

Representing aerospace professionals with competence, integrity and action



## Wichita holiday bowling with Santa

SPEEA member **Heather Alexander** and her family wore holiday sweaters to enjoy bowling with Santa on Dec. 16 in Derby, Kansas. The Midwest Membership Activities Committee (MAC) hosted the event which drew more than 130 participants.

### Artificial Intelligence

## IFPTE testifies at Congressional forum on AI

IFPTE President **Matt Biggs** was the only labor representative speaking to a bipartisan Congressional forum on the potential impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on national and homeland security.

"It is IFPTE's view that any work performed by government employees that is deemed an 'inherently governmental function,' 'closely associated with inherently governmental functions' or subject to the national security exemption be completely protected from being replaced by AI by a private sector contractor," Biggs told the forum.

"This threshold is necessary," he continued, "to build and maintain AI expertise within the federal defense industrial base and is essential to the responsible development, innovation, implementation and procurement of AI for the public interest and for our national security."

The Dec. 6 forum was hosted by Senate Majority Leader **Chuck Schumer** (D-N.Y.) and Sens. **Martin Heinrich** (D-N.M.), **Mike Rounds** (R-S.D.) and **Todd Young** (R-Ind.) Biggs was one of 21 panelists invited to speak.

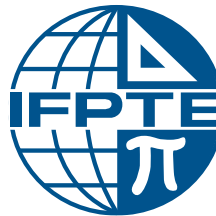
Biggs told the forum the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "much to the dismay of IFPTE

and over our objections," is rushing ahead with a plan to use AI to replace human workers.

The Corps is "implementing remote operations at our nation's hydroelectric dams and has plans to expand these operations to our navigational locks and dams," Biggs said. Instead of having humans on site to monitor dams and locks, operations would be centralized and performed remotely.

"This would not only result in the loss of good-paying, union-represented jobs, it would also put a huge target on these remote operations for a cyberattack, threatening communities located near these dams and businesses and supply chains that rely on our nation's inland waterways," Biggs said.

In the Northwest, IPFTE Local 8A represents civilian workers with the Army Corps of Engineers' Walla Walla District, Washington, and IFPTE Local 97 represents civilian workers at the Corps' district headquarters in Portland, Oregon.



### Executive Board

## Submit petition from Jan. 10-24 to run for SPEEA officer

If you're interested in running for SPEEA president, treasurer or secretary, the timeline to submit your petition is Jan. 10-24.

For the petition, candidate eligibility, requirements and more, see the election booklet at [www.speea.org](http://www.speea.org) (drop-down menu: Councils/Forms, Petitions, Delineations).

The booklet also includes information for pursuing petition signatures through home email if working remote.

SPEEA sends ballots to all members in good standing by Feb. 28. Votes are counted March 13, with new terms starting March 27.

### About the Board

Executive Board members are responsible for setting and administering the annual budget and administering the affairs of SPEEA according to the constitution, bylaws and policies established by the membership and the union councils.

### Reminder on federal laws

**Ban on company/union resources** – Federal law prohibits candidates from using union or company resources to conduct their election campaigns.

For example, do not:

- Use company (or union) resources such as paper, copy machines or email
- Campaign on company time
- Post on union or company bulletin boards

This applies to the candidates *and* their supporters.

**Mailing campaign literature** – Federal law also requires labor organizations to comply with all reasonable requests from any candidate to distribute campaign literature, at the candidate's expense, to members in good standing of the labor organization.

If candidates or their supporters want to send a mailing to members, they will work through a bonded mailing house. Addresses are never provided directly to a candidate.



**President**

Ryan Rule

**Executive Director**

Ray Goforth

**Executive Board**

Dan Nowlin	Treasurer
Shaunna Winton	Secretary
Mike Arrington	NW Regional VP
John Dimas	NW Regional VP
Jeffrey L. Forbes	NW Regional VP
Chris Streckfus	MW Regional VP

**SPEEA Council Officers**

R Matthew Joyce	Chair
Theryl (TJ) Johnson	Treasurer
Byron D. Henderson	Secretary

**Midwest Regional Council Officers**

Emily Forest	Chair
R Matthew Joyce	Treasurer
Benjamin Blankley	Secretary

**Northwest Regional Council Officers**

Mike Pirone	Chair
David Fritz	Treasurer
Raquel P. Cundiff	Secretary

**SPEEA Communications**

Karen McLean	Communications Director
Bryan Corliss	Senior Communications Specialist
Lori Dupuis	Graphic Designer
Julia Groves	Communications Support

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 Phone: 206-433-0991 • 1-800-325-0811

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 Mon-Fri, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
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**WICHITA HALL**

4621 E 47th St. S, Wichita, KS 67210  
 Mon-Thu, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Fri, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 Phone: 316-682-0262 • 1-800-325-0811

**Aerospace supply chain**

# SPEEA's Rich Plunkett named to federal task force



Rich Plunkett

**R**ich Plunkett, SPEEA's director of strategic development, has been named to a new federal task force studying the aerospace industry's supply chain.

The new Aerospace Supply Chain Resiliency (ASCR) Task Force will hold its first meetings Jan. 10-11 in Washington, D.C. The group was authorized by Congress in 2023 and created by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

It is charged with identifying and assessing the availability of raw materials and critical manufactured goods, with respect to "major end items produced by the aerospace industry" per the DOT as well as the nation's airspace system infrastructure.

The Task Force also is assigned to identify best practices and make recommendations on ways

to mitigate risks and support a robust U.S. aerospace supply chain. It is expected to deliver its report to Congress in January 2025.

Plunkett said he looks forward to "working with the DOT and my colleagues on the ASCR Task Force to identify both current and future challenges with aerospace industry supply chains and ever evolving technologies and doing so from the perspective of workers in the industry."

Plunkett has been a SPEEA staff member since 1997. Prior, he spent 12 years at Boeing as an engineer for both commercial and defense programs.

SPEEA is one of three labor unions with representatives on the 16-member panel. The others are the International Association of Machinists (IAM), represented by General Vice President **Jody Bennett**, and the Transport Workers Union (TWU) represented by **Gary Peterson**, TWU's international vice president and air division director.

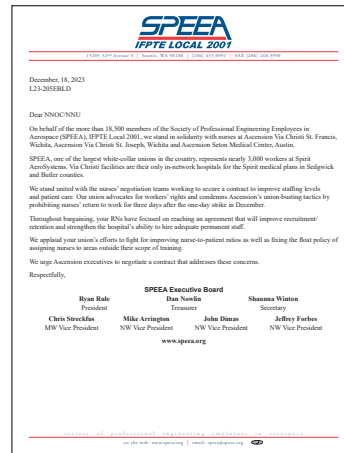
# SPEEA sends support for Wichita nurses

**T**he SPEEA Executive Board voted to send a letter of support to nurses fighting for fair contracts in Wichita.

The nurses are represented by the National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (NNOC/NNU) at Via Christi facilities in Wichita and in Austin, Texas. They are seeking improved recruitment and retention to increase staffing levels for patient care.

See the letter at [www.speea.org](http://www.speea.org).

Learn more about the nurses' efforts at [www.national-nursesunited.org/nnoc/kansas](http://www.national-nursesunited.org/nnoc/kansas).



**Helping Other People Excel (H.O.P.E.)**

# Still time to nominate a volunteer for SPEEA award

**S**PEEA is seeking member nominations for the **Stephen Pezzini Helping Other People Excel (H.O.P.E.) Award** by Friday, Jan. 19.

**How to nominate**

If you know a current dues-paying SPEEA member in any bargaining unit who goes above and beyond for their union and community, fill out the nomination form at [www.speea.org](http://www.speea.org) (drop-down menu:

Councils/Forms, Petitions, Delineations).

The nomination must be emailed to [amberm@speea.org](mailto:amberm@speea.org) by the deadline.

**Members needed for nomination committee**

Members can apply for the Stephen Pezzini H.O.P.E. Award Committee responsible for reviewing the nominations. SPEEA members interested in serving on this committee can email [amberm@speea.org](mailto:amberm@speea.org) by Friday, Jan. 19.





## SPEEA at Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) convention

SPEEA members in red shirts Catherine Owen, Serena Lan and Gordon Yip joined IFPTE International Representative Karen Bellamy Lewis (second from right) at the biennial convention of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), held Nov. 10-12 in Minneapolis, Minn. Convention delegates voted on resolutions related to issues affecting women. They also heard from speakers including AFL-CIO President Liz Schuler, Communications Workers of America President Claude Cummings, U.S. Department of Labor Policy Analyst Kate Miceli and Janet Gerhard, director of public and community affairs with FHE Health. Elected officials speaking at the conference included U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.) and U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.)

## Jumpstart your resolutions with ACE classes

Don't let 2024 creep up on you! Get started now on your resolution toward self-improvement by signing up for a SPEEA ACE class. RSVP today to save your spot and see your resolution through in the new year. For most offerings, capacity is limited.

Learn more and sign up at [canvas.aerocareer.org](https://canvas.aerocareer.org).

### Interested in mentorship?

ACE offers a five-month program, starting in early February. The mentors are both active and retired aerospace engineers. The mentees are college students or current professionals. Mentors and mentees are welcome to sign up – the earlier the better.

### Upcoming classes

#### Building Team Culture through the Ways We Work: Simple Tools to Get Started

Learn about, experience and practice simple tools to help you build the team experience and culture you deserve.



- Wednesday, Jan. 17, from 5 to 7 p.m. Virtual

#### Live and Interactive: Excel V Lookups and Pivot Tables

Tap the power of Excel to manage and analyze large data sets.

- Wednesday, Jan. 24, and Thursday, Jan. 25, from 5 to 7 p.m. Virtual

#### First Aid + CPR/AED

This course focuses on building confidence through practice, teamwork and preparation.

- Saturday, Feb. 3, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. SPEEA Everett
- Saturday, Feb. 10, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. SPEEA Tukwila

Check out more upcoming classes at [canvas.aerocareer.org](https://canvas.aerocareer.org).

## SPEEA Wichita hosts Early/Mid-Career Financial Planning 101

WICHITA – SPEEA Subject Matter Expert Matt Kempf, CFP® will be in Wichita for a joint benefits meeting in January. While there, he will present a financial planning overview geared toward early and mid-career employees at Spirit AeroSystems. This free session is for dues-paying members on Tuesday, Jan. 23 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at Wichita SPEEA. Snacks provided.

### Save a seat

Since space is limited, signups will be on a first-come, first-served basis. To reserve a seat, email [vickim@speea.org](mailto:vickim@speea.org).

### Not a dues-paying member?

Contact your Council Rep or stop by the SPEEA office to sign a membership card.

## TRAINING/ EVENTS

See online calendar for details. RSVP where you plan to attend.

### Midwest Young Professionals no-host social

Friday, Jan. 12, 4 p.m.  
Location TBD

Email [tjtrousdale@gmail.com](mailto:tjtrousdale@gmail.com)  
for location details

MW Young Professionals

## Honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

Celebrations for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 15, will take place across the country.

Join in honoring King's civil and labor rights legacy. See the article in the January issue of SPEEA Spotlight for more about area events.

SPEEA offices close Jan. 15 in observance the holiday.

### New terms for Tellers

## Seeking members to serve on election committee

The regional Teller committees, which oversee union elections and more, need members to run for new terms.

### Election packet and petition

If you're interested, see the petition and eligibility details online, at [www.speea.org](http://www.speea.org) (drop-down menu: Councils/Forms, Petitions, Delineations).

Petitions and statements must be submitted between Jan. 10-24 to the nearest SPEEA office or email [petitions@speea.org](mailto:petitions@speea.org).

### About the Tellers

The Tellers manage the election process, work on Council district delineation, and review the annual auditor's report and SPEEA financial statement.

# Former SPEEA staff wins state award



Chelsea Mason-Placek

Former SPEEA Legislative Director **Chelsea Mason-Placek** has been honored by the Washington Workforce Association as one of its workforce partners of the year.

Mason-Placek brings “a really holistic strategy around helping

individuals who are experiencing layoffs,” said **Samuel Bradshaw**, the business solutions manager for WorkForce Central, the Pierce County agency that connects job seekers, employers and community organizations to help jobless people get the kind of training that local employers seek.

Mason-Placek has been a workforce development director with the Washington

State Labor Council (WSLC), AFL-CIO, since 2021. In that role, she seeks alternatives to plant closures and layoffs, and when they can't be avoided, she helps workers enroll in job retraining and re-employment programs offered through various federal and state programs.

She was SPEEA's legislative director from 2011 to 2019, then served in the same role for IAM District 751 before moving into her current position. Mason-Placek also is a labor representative on the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges.

The Washington Workforce Association is a statewide organization comprised of local workforce development boards from around the state. The local boards coordinate the various federal state and local workforce development initiatives with a goal of identifying future job trends and training workers to fill them.

# SPEEA members applying for WEU Negotiation Team

**W**ICHITA – The Wichita Engineering Unit (WEU) Bargaining Unit Council (BUC) is seeking applicants for the WEU Negotiation Team. The deadline to apply is Friday, Jan. 26.

The WEU contract, which expires Dec. 1, 2024, covers more than 1,000 SPEEA-represented employees at Spirit.

## Recommended requirements

- Regular SPEEA member for the past three years.
- Active member for a minimum of two years in the past three years – examples include serving as a Council or Area Rep, Executive Board member or active on a SPEEA committee. *Note:* Members currently on the Tellers Committee or Judicial Review Committee cannot serve on the Negotiation Team at the same time.
- Must attend a negotiation team orientation session to learn more about the negotiation process and what to expect in terms of time commitment.

## Orientation session (pick one)

Both orientations will start at 4:30 p.m. at the SPEEA Wichita office.

- Tuesday, Jan. 16
- Wednesday, Jan. 17

Email [vickim@speea.org](mailto:vickim@speea.org) to reserve your seat.

## To apply

The application form is online at [www.speea.org](http://www.speea.org) (drop-down menu: Bargaining Units/Current Negotiations). The completed form must be sent via email to [vickim@speea.org](mailto:vickim@speea.org) by 4:30 p.m., Jan. 26.

# Executive Board mini-minutes – Dec. 7

**Attendees:** Ryan Rule, Dan Nowlin, Shaunna Winton, John Dimas, Mike Arrington, Jeff Forbes, Chris Streckfus

**Council officers:** R Matthew Joyce, Byron Henderson, David Fritz

**Guests:** Jimmie Mathis, David Garrett

**Staff:** Ray Goforth, Rich Plunkett, Steve Spyridis, Robin Fleming, Matt Kempf, Karen McLean, Amber Musselman, Pauline Tamblyn

At their regular meeting, the Board:

- Approved costs not to exceed \$2,200 for SPEEA IFPTE Vice President **Ryan Rule** to participate in the IFPTE Legislative Advocacy Conference
- Approved up to 40 hours SPEEA-paid time each for **John Dimas, David Garrett, Jimmie Mathis, R Matthew Joyce, Emily Forest, Dan Nowlin, Shaunna Winton** and **Ryan Rule** to participate in the IFPTE Legislative

Advocacy Conference.

- Approved funding of \$2,250 plus taxes for room rental, food, soda and water for a reception with legislators in Topeka, Kansas, the end of January 2024.
- Approved up to 24 hours SPEEA-paid time and \$250 registration each for up to three members to attend the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute.

## Follow SPEEA on social media



# UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULES

## NORTHWEST MEETINGS (ALL TIMES PT)

Week of January 8, 2024	
Tuesday, Jan. 9	4:30 p.m. NW Membership Activities
Tuesday, Jan. 9	4:30 p.m. SPEEA Tellers
Wednesday, Jan. 10	4:30 p.m. SPEEA Diversity
Thursday, Jan. 11	3:00 p.m. SPEEA Council
Week of January 15, 2024	
Tuesday, Jan. 16	3:30 p.m. SPEEA Legislative & Public Affairs
Wednesday, Jan. 17	4:00 p.m. SPEEA Governing Documents
Wednesday, Jan. 17	5:00 p.m. NW Governing Documents
Thursday, Jan. 18	4:00 p.m. Executive Board
Week of January 22, 2024	
Monday, Jan 22	4:30 p.m. NW Legislative & Public Affairs
Tuesday, Jan. 23	4:00 p.m. SPEEA Organizational Planning
Tuesday, Jan. 23	5:00 p.m. NW Women's Advocacy
Wednesday, Jan. 24	4:30 p.m. NW New Hire/Young Members
Thursday, Jan. 26	4:00 p.m. SPEEA Veterans

## MIDWEST MEETINGS (ALL TIMES CT)

Week of January 8, 2024	
Tuesday, Jan. 9	6:30 p.m. SPEEA Tellers
Wednesday, Jan. 10	6:30 p.m. SPEEA Diversity
Thursday, Jan. 11	5:00 p.m. SPEEA Council
Week of January 15, 2024	
Tuesday, Jan. 16	4:30 p.m. MW Legislative & Public Affairs
Tuesday, Jan. 16	5:30 p.m. SPEEA Legislative & Public Affairs
Wednesday, Jan. 17	6:00 p.m. SPEEA Governing Documents
Thursday, Jan. 18	4:30 p.m. MW Young Professionals
Thursday, Jan. 18	6:00 p.m. Executive Board
Week of January 22, 2024	
Tuesday, Jan. 23	6:00 p.m. SPEEA Organizational Planning
Thursday, Jan. 26	6:00 p.m. SPEEA Veterans



Meetings are virtual/hybrid and subject to change/cancellations. See online regional calendars at [www.speea.org](http://www.speea.org) for details.