



'We Build Our Destiny'



Join us during Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month as we celebrate those who flew faster, higher & farther to achievements in aviation. Do you have something to say? Share your story with FocusFAA. ([https://my.faa.gov/site/emailForm.html?send_to=LQO7UTPNT4wRKmERD%](https://my.faa.gov/site/emailForm.html?send_to=LQO7UTPNT4wRKmERD%2Fppo0V3SXN2bfT2IMivHQtkcrhsdtUUVV9uob%2FWse2Pyx1VKDehHKt9rsb7z9hQvvjAPRLWvoBq9AnY2Vd3RANzMzPYV7qq7NXEYKe6kKwia9EGF&sut20FAA%20Feedback&returnPage=/content/myfaa/en/focus.html&name=Focus%20FAA)

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Annabelle Flores shares the story of her personal journey from teaching high school in the Philippines to becoming a Program Management Analyst in the Program Management Organization (PMO) (<https://my.faa.gov/org/linebusiness/ato/pmo.html>) . She recently completed a detail in the FAA's Office of Talent Development, Organizational Effectiveness and Executive Development Group, AHD-300 and talked with Focus FAA about her career path and her support for workplace diversity.

Where did you grow up and when did you come to the United States?

Born and raised in the City of Manila, Philippines and graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor's Degree in Education major in Communication Arts and Master of Arts in Educational Management.

I taught high school speech and drama, grammatical structure and spelling before migrating to the U.S. in 1986.

When did you join the FAA and what positions have you held with the agency?

I started working for the FAA in 1992 in the Security office for one year and promoted after a year under an upward mobility positions at the Air Traffic Control System Command Center (ATCSCC) in Herndon, VA from 1993, for 16 years

When I moved to the town of Alexandria, I transferred to the PMO's Aviation Weather & Aeronautical Services Group, AJM-33 as a Program Management Analyst. I recently completed a detail assignment as Senior Advisor to the Director, Office of Talent Development, Organizational Effectiveness and Executive Development Group, AHD-300, in the planning, development and execution of an agency-wide Executive Training Curriculum.

Did you have any prior aviation experience? What is your area of expertise?

I worked at the Air Traffic Control System Command Center (ATCSCC), in Herndon, Va. for 16 years as a Management and Program Analyst. I don't have prior aviation experience but I provided Business Management tasks such as fund certification and acquisition management. I was considered an expert in the pay-setting tool requirements, provided staffing, compensation, classification and benefit services for organizational customers and the field facilities. I also supported employee relations, labor relations, and



Annabelle Flores

training functions. In addition, I acted as an expert source referring to permanent change of station (PCS) moves, travel guidelines, and administrative processing tools and responsibilities when managing and accepting different duties as assigned

How did you become involved with the National Asian and Pacific American Association (NAPA) and the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC)? What have been your contributions to these organizations?

I have taken a leadership role in strengthening the FAA culture through activities and organizations that foster respect and appreciation for diversity. I serve as the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Regional Director and served as Vice President for the National Asian & Pacific American Association (NAPA), one of the FAA National Employee Affinity Groups. While on detail supporting the Director of Executive and Organizational Effectiveness (AHD-300) during which I supported programs such as the Rotational Program and Diversity & Inclusion. Through these experiences and my focus on supporting a culture rich in diversity, I have come to appreciate several areas in particular that support diversity in the workplace.

Diversity can refer to any number of things, like different points of view. Sara Ellison, an MIT economist, said, "Having a more diverse set of employees means you have a more diverse set of skills, which could result in an office that functions better." Not only does a diverse set of skills promote FAA's mission for safer and more efficient air traffic, but it adds more experience to work more effectively.



Annabelle Flores, fourth from right, with fellow officers and representatives of NAPA at a recent FAPAC conference.

How do you view diversity and its value?

As a member of FAPAC and NAPA, I have seen employee development and the sharing of cultural experience as a way to foster new opportunities and networking across organizations. By engaging in these groups (Asian and Pacific Islander descent not required for participation), employees learn something new. As noted in a Wall Street Journal article on building workplace culture through affinity groups, these groups help employees get new ideas, build working relationships, and find mentors that share personal interests. Employees also become empowered, assuring them that differences are assets.

As the economy becomes increasingly global and our workforce becomes increasingly diverse, organizational success will depend on the ability to manage diversity in the workplace effectively. Toward that end, I note that, as attitudes toward diversity originate at the top and filter downward, executive and managerial team commitment is key to supporting diversity at all levels of the workplace. I also emphasize the need to incorporate diversity policies into all aspects of the organization's function and purpose.

I remember [ATO Chief Operations Officer] Teri Bristol had a weekly message on diversity and inclusion. Supporting workplace diversity occurs at all levels, and she mentioned that what ATO offers strengthens us, serves the community, and attracts our future workforce.

Both formal and informal training can support diversity in the workplace. An example of formal training is the Program for Emerging Leaders (PEL) which focuses on leadership development, particularly to help employees prepare to be managers. During my rotation in the Office of Talent Development, I supported the development of another formal training opportunity, the Executive Training Curriculum, which provides coaching and knowledge of policy and constitutional matters.

Informal training opportunities are also plentiful and valuable. For example, NAPA hosts brown bag seminars – open to everyone – on career management, conflict resolution, and improving leadership.

Speaking of diversity, what does Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month mean to you? How do you plan to commemorate it?

In the Philippines where I grew up, the elder generation is highly respected in family life. A child would greet their grandmother by taking her hand and press it on their forehead as a gesture showing respect. While not necessarily something that would occur in the workplace, this example illustrates how communication patterns vary by culture which, in turn, can inform our workplace interactions.

May is Asian, American Pacific Islander (AAPI) month. We usually have activities and festivities showcasing the contributions of the AAPI community that enrich our nation

May 15-19 is the FAPAC conference in Washington, D.C.



Annabelle, second from left, with fellow NAPA members at a diversity event at DOT headquarters. From l to r: KC Yanamura, Kevin Le, Zena Huen, Bing Huang, and Thong Vu.

May 25 is DOT event and Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao is the speaker.

What traits do you admire most in others?

Integrity is #1 in my list. I am a firm believer in “Doing unto others what you would have others do unto you”!

What’s the best advice you’ve received or would offer?

We do what we do best — for a reason or two — but what really matters is how we can make a difference and to have an impact on each and everyone’s life and belief. If you know what tickles you, found your “halo,” what your passion, please do not allow anyone or anything to hinder that. If others

can do it, we can do it, too! We are like carpenters – we build/create and get to design our own future. We have only one life to live — Make it count, make it our own and make a difference!

What are your personal interests and passions?

Giving back to the community! I count my blessings by sharing my talents and skills to make people happy!

We do what we do best - for a reason or two - but what really matters is how we can make a difference - to have an impact on each and every one’s lives – how to make it count and make it your own. If others can do it, we can do it too! What footprints would you want to leave behind?

In my spare time, I teach yoga and Zumba classes and I’ve performed Hawaiian and hula dances at events such as the FAPAC conference, May festivities , Mission of Mercy and both local and international community

I love traveling and am fortunate to have visited not only states in the continental United States but also Australia, New Zealand, London, Heidelberg, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and other European countries, as well as Mexico, the Caribbean and Virgin Islands. I also write poems on my spare time, wrote “Kingdom by the Sea,” which is based on Edgar Allan Poe’s “Annabel Lee.” I have an interest in event planning and volunteering to perform in a home for the aged and senior citizens places and some Asian and Filipino ministries activities, became a part of my passion of making people smile and making a difference in the lives of people who mostly are deprived of attention and affection. I also mentored interns and students who are now professionals in their own chosen field of endeavors.

My parents live in Manassas, VA. I have two sisters and three brothers. I also have two daughters, (Marian, a Graphic designer, and Mia, a dental hygienist) ages 30 and 27 whom I single handedly raised as a single mother. They are my greatest achievement in life that I am so proud of.

Do you have future professional and personal goals and/or achievements you'd like to mention?

My contributions to FAA's workplace diversity have been recognized and applauded. As one of my mentors, Ravi Chaudhary, Executive Director, Regions and Center Operations (ARC-2), says, "Annabelle's commitment to workforce diversity pays big dividends for our Agency—these value-sets are fundamental to our nation and give us the ability to bring new ideas and ways of doing business in an ever-changing world. I'm proud to serve alongside her in the FAA!"

This agency needs good people. People are our best investment. They are at their best when they are happy and contented. I bring sunshine to the workplace environment with merely just my presence and positive outlook and demeanor.

Top Photo: Annabelle Flores wore Hawaiian attire during her dance performance with her partner at a recent FAPAC conference.



Annabelle, left, with her daughters, Marian, middle, and Mia. The trio attended a Great Gatsby-themed birthday party.

[Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month \(https://my.faa.gov/focus/article-search.html?q=myfaa:focus/Campaigns/2017_Asian_American_Pacific_Islander_Heritage_Month\)](https://my.faa.gov/focus/article-search.html?q=myfaa:focus/Campaigns/2017_Asian_American_Pacific_Islander_Heritage_Month)

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Anthony Milligan
2 days ago

Great story about one of my favorites, My wife and I still talk about how thoughtfull you were during our time in Herndon. You epitomize the following quote.

~~"Work joyfully and peacefully, knowing that right thoughts and right efforts will inevitably bring

about right results." James Allen



Eva Ngai
2 days ago

~~Congrats for the great article on you. I am proud to know you. Thanks again for being so nice to me when I first started. I really appreciate it.



Catherine Huth
2 days ago

Such a nice article and I really loved the pictures! Congratulations!



Lizett Culley
2 days ago

Such a wonderful article, congratulations on your achievements. I like all your pictures, in particular the one with your daughters. Thank you for your contributions and fostering cultural diversity in the workplace and the professional development of our workforce. Maging masaya sana ang araw mo!



Maria
Florentino
1 day ago

~~I felt tears of joy reading the article. Congratulations! I hope to meet you one day.



Rose Moore
1 day ago

Annabelle, you are wonderful! Congratulations!



David Chien
1 day ago

~~Not only would I agree with you Ravi, but she is also a good person. It is very hard to find people like Annabelle, who are both talented and genuinely nice! I loved reading her story. That was just too cool for words! And her advice was applicable to everyone. If we all came to work with her happy attitude, what a world it could be!

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