



**NLGA STATE-FEDERAL EXCHANGE ON AEROSPACE  
JUNE 1-2, 2026 | WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**SPEAKER BIOS**



**CHRIS ROCHELEAU  
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA)**

Chris Rocheleau was named Deputy Administrator in July 2025. He was previously named Acting FAA Administrator in January 2025.

Rocheleau previously served the FAA with distinction for over 20 years in multiple roles including Deputy Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety; Chief of Staff; Deputy Associate Administrator for Policy, International Affairs and Environment; Executive Director for International Affairs, and Director of National Security Programs, Emergency Operations and Investigations.

Before becoming Acting FAA Administrator, Rocheleau was Chief Operating Officer for the National Business Aviation Association, overseeing aircraft and flight department operations, as well as administrative, financial, and

human resources functions.

Prior to NBAA and his tenure at the FAA, Rocheleau was one of the first leaders of the Transportation Security Administration. He also served as an officer and special agent with the U.S. Air Force, retiring from the USAF Reserve in 2010 as a lieutenant colonel.

Rocheleau holds a bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University and a master's degree from the City University of Seattle.

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**MEGHAN ALLEN**  
**SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS**  
**SPACE FOUNDATION**

Meghan Allen is the Senior Vice President Strategic Engagements for Space Foundation. In this role, Meghan will direct the company's vision and activities with stakeholders in Washington DC while managing customer relationships. An accomplished and forward-thinking governmental affairs executive, she brings a wealth of experience and expertise to our team.

Prior to joining Space Foundation, Meghan served as Vice President of Washington Operations for Sierra Space/Sierra Nevada Corporation since 2013. In this capacity, she excelled as the primary liaison to all space activities, fostering consistent engagement with agencies, the White House,

Congress, trade associations, and industry partners. Her extensive knowledge of current political climates, particularly in the Aerospace and Defense sectors, positions her as a strategic leader. Meghan is an energetic mediator, leveraging her exceptional interpersonal communication skills and tactical diplomacy to secure partnerships critical to organizational success.

From 2005 to 2012, Meghan held the position of Vice President of Washington Operations for United Space Alliance, contributing to the company's senior leadership team. Her passion for the Aerospace and Defense sector dates to her role as Director of Congressional Relations at GenCorp Aerojet, where she spent eight years shaping the company's government relations strategy and emphasizing collaboration with all stakeholders.

Meghan's early career included notable roles on Capitol Hill, working for Members in both the House and the Senate. She also spent a year with a White House Task Force during the Clinton-Gore Administration and contributed to the National Republican Congressional Committee. Meghan holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration with a minor in Economics from George Mason University and an advanced degree in Executive Leadership from Notre Dame University.

Currently, Meghan serves as the Awards Chair on the board of the National Space Club. With over 30 years of marriage to Jeff Allen, she is a devoted mother to Justin, Julia, and Jenny Allen, all three currently pursuing their college education.

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**GREG PECORARO**  
**PRESIDENT**  
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AVIATION OFFICIALS (NASAO)**

Greg joined NASAO in early 2020 as the organization's President and CEO, and is excited to join one of the oldest and most consequential aviation organizations in the nation. Greg brings to NASAO more than 25 years of government relations and executive experience in the aviation and transportation sectors, both in government and associations. He served as vice president of government affairs for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, as assistant secretary for Administration at Maryland Department of Transportation, as well as in other key leadership positions in the public and private sectors. In these roles, he has worked extensively across the Aviation community, with policymakers at every level of government, and with other association leaders. Greg has also been active in a variety of civic and community activities, including service on the City Council in Westminster, Maryland; as a Trustee of the YMCA Youth Foundation of the Central Atlantic Area; and as a member of the Friends Advisory Committee of the Johns Hopkins University Sheridan Libraries.

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**PAUL FELDMAN**  
**VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**  
**GENERAL AVIATION MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (GAMA)**

Paul H. Feldman joined GAMA in 2008 as Vice President of Government Affairs. He is responsible for promoting the interests of GAMA's members before the U.S. Congress and Executive Branch departments and agencies.

Paul was formerly with APCO Worldwide, where he headed the company's transport practice in Europe. Prior to joining APCO, Paul was the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Director for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, based in Brussels. In this capacity, he represented the U.S. Secretary of Transportation and FAA Administrator on all aviation issues for these regions and was the lead U.S. negotiator on the aviation safety bilateral between the United States and the European Union.

Additionally, during his tenure with the FAA, he was Acting Assistant Administrator for International Aviation and held positions in the offices of the FAA Administrator and FAA Deputy Administrator. He also served as Deputy Director of the National Civil Aviation Review Commission.

Prior to his work with the FAA, Paul was a lead staffer on the Aviation Subcommittee in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has also worked in Congress as a chief of staff and legislative director, and has considerable experience with the Congressional appropriations process.

Paul was President of the Aero Club of Washington Board in 2019, a Board member of the Greater Washington Aviation Open, which benefits Veterans Airlift Command and AIRLINK, and a Board member of the Air Traffic Control Association. He also helped lead fundraising and organizational efforts for the Arsenal of Democracy: World War II Victory Capitol Flyover in 2015.



**HEATHER PENNEY**  
**DIRECTOR OF STUDIES AND RESEARCH**  
**THE MITCHELL INSTITUTE FOR AEROSPACE STUDIES**

**Heather Penney** is the Director of Studies and Research at the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies. She conducts extensive research on cutting-edge defense policy with a focus on the leveraging the critical advantage that only aerospace power affords.

**Background:** Prior to joining Mitchell, Penney worked over a decade in the defense industry focusing on defense budgets, supporting program execution, and capturing campaign management. She served in the Washington, DC Air National Guard flying F-16s and G-100s; she has also served in the Air Force Reserve in the National Military Command Center. She has also lectured extensively on subjects such as Air Force capabilities and force structure, organizational command and control, reforming the defense personnel system, and other defense policy issues to a broad number of organizations, universities, and military institutions.

**Areas of focus:** She's a recognized expert on defense policy issues concerning data rights, unmanned systems, software maintenance and operations, autonomy, and force structure considerations. Penney is established voice on Mosaic warfare, JADC2, and future operational concepts associated with information architectures.

**Academic and professional titles:** Penney received her undergraduate degree from Purdue University, majoring in English with a minor in Philosophy. She earned her MA in American Studies from Purdue University. She earned her wings at Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training (ENJJPT) at Sheppard AFB, and qualified in the F-16C at the 149th FTW at Kelly ANGB. She has successfully completed numerous industry executive leadership courses and holds multiple aviation certifications.

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**RONALD J. BIRK**  
**PRINCIPAL DIRECTOR, SPACE ENTERPRISE EVOLUTION DIRECTORATE**  
**THE AEROSPACE CORPORATION**

Ronald J. Birk is the principal director of the Space Enterprise Evolution Directorate at The Aerospace Corporation. In this role, he focuses on the future, leading and collaborating on activities to advance U.S. space capabilities for the space enterprise.

Previously, Birk was the associate principal director of development with the Civil Systems Group at The Aerospace Corporation. In this role, he focused on the development of emerging drivers associated with national priorities, on strategic planning, and establishing strategic relationships with partners, customers, and collaborators.

Birk has 42 years of experience in program management, business development, and strategic planning associated with the development of aerospace systems. His experience includes developing programs, systems, and sensors to advance U.S. space capabilities and related complex systems in the national interest, including national and international plans for Earth observation systems of systems to improve decision support.

Prior to joining Aerospace, Birk was the director of Civil and Military Space Systems at Northrop Grumman, and director of Applied Sciences at NASA.

Birk earned his bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Notre Dame.

**Affiliations:** Birk serves as president for the board of the American Astronautical Society, co-chair of the Consortium for Execution of Rendezvous and Servicing Operations (CONFERS) Technical Working Group, and chair of the WashingtonExec Space Council.



**DR. GEORGE C. NIELD**  
**PRESIDENT, COMMERCIAL SPACE TECHNOLOGIES, LLC**  
**CHAIRMAN, GLOBAL SPACEPORTS ALLIANCE**

Dr. George C. Nield is the president of Commercial Space Technologies, LLC, which he founded to encourage, facilitate, and promote commercial space activities. He also serves as the Chairman of the Global Spaceport Alliance. In March of 2022 he flew to space as a private astronaut onboard Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket. He had previously been the associate administrator for the Federal Aviation Administration's Office of Commercial Space Transportation and was responsible for licensing and regulating all commercial launch activities. Earlier in his career, he held engineering roles at the Air Force Flight Test Center and the OrbitalSciences Corporation, and he was an assistant professor and research director at the U.S. Air Force

Academy. Dr. Nield also served as the manager of the Flight Integration Office for NASA's Space Shuttle Program. A graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, he holds an M.S. and Ph.D. in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Stanford University, and an MBA from George Washington University. He is also a Flight Test Engineering graduate of the USAF Test Pilot School. Dr. Nield is a registered Professional Engineer and a Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.