

Candidate Statement for AIAA Council Chair 2022-2023

Cherie L. Johnston



Cherie L. Johnston, B.S., MBA
Chair Candidate Prospectus, AIAA Orange County Section

We currently exist in one of the most exciting technologic cross-roads in human-history! There is no more pivotal time than right now to participate in our chosen fields of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Personally, I am passionate, focused and incredibly high energy towards our industry. This year, I have made it my mission to become the Chair of your AIAA Orange County Council, to lead the local section out of the stagnant rut it has fallen into, back into a vibrant, diverse and premier Aerospace and Space organization for our community.

This past year while serving on the OC Council, as the only voting female elected to the board, and one of the few directors not serving my 3rd, 4th, 5th or even 10th consecutive term, I wondered how this local organization affiliated with the prestigious international AIAA, located in the heart of Southern California, fell victim to the stagnant ‘*way it’s always been done here*’ syndrome. Your local AIAA Council needs a breath of new *innovative* life and a gentle reminder that its purpose is to function as a Professional Trade Association representing and serving **all** of its membership in the OC and the countless other Aerospace/Space companies located here. As a leader in one of our nation’s Aeronautic hubs, I will tirelessly strive to see that the OC companies that are currently *under-represented* or *not represented at all* have a member join to participate and a voice in our newly established activities. Especially our many OC Universities, who currently have had close to no engagement with the Council the past few years!

This term, if elected, I plan for your Council to re-engage all existing and prospective members in OC, so **together** we can host in the local community:

Business Roundtables, Speaking Events, Networking & Professional Development Opportunities,
Corporate Tours, a Career Fair/Resume Workshop, Social Mixers, Policy Discussions/Debates,
University Engagement, Mentorship/Protegee Relationships

About Me: I am an Aerospace professional and local entrepreneur who first moved to Orange County in 1985. I obtained both my undergraduate and graduate degrees from Chapman University. Further, I raised my son in the OC, who attended Mater Dei High School, then UC Irvine, obtaining 3 Aerospace/Mechanical Engineering degrees and employment as a rocket

scientist. I did this, while his father served a 20-year career in the U.S. Marine Corps. I have been with Panasonic Avionics for nearly 9 years now. Further, for over 12 years I ran a non-profit organization, as an unpaid volunteer in our OC community, supporting local military children of every branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Thus, in addition to our local Aerospace and Space ecosystem, I am intimately familiar with all of our local OC military installations.