patrol Falcon Squadron Meeting**  
John F. Kennedy International Airport  
Jamaica, New York 11430  
[falconsquadron.cap.gov](http://falconsquadron.cap.gov)

## **March 11**

**ADDAPT Dinner Group**  
Heritage Club at Bethpage State Park  
Farmingdale, New York 1173  
[www.addaptny.org](http://www.addaptny.org)

## **March 12**

**JFK Chamber of Commerce Luncheon**  
Speaker: Steve Thody  
Cradle of Aviation Museum  
Garden City, New York 11530  
[jfkairportchamberofcommerce.org](http://jfkairportchamberofcommerce.org)

## **March 13**

**LAAMCO Monthly General Meeting**  
LaGuardia Airport-(LGA)  
East Elmhurst, New York 11371  
[www.laamco.com](http://www.laamco.com)

## **March 13**

**LGA Kiwanis Club Monthly Meeting**  
Virtual Event  
[www.lgakiwanis.org](http://www.lgakiwanis.org)

## **March 13**

**PANYNJ ACDBE Certification**  
Virtual Event  
[www.panynj.gov](http://www.panynj.gov)

## **March 18**

**MWBE Certification Webinar**  
Virtual Event  
[www.anewjfk.com](http://www.anewjfk.com)

## **March 19**

**JFK Airport Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders Association Member Meeting**  
Russo's On the Bay  
Howard Beach, New York 11414  
[www.jfkbrokers.com](http://www.jfkbrokers.com)

## **March 20**

**JFK Air Cargo Association Expo 2025**  
Speaker: Stephanie Abeler, Vice President, Lufthansa Cargo Americas  
Russo's On the Bay  
162-45 Cross Bay Boulevard  
Howard Beach, New York 11414  
[www.jfkaircargo.aero](http://www.jfkaircargo.aero)

## **March 26**

**LaGuardia Airport Committee (LGAAC) Meeting**  
Virtual Event  
[aircraftnoise.panynj.gov](http://aircraftnoise.panynj.gov)

## **March 27**

**KAAMCO Cargo Operations Committee Meeting**  
John F. Kennedy International Airport  
Port Authority Building  
Queens, New York 11430  
[www.kaamco.org](http://www.kaamco.org)

## **March 30**

**Aviation High School Street Renaming Ceremony**  
Aviation High School  
45-30 36th Street  
Long Island City, NY 11101  
[www.aviationhs.net](http://www.aviationhs.net)

## **March 30**

**Wings of Legacy: Aviation High School Boulevard Dedication Dinner & Dance**  
Russo's On the Bay  
162-45 Cross Bay Boulevard  
Howard Beach, New York 11414  
[www.aviationhsef.org](http://www.aviationhsef.org)

## **April 8**

**Republic Airport Commission Meeting**  
Republic Airport-(FRG)  
East Farmingdale, New York 11735  
[www.republicairport.net](http://www.republicairport.net)

## **April 10**

**Bishop Wright Aviation Industry Awards Luncheon**  
2025 Honorees:  
▪ Elizabeth Schuette  
The ARK at JFK  
▪ Frank McIntyre  
JFK Airport Chamber of Commerce  
▪ Rev. Paul Egensteiner  
Metropolitan New York Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Russo's On the Bay  
162-45 Cross Bay Boulevard  
Howard Beach, New York 11414  
[www.christfortheworldchapel.org](http://www.christfortheworldchapel.org)

## **April 16**

**Teterboro Aircraft Noise Abatement Advisory Committee Meeting**  
Teterboro Airport-(TEB)  
Teterboro, New Jersey 07608  
[aircraftnoise.panynj.gov/tanaac](http://aircraftnoise.panynj.gov/tanaac)

## **April 23**

**New York Community Aviation Roundtable (NYCAR) Meeting**  
Virtual Event  
[aircraftnoise.panynj.gov](http://aircraftnoise.panynj.gov)

## **April 24**

**Vaughn College Gala 2025**  
TWA Hotel  
Jamaica, New York 11430  
[www.vaughn.edu/gala](http://www.vaughn.edu/gala)

## **April 24**

**The 50th Anniversary of Operation: Baby Lift**  
Cradle of Aviation Museum  
Charles Lindbergh Blvd.  
Garden City, New York 11530  
<https://www.thepanammuseum.org>

## **May 3**

**Airport Community Charity Soccer Tournament**  
York College  
Outdoor Athletic Complex  
Jamaica, New York 11451  
[www.acf-cup.com](http://www.acf-cup.com)

# May 3, 2025 • York College



## Registration Is Open for the ACF Charity Soccer Tournament

The Airport Community Foundation (ACF) and its partners are proud to introduce the ACF Cup, **a 5-on-5 soccer tournament benefiting the New York airport community**. The ACF Cup brings together teams comprised of players from airport companies for a day of competitive play and camaraderie. Beyond the on-field action, the tournament highlights the importance of supporting the next generation of aviation professionals and strengthening community connections while fostering teamwork and friendly rivalry among the airport community.

**Register Your Company Team Today to Bring Home the Cup!**



[WWW.ACF-CUP.COM](http://WWW.ACF-CUP.COM)



Contact us for additional information (718) 750-4441 or [info@acfhelps.org](mailto:info@acfhelps.org)



Airport Community Foundation, Inc. is a qualified 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization registered in the U.S. under Federal Tax ID: 33-1522353.  
For additional information about the Airport Community Foundation and its partners, visit [www.ACFHelps.org](http://www.ACFHelps.org)



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**\$42<sup>50</sup>**

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unlimited card**

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