

PROFESSIONAL AEROSPACE
CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



PACA Pulse

Winter 2025

PROFESSIONAL AEROSPACE CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION OF NEW MEXICO

PACA Scholarships Announced

Two New Mexico Tech Students Awarded \$2500

Since 1995, PACA has contributed over \$420,000 for endowed scholarships at New Mexico's three major universities. Two students from New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology were recently awarded \$2,500 each.



Emiliano Diaz

convinced in the magic of science."

Emiliano Diaz is currently a junior pursuing an Electrical Engineering major with an Optics minor. "I chose the EE major when I was studying at the Santa Fe Community College. I was stumped on a problem involving imaginary numbers. My tutor casually mentioned that his brother was an electrical engineer who said imaginary numbers were their bread and butter. This was enough to spark my interest - how can the square root of negative one be so powerful? Several math and analysis classes later, I can see and imagine more of the world,

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Albuquerque, NM 87119

www.pacanm.org

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER



By Dena Crain

Welcome to 2025! My term as President of PACA's Board of Directors comes to an end on April 1, when Monica Hilbert becomes your new President.

I'm sad to step down, but excited to see PACA continue to excel under Monica's leadership, her stellar organizational skills and strong relation-

ships within the aerospace community.

As I look back at my term, we've accomplished many of the goals I laid out last year. First, we finalized our new PACA website, making it easier for members and guests to register for luncheons, Briefing for Industry and the annual golf tournament. A special thank you to Zehra Alidina, PACA Administrator, for assuming the colossal undertaking of refreshing the website.

In June, the board held a productive planning retreat. One of our priorities was to strengthen PACA both financially and boost participation at monthly luncheons. Scheduling interesting luncheon speakers and topics in advance definitely encouraged attendance – with an average of 48 per

“As Immediate Past President, I’ll continue to be involved, supporting the vital, dynamic organization PACA has become.”

JOIN PACA

PACA membership annual dues are \$150*

You may apply and pay dues at pacanm.org

A renewal notice is sent out a few weeks prior to the expiration of each PACA membership and is due a year from the payment.

For example, if your dues are paid in August 2024, the membership will expire August 2025.

For more information, contact Membership Chair, Kurt Kuntzelman at Kurt.kuntzelman@elaranova.com or 719-440-4845.

*Dues subject to change.

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per luncheon, compared to 27 in 2023! An unexpected but wonderful side effect? More members have shown interest in serving on committees and the board. Thanks to everyone for stepping up to serve the organization – we know it's a big commitment on top of our busy lives.

In September, the 36th Annual Briefing for Industry brought together more than 500 members, guests and speakers to understand the state of the aerospace sector over three days. Before that, the 6th Annual “Bringing STEM Up to Par” Golf Tournament saw 81 golfers in 21 teams challenging each other for dominance. The event raised more than \$6,000 for the Explora Science Center and Children's Museum of Albuquerque, and the Albuquerque Aviation Academy (formerly SAMS Academy). Enormous thanks to everyone who participated, donated and sponsored these signature, camaraderie-building activities.



We also updated our logo, the visual embodiment of the organization, by acknowledging our roots (stay right there, roadrunner and sunny yellow), switching to a futuristic font, and adding another Southwestern color, turquoise.

With tremendous gratitude we said farewell to Ross Crown as PACA Pulse editor, and Ro Saavedra as editorial support and designer. As a team, they produced each quarterly newsletter for years with style, interesting content and information important to the membership. The new logo debuts here in the redesigned PACA Pulse

newsletter, as does Kelly Koepke as PACA Pulse editor. Some of you met her at monthly luncheons. Please welcome her and this updated design that promises to provide even more information you, as members, can use in your work.

As Immediate Past President, I'll continue to be involved, supporting the board, advisors, members and sponsors who make PACA the vital, dynamic organization that it has become.



New Mexico State Capitol, photo by Jim Bowen

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Dan Crouch, PACA Legislative Liaison Chair

The 57th New Mexico Legislative session commenced on January 21, 2025, and is set to conclude on March 22. Through its legislative advocacy program, PACA's Legislative Liaison Chair actively monitors legislative developments affecting the aerospace, defense, and security industries and communicates these matters to policy-makers.

In collaboration with the PACA Board of Directors and key advocates such as Casey DeRaad of NewSpace Nexus, PACA is dedicated to driving legislative initiatives that support the aerospace sector. Over the past two years as PACA's Legislative Liaison, I've played a pivotal role in addressing key issues impacting these industries, engaging with state lawmakers and industry leaders.

This year, legislative leaders have proposed a 5.7% increase in general fund spending for fiscal year 2025-2026, bringing the total budget to \$10.8 billion. While aerospace has not been a primary focus in previous sessions, certain legislative measures, such as House Bill 93, "Advanced Grid Technology Plans," may have indirect benefits for high-tech industries by enhancing the state's electrical grid infrastructure. However, this bill does not directly address critical challenges facing the aerospace sector in New Mexico.



PACA Legislative Liaison Chair Dan Crouch (left) at the 2024 NM Legislative session, shown here with Lt. Governor Howie Morales

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ann Shubert
Equila Financial, LLC

Chuck Wilson
Aegis Aerospace

Danny Rumley
HII Mission Technologies

Derek Doyle
Sigmatech

Francisco Pallares
Spaceport America

Gerald Burkhart
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Ilona Klosterman
Tau Technologies

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Space Science Corp

Melissa Sisneros
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Michael Courtney
Aztec Discount Supplies

Michelle Taylor
Peerless Technologies

Rebecca Latham
HB Construction

Scott McLaughlin
Spaceport America

Sheila Molina
Fortaleza Programmatics & Analytics

Steven Brown
PSG Global Solutions

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, *continued from page 3*

During this session, PACA aims to elevate industry concerns, including STEM education, workforce development, talent recruitment and retention, New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax credits for both small and large businesses, veteran income tax relief, safety and security measures, and access to secure facilities for classified development and operations.

To further these discussions, PACA, in partnership with NewSpace Nexus, participated in the Aerospace States Association Caucus and hosted a breakfast event for key aerospace stakeholders on March 3 to address these pressing issues (see page 5),

In the next issue of PACA Pulse, we will update the PACA membership on any legislative actions that may affect the aerospace industry.

MaxQ@Kirtland: A New Era for Aerospace & Defense Innovation in New Mexico



A rendering of MaxQ@Kirtland, courtesy of Dekker

By Hilma Chynoweth, Dekker

MaxQ@Kirtland is rapidly emerging as a premier destination for aerospace and defense innovation in New Mexico. Located on a 70-acre site at Kirtland Air Force Base, this high-tech civilian commercial campus is designed to foster collaboration between industry leaders, government agencies, and research institutions.

The development is strategically positioned adjacent to the Air Force Research Laboratory's Directed Energy and Space Vehicles Directorates, offering unparalleled proximity to cutting-edge research and potential government contracting opportunities. With a planned 1 million square feet of office, laboratory, and retail space, MaxQ is designed to accommodate companies seeking to engage with national security, space, and directed energy missions.

Since its groundbreaking, MaxQ has made significant progress. The first phase spans 20 acres and is designed as a mixed-use development, featuring office space, research and development facilities, and amenities such as retail and hospitality. Northrop Grumman became the first anchor tenant in

April 2023, opening a 27,000-square-foot facility focused on space systems engineering, mission operations, and cybersecurity. Additional projects are in various stages of planning and leasing, including multi-tenant office buildings, specialized defense contractor facilities, and retail developments.

MaxQ is made possible through the Air Force's Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) program, allowing private-sector development on military land. This model not only accelerates commercial innovation but also enhances mission-critical capabilities by attracting top-tier talent and businesses to Albuquerque.

For aerospace and defense companies looking to expand, MaxQ@Kirtland offers a unique opportunity to co-locate with key industry players in a thriving ecosystem. With infrastructure development well underway and new tenants preparing to break ground, now is the time to explore the advantages of being part of this dynamic community.

For more information, visit maxqnm.com and follow on [LinkedIn at MaxQ@Kirtland](#).

NM Tech Scholarships, continued from page 1

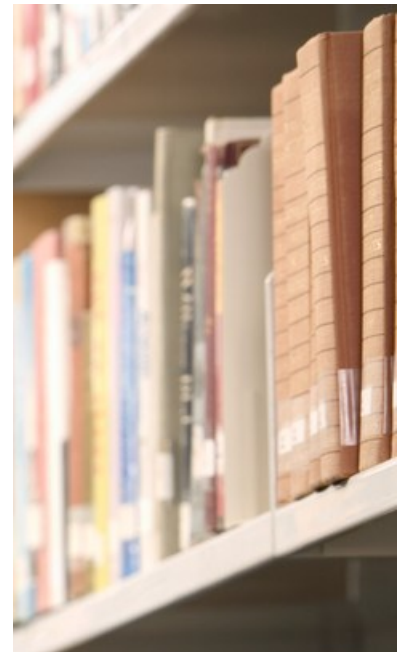


Diego Sanchez

Diaz says that the degree he chose helps him greatly in producing and understanding music, as signal processing and frequency responses are intertwined with the world of music he loves. After graduation, he plans to pursue a career in the Electrical/Optical engineering field.

Diego Sanchez is also majoring in Electrical Engineering and is currently an intern at Sandia National Laboratory. He chose this field because of his passion for solving problems using technology. "My education at New Mexico Tech has strengthened my resolve to take on today's most challenging issues. Thank you again for lightening my financial burdens and enabling me to focus on my research and studies. Your generosity has also inspired me to help others and give back to the community."

After graduating, Sanchez wants to pursue a career within the various national laboratories in order to focus on developing better renewable energy sources as well as dedicating his talents to upholding national security.



"I can see and imagine more of the world, convinced in the magic of science," says scholarship recipient Emiliano Diaz.

Aviation & Aerospace Day in Santa Fe

PACA Board members Dan Crouch, Ed Risely, and Casey DeRaad participated in the Aviation and Aerospace Day at the Roundhouse on March 3. The day began with an Aerospace Caucus Legislative Breakfast, then many aerospace partners exhibited in the Roundhouse. The day culminated in an Avia-

tion and Aerospace Reception hosted by Lt. Gov. Howie Morales for the Aerospace States Association.



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- Recognition on PACA website
- Recognition in PACA Pulse
- Logo on PACA signage at monthly luncheons & events
- Add company literature/giveaways at BFI
- Once per year tabletop display at monthly luncheon & ten minute corporate overview presentation.

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- Seven BFI registrations
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Northrop Grumman Corporation is an American multinational aerospace and defense technology company, with 95,000 employees and an annual revenue in excess of \$30 billion. It is one of the world's largest weapons manufacturers and military technology providers. Among its other projects are the development and production of the

James Webb Space Telescope and the production of the solid rocket boosters for NASA's Sace Launch System program. northropgrumman.com

PREMIER SMALL BUSINESS



Founded in October 2019, NewSpace Nexus is a 501(c)3 non-profit accelerating the pace of space innovation by uniting and igniting the industry. Through the NewSpace Launchpad, stakeholders gain access to workspaces, equipment, programming, rapid prototyping and demonstration, and resources needed for innovation and rapid progress. newspacenexus.org



Studio Southwest Architects is a locally owned creative and collaborative design studio based in Albuquerque. Recent projects on KAFB for AFRL include the Deployable Solar Array Research Lab, RAPID small satellite research lab, and the WARS Simulation Lab. The firm has badged personnel for entry to Sandia National Labs and Los Alamos National Labs. studioswarch.com



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PACA'S MISSION

Promoting and maintaining relations between New Mexico businesses, their subcontractors and vendors, who provide products and services to the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security and related Government agencies. pacanm.org



UPCOMING LUNCHEONS

April 17: Ms. Erin Pettyjohn, SES, AFRL/RD Director
May 15: PACA Endowed Funds Presentation
June 12: TBA

BRIEFING FOR INDUSTRY:

Sept. 8-11, 2025
Ticketing open in May
Bringing STEM Up To Par Golf Tourney:
Sept. 8, 2025

Visit pacanm.org

JANUARY & FEBRUARY LUNCHEONS

In January, Colonel Michael J. Power, 377th Air Base Wing and installation commander at Kirtland Air Force Base, spoke to a record attendance at the PACA monthly luncheon. He also answered participant questions about the state of Kirtland Air Force Base.



Colonel Michael J. Power spoke at the January luncheon, shown here with Casey DeRaad, PACA Program Officer



Danny Rumley of HII Mission Technologies

February's luncheon showcased PACA members and sponsors, now an annual event. Members and sponsors were given the opportunity to present information about their organizations and answer questions.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2024



Participants at PACA's holiday event in December 2024 celebrated the season with food, fun and presents!
Thanks to everyone who came and we'll see you soon at another PACA event.