

# Cheryl Mora

## San Antonio Ninety-Nine Chapter Chairman Member Women in Aviation International



In the early 90s, when I was in my early thirties, I went on my first airline flight to pick up my 16 year old son in Texarkana. This required landing at DFW and flying in a small turboprop into Texarkana, then back from DFW to San Antonio. I remember thinking I would feel much more comfortable up in the cockpit, as we were bouncing along on final approach.

During the flight home I was absolutely awestruck by the humongous aircraft lifting off as I sat glued to the window near the engine, in what I now know was a DC-10.

At the time I was a school bus driver for Judson ISD and took daily walks near the transportation building near Randolph's traffic pattern. After my first flight I really started noticing aircraft everywhere, especially all the aircraft at Randolph flying overhead...T-37s, T-38s, and T-43s at that time. I lost 120 lbs. by dieting & walking over the next year, which gave me the courage, and enough gumption to call a flight school at Stinson. I figured if all those military pilots could fly, I could too!

A friend said they overheard someone say that I was too old to start an airline career. That hurt, but I still persevered. So once again, that's why my favorite quote is "Follow your dreams, because they hold unlimited possibilities!"

San Antonio Aviation had a small cargo operation, which I ended up flying for 10 years later! I started flight training there in February of 1993, got my license on Halloween day that year. I had only planned to become a Private Pilot for fun, but then I discovered I could actually get paid for doing what I loved! I continued to pursue different scholarships, took loans out against my vehicle, then on my husband's truck, and worked three jobs to pay for my ratings. I finally managed to complete my ATP with a scholarship from ISA +21 in 2007. All this, while raising 2 sons was difficult, but so worth it!

I received a grant in 1998 from the Philanthropic Education Organization to help pay for my CFI. I instructed at Wright Flyers until 2000, then Flight Safety in the Mooney program until 2001.

I also won two scholarships from The Ninety-Nines, my multi-engine in 2000, & B-737 in 2008. I hoped to be hired by Southwest Airlines, but there was a huge slowdown in airline hiring at that time. I was flying cargo for Ameriflight at the time.

I was ultimately hired by two airlines, Trans States Airlines in 2001, I was hired in August and was supposed to start training in October. Of course after 9/11 it was canceled.

Shortly before that, I had interviewed for a Part 135 cargo pilot position, but turned down their offer to try for the airlines. When my class was canceled at TSA I called the cargo company back and told them I was available. I flew for them for 2 years, flying contract cargo for UPS. After a back injury, (the pilot was responsible for loading/unloading up to 3000 lbs. of cargo twice a day!) I left that company and began flying for San Antonio Aviation, where I took my private pilot training. They had much lighter cargo loads that I could manage more easily.

I was hired by SkyWest Airlines in 2005. I had nearly completed my training when my former supervisor sent them inaccurate information which resulted in my termination. I couldn't afford a lawyer to fight it, unfortunately. So I returned to my former cargo company and also began instructing at Sky Safety.

In 2006 I was hired by Ameriflight, where I also flew contract UPS cargo until 2009.

In 2010 I tried something totally different and began driving for the railroad, a very interesting job transporting crews to their trains in some of the most out-of-the-way places!

I eventually returned to school bus driving, part-time at Randolph ISD, while continuing to instruct part-time.

I'm now 60 years old, and have yet to fly for a passenger airline, but came very close! I still have a few years left to try for a Part 121 airline before the mandatory retirement age of 65! 😊

**Cheryl will be flying a N5862R, a 1965 Cessna 172 and she will be the the Lead Pilot and aircraft #1 in formation**

# Olga Custodio

**LtCol USAFR (Ret), American Airlines Captain (Ret)  
Executive Director & Treasurer  
Women in Aviation Alamo City**



Olga is a Retired Lt Colonel from the United States Air Force (USAFR) Reserves with 24 years of service and a Retired Captain from American Airlines with over 11,000 flight hours.

She received her commission through Officer Training School in 1980. She was the first Latina and among the first military female pioneers to

graduate from U.S. Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT). Graduating in the top 5% she received her fighter qualification to become the first female UPT T-38 Instructor Pilot at 96th Flying Training Squadron at Laughlin AFB, TX and the 560th Flying Training Squadron for Pilot Instructor Training (PIT) at Randolph AFB, TX.

Flying for American Airlines, Olga flew the Boeing 727, Fokker 100, Boeing 757 and Boeing 767 to the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Europe, Mexico Canada, and U.S. Her education and professional certificates include an Air Transport Pilot certificate with single and multiengine land and instrument ratings, a Flight Engineer Certificate - Turbojet Powered rating.

**Olga is the Formation Flight Coordinator and will be the co-pilot on formation aircraft #2**

# **Dana Perez**

## **Owner and Operator at Aviate ESP**



Dana Perez has been actively flying for 15 years and holds a Commercial Pilot, Certified Flight Instructor, CSIP, and SF-50 Type Rated pilot license.

Dana is the owner and operator of Aviate ESP: Education and Services for Pilots since 2015. She began flying professionally offering Flight instruction and Pilot services to many in the community.

Dana comes from a long legacy of pilots and has been involved in the aviation field her entire life. Her family has soar the skies for many years since her grandfather, father, and brother are also pilots.

She gives credit to her father, Harry Perez, for helping her develop and find her love in aviation.

Her dedication to aviation goes beyond the flight deck, she is a member of Women in Aviation Alamo City Chapter and the Ninety-Nines (an international organization for women pilots).

**Dana will be flying a 1980 Beechcraft Bonanza A36 and will be aircraft #2 on formation.**

# **Veronica Velasquez**

## **Flight Attendant – Southwest Airlines**



Veronica Velasquez is a dedicated aerospace professional with cross-functional experience in aviation. She has been working for Southwest Airlines since 2009, as a skilled Flight Attendant and has held various roles within the company.

Additionally, she flies a Pilatus PC-12 for a South Texas as a part 91 contract pilot. She is a graduate from St. Mary's University and has a commercial single engine pilot license.

**Veronica will be the pilot of a Cessna 140A or Cessna 172 and flying in formation as Aircraft # 3**

# **Lacee Law**

## **Flight Instructor – Sky Safety**



My name is Lacee Law, and I am honored to have been afforded the opportunity to participate in this event!

I've been working as a flight instructor since 2017 at Sky Safety, located at Stinson Municipal Airport. There I've gained a wealth of additional experience, while also pursuing my Bachelors in Aeronautics through Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Worldwide University. My goal is to join the military upon graduation, and commission as a pilot in a Guard or Reserve unit.

I am a recipient of the 2019 WAI Alamo City Chapter Scholarship.

**Lacee is our graphic designer and will be on  
formation as aircraft #4**

# Aurelina Prado

**Supply Chain Management Leader - Boeing  
Development and Fundraising Coordinator  
Women in Aviation Alamo City**



Aurelina Prado is the Senior Supply Chain Management leader at San Antonio responsible for implementing supply chain planning & execution solution across all platforms. Prior to her role she supported Executive Transport Services & Support team as an Operations Manager for 747 Executive Programs.

She has held multiple roles in aviation including; Aircraft Technician, Operations Analyst , Process Engineer, Operations Manager. She holds a Master in Business Administration from University of Phoenix, a Bachelor of Science from Embry-Riddle, and multiple certification targeting business development and strategy leadership.

As a Latina in STEM she has a passion to develop and promote future women into Aerospace careers, and was a co-founder and Executive Director for Women in Aviation Alamo City Chapter. She currently supports the location WAI chapter as the Development and Fundraising Coordinator. She recently became a Lemonade Circle board member promoting leadership opportunity to women of color, and serves as a member of the San Antonio Aviation Advisory Commission.

**Aurelina is serving as the Event Coordinator**