



Matthew Blake – Route Dynamics Corp

Matthew Blake has more than 30 years of management and technical experience in developing and analyzing some of the world's most complex aircraft, spacecraft, and aviation systems. In addition to developing high fidelity simulations of vertical take-off jets, advanced rotorcraft, and enhanced space shuttle guidance systems for NASA, Mr. Blake was the principal architect of ACES, the world's highest fidelity nation-wide air traffic simulation system, and he performed many of the key analyses for the FAA that led to what is now called NextGen. In addition to supporting NASA and FAA, Mr. Blake led the Aerobahn commercial surface traffic management product line with several successful airline customer sales and deployments. Mr. Blake has authored and co-authored over 23 technical publications. He holds a BS degree from the University of California, Davis, and has completed graduate courses from several universities including Stanford and the University of California, Berkeley. Mr. Blake is an AIAA Associate Fellow and holds a private pilot license.



Phil Brooks – United Airlines – Jumpseat Coordinator

Phil Brooks has been in the airline industry for 38 years, and a Dispatcher for 27 years. He's worked for United Airlines since 1999, and has served as the Jumpseat Coordinator for the ADF as well as United's Dispatchers' Union since the early 2000s. A commuter himself, he keeps up on industry issues and individual airline jumpseat procedures for the benefit of his fellow Dispatchers.



Jim DeYoung – United Airlines
Vice President – Network Operations

Based at the Willis Tower in Chicago, Jim manages a team of Flight Dispatchers, Load Planners, Aircraft Routers, Crew Schedulers, Air Traffic Coordinators, and operations leaders that provide 24/7 management to its worldwide flight operation. In addition to the NOC operations team, he's also responsible for the Operations Planning, Engineering, and NOC Safety & Regulatory Compliance departments.

While at college, Jim began his aviation career in St. Louis working at Anheuser-Busch's corporate flight department. He then spent 4 years at Trans States Airlines as a Crew Scheduler, Dispatcher, and Operations Manager.

Jim joined United in 2000 as a Flight Dispatcher, later moving into roles of ATC Coordinator, Dispatch Manager, and Managing Director - Network Operations. In his director role, he led the team through several changes including the Continental/United merger, design and move to the Willis Tower NOC, reorganization to fleet-based operations management, and the development of new irregular operations management and recovery tools. In January of 2018, Jim was promoted to his current role and serves as the carrier's representative to the IATA Operations Committee in addition to membership with the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE).

Jim received his bachelor's degree in Aeronautics and Airway Science from Saint Louis University and resides in Chicago with his partner.



Nathan Doble, NTSB Turbulence Study

Nathan Doble is a transportation research analyst at the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington, DC. Since joining the NTSB in 2012, he has conducted safety studies of gas transmission pipeline systems and speeding-related passenger vehicle crashes. In addition, he compiles the NTSB's annual summary of aviation accident statistics and is responsible for fulfilling aviation data analysis requests from NTSB investigators, media outlets, and the public. Prior to joining the NTSB, Mr. Doble developed air traffic management decision support tools at Metron Aviation and The Titan Corporation. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Aerospace Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and he is an instrument-rated pilot.



Ray Ellis – Delta Air Lines Dispatcher

Ray Ellis started his aviation career in the early 1980's at Gatwick Airport in London UK. He worked for a handling company until joining Delta Air Lines in January 1987.

His airline experience covers a multitude of disciplines including customer service, operations, reservations, aircraft fueling, aircraft weight and balance and aircraft dispatch.

Ray moved to the USA in 1995 and served in multiple training roles before moving to Delta Flight Control in February 2001, serving as a Dispatcher before moving into his current role as Flight Control Training Supervisor in September 2012.



Matt Hafner
Vice President NOC – Southwest Airlines

As Vice President NOC, Matt Hafner oversees the Network Operations Control (NOC), Southwest Airlines' world-class operations center that functions as the "heart" for major operational decisions and coordination and operates 24/7 to keep our airline running.

The NOC houses more than 700 Employees from Dispatch, Maintenance, Flight Operations, Inflight, Ground Operations, Meteorology, Customer Support & Services (CS&S), Corporate Communications, and Proactive Customer Service (PCS). Having all of these voices in one room provides visibility to just about everything that happens in the operation on a daily basis. Strong coordination among all of these groups helps us make the best possible decisions for our Customers. Employees in the NOC partner with work groups across the operation and business to make sure that each flight operates safely and ontime.

Matt began his Southwest Airlines career as a Dallas Ramp Agent, before moving up quickly through the Ground Operations ranks. He has held the Leadership positions of Manager of Ramp and Operations, Station Manager, Regional Director, Director Ground Operations, Senior Director Ground Operations, and Vice President Ground Operations. After the acquisition of AirTran Airways, Matt oversaw the successful integration of the AirTran operation into Southwest's operation while serving as Vice President Integrated Operations. He then joined the NOC as Vice President in 2012.



Dave Holtz
Senior Vice President – Operations and Customer Center

Dave Holtz is senior vice president – Operations & Customer Center for Delta Air Lines responsible for the Operations Customer Center (OCC) and the direction of Delta’s worldwide operations. His responsibilities include numerous other critical operational disciplines, as well as the oversight of Delta customers on SkyTeam and Delta Connection partners.

The Operations and Customer Center (OCC) encompasses a vast array of disciplines, including flight control, strategic operational planning, emergency management, performance engineering, and beyond. The OCC serves as a connection point facilitating interaction from nearly every branch of Delta’s operation and customer teams (Airport Customer Service, In-Flight Services, Technical Operations, Reservations, Customer Care, Social Media, and many more) to make proactive and real time decisions, resulting in record-breaking operational performance.

Dave is an industry veteran with more than 35 years of service with Delta. He is in charge for directing Delta's excellent daily performance results and customer service recovery efforts on the 3200+ daily departures. He has been instrumental in driving Delta’s industry-leading performance as well as irregular operations solutions. Dave is routinely consulted by both governmental and commercial organizations on Delta’s operating strategy.

In his early years at Delta, Dave gained valuable experience in Airport Customer Service in various capacities, including above-wing and below-wing leader and hub control manager. Since joining the OCC as a flight control superintendent in 1990, he has steadily advanced through numerous positions of expanded responsibilities and was named senior vice president in March 2014.



Gene Kim
Strategic Advisor
Operational Strategy and Performance

Gene Kim is a Strategic Advisor for the Operational Strategy and Performance department at Southwest Airlines. His responsibilities include providing subject matter expertise, support, and thought leadership to several areas of the company's long-term operational strategy and vision.

Gene recently served as the Senior Program Manager AIR Network Control Center (NCC) at Amazon Air where he was responsible for building their NCC and developing a staff to manage the Amazon Air network around the world. Prior to Amazon Air, Gene held several leadership positions at Southwest Airlines, including Senior Director Network Operations Control (NOC) Systems, Senior Director Ops

Projects and Initiatives, Director Flight Dispatch, Senior Manager NOC Automation, and Manager

Dispatch Training. Gene has over 28 years of airline experience, previously working at AirTran Airways, United Airlines, Polar Air Cargo, and Korean Air. His experience includes dispatch union and management positions as well as time as a first officer on the B747-400. He has also worked with government, industry, and university organizations on matters affecting air transport and emerging technologies.

Gene served in the United States Marine Corps Reserve while studying Criminal Justice at Old Dominion University from 1985-1989. He and his wife currently live in the Dallas area with their Chocolate Lab. Their children attend Missouri State University and University of Texas at Dallas as a senior and sophomore respectively.



Suzanne Koppanen, FAA Aeronautical Common Services

Suzanne Koppanen is an Aeronautical Information Specialist and Program Manager in the Aeronautical Services Group for the FAA Program Management Organization. She is currently working with the Aeronautical Information Management Modernization (AIMM) program and the National Airspace System Resource (NASR) Program. The focus of the AIMM Program is to utilize authoritative data sources and provide FAA Aeronautical information in one location and in one format for all of the data stakeholders. The first part of this program was completed in 2014 with the deployment of the Federal NOTAM Service and in summer of 2020 this program will deploy the second milestone with the Aeronautical Common Service (ACS). In support of the ACS, Suzanne led a team to consolidate multiple obstacle databases to create the Obstacle Authoritative Source, which provides FAA obstruction data in AIXM 5.1 format to consumers internal and external to the FAA. Previously, Suzanne was with the FAA Aeronautical Charting Office. She holds degrees in Geography and Cartography with Masters degrees in Program Management and Technology Management.



Vik Krishnan, Partner-McKinsey & Company, Moderator

Vik Krishnan is a San Francisco-based Partner in the Airline advisory practice at McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm that serves a broad mix of private, public and social sector institutions. He is an expert on airline operations with 20+ years of experience serving clients on On-Time Performance, cost and operational efficiency, and technology change programs. Prior to joining McKinsey, Vik was a partner and global aviation sector leader at Oliver Wyman, another management consultancy.



Dave McNally – Route Dynamics Corp

Dave was a research aerospace engineer in the Aviation Systems Division at NASA Ames Research Center from 1984 through 2016. He has 21 years of experience in laboratory development, human-in-the-loop simulation, and operational testing of flight trajectory-based automation for en route air traffic controllers and airline dispatchers. Dave led four operational trials at FAA Air Route Traffic Control Centers including that of NASA's Direct-To tool at Fort Worth Center, the first demonstration of continuous automatic search for operationally acceptable, conflict-free routes that can save significant wind-corrected flight time. Dave led the development of NASA's Dynamic Weather Routes (DWR) tool including the highly successful 2+ year trial of DWR at the American Airlines dispatch operations Center. The DWR trial resulted in significant flight time savings for over 500 revenue-generating American Airlines flights. Dave's experience includes software requirements specification, integration of trajectory automation with Controller/Pilot Data Link Communication (CPDLC), and advocacy at all levels from end users to senior management including NASA & FAA Administrators and airline VPs. Prior to his work in air traffic automation Dave was the NASA lead on a joint DoD/NASA/FAA/Industry flight research project to demonstrate the use of Differential GPS for Category III precision landing guidance. Dave is the author or co-author of 38 technical publications, and he holds US Patents on DWR and Direct-To technologies. He is currently Chief Technology Officer at Route Dynamics Corp, a company exclusively focused on meeting unrelenting demand for efficiency in the airline market.

Ben Shermer - Delta Air Lines

Ben Shermer serves as a General Manager Domestic Line Operations in the Operations Control Center at Delta Air Lines. Starting as a certified flight instructor, Ben has over 30 years in aviation having worked for several Part 135, 121 Supplemental and Part 121 Carriers in different capacities including Aircraft Dispatcher, Chief Dispatcher, Operations Manager and Duty Director. Ben currently oversees Domestic Line Operations as well as IT systems development, research, procurement and support for the Flight Control division at Delta. He also is in charge of Dispatcher Training for over 450 Licensed Dispatchers as well as the operation of an in house Part 65 Dispatcher School. Ben's responsibilities include policy, procedure, administration and labor relations as well as extensive training support for Delta's Joint Venture partners KLM, Air France and Aeromexico.



James Spadaro, Laminaar Aviation Infotech Americas, Inc

James Spadaro is an IT professional with over 15 years in the business aviation industry. He started his career with TAG Aviation as a consultant, growing to become their Principal IT Solutions Architect. In 2008, he co-founded and was the CEO of FlightApps, which provided cloud-based IT services to over 150 flight departments worldwide. After the acquisition of FlightApps in 2016, James joined the OneSky Network team as the Director of Sales Engineering. With his unique combination of technical, business and leadership skills, James has excelled in improving IT solutions for hundreds of clients worldwide, in addition to authoring IT study guides like the Citrix Certified Administrator (CCA) for MetaFrame 1.8 (Exam 218) and XP Study Guide (Exam 220) by Syngress Media, Inc.

James holds a business degree from Michigan State University, technical certifications from Cisco, Citrix, Microsoft, and VMWare.



RUTH E. STILWELL

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Dr. Ruth Stilwell is the Executive Director of Aerospace Policy Solutions LLC, an adjunct professor at Norwich University, and Senior Nonresident Scholar at the Space Policy Institute of George Washington University. She is one of the world's leading authorities on integrated space and aviation policy and governance.

A 25-year air traffic controller, experienced labor leader and policy expert, Dr. Stilwell is also an accomplished researcher and lecturer. Her numerous publications and presentations, which cover a wide range of space and aviation, public safety, human factor, administration, financing, and industry reform topics. In addition to her publications, she is a contributing author to McGill University's Global Space Governance: An International Study. Dr. Stilwell's specific areas of expertise include: integrating commercial space operations in civil airspace; projecting air traffic controller retirement and staffing requirements; FAA funding and financing structures; workers' rights and more.

Dr. Stilwell served from 2010-2015 as the industry expert representing air traffic controllers on the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Air Navigation Commission in Montreal. Her air traffic control experience includes 25 years of operational duty at the Miami Air Route Traffic Control Center, two years as liaison to the FAA Requirements Service, and six years as Executive Vice President of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association.

The founding chairperson of the Air Traffic Services Committee of the International Transport Workers Federation, a position she held for four years, Dr. Stilwell currently serves on the Technical Committee on Human Spaceflight Safety of the International Association for the Advancement of Space Safety, which is working to develop safety guidelines for human commercial spaceflight.

Dr. Stilwell earned her BA in Labor Studies at the National Labor College and her MPA and DPA at the University of Baltimore. A resident of Florida, she enjoys skiing, long-distance running, and spending quality time with her stepson.



Mike White, AVTEC

Mike is a 33-year veteran of the airline industry. He began his career at Piedmont Airlines in 1984 where he was responsible for designing, procuring and managing technology projects for Operational Control environments such as Flight Dispatch, MMOC and Ramp Control. Mike has an extensive background and practical application experience in radio, telephony, and IP network solutions across the commercial airline industry. For the past 20 years, Mike has served as Avtec's Vice President of Air Transportation Solutions helping airline clients develop and enhance their operations. Mike and Avtec have always been an advocate and voice for the Flight Dispatcher, and a consistent supporter and sponsor of the ADF since 1997. Mike lives in the Charleston, SC area where you'll find him enjoying his down-time on his boat and giving back to the community through emergency communications via the Amateur (Ham) Radio fraternity. A native Tar Heel, Mike makes sure his clients are treated with the hospitality that is customary in the South.



Russ Williams IFALDA

Got into the aviation industry when enrolled in the Civil Aviation Management course at Georgian College, Barrie, Ontario, Canada in 1986. The program was co-operative in nature, therefore worked as a Ramp Attendant followed by a work term with Transport Canada (Terminal services) in Airport Operations. Both jobs were in YHZ.

After graduation in 1989, worked another term with Transport Canada, before gaining full time employment as an Assistant Dispatcher with Air Nova, a connector airline for Air Canada based in YHZ. While at Air Nova, went on to work as a Load Agent, then finally as a Flight Dispatcher.

Was hired in 1995 by Air Canada as a Flight Dispatcher in YYZ. At the time, Transport Canada had legislated all Flight Dispatchers in Canada must be licensed by June 01st, 1998. This included two written national exams followed by airline specific training. The goal was met and was a proud moment for all, showing respect for the profession. Russ was promoted to Chief Duty Dispatcher in 2004.

Was elected as Local Council Chairperson in 1997 for (Air Canada) CALDA (Canadian Airline Dispatchers Association) and held this position for 5 terms. The terms included bargaining a full collective agreement in 1999, followed by negotiation sessions in 2001, 2003, 2004 and 2009 during the Airline's restructuring.

Was elected National President of CALDA in 2009. CALDA represents the Flight Dispatchers of Air Canada, Jazz Aviation, First Air, Air Transat, Sunwing Airlines, WestJet, Canadian North

Airlines and WestJet Encore. CALDA has over 300 (three hundred) members. As President, has participated in further contract negotiations with Air Canada in 2011, 2016 and 2019 as well as bargaining sessions with all the member groups listed above.

Following election as National President, began to attend aviation industry meetings with Transport Canada, Navcanada, and of course IFALDA (International Federation of Airline Dispatchers) and the ADF (Airline Dispatchers Federation). Through IFALDA, began to attend meetings with ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), notably an emergency session on Global Tracking following the disappearance of MH370 in 2014. Was elected Vice-President West for IFALDA in 2014, Held this position until 2017, when he was elected President during the AGM in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Russ is still active as a Chief Duty Dispatcher with Air Canada, while continuing in his roles as President for both CALDA and IFALDA.

Married with three grown children. Cherishes time spent with family at the Lighthouse cottage in Shediac Cape, New Brunswick (Canada).