



## Meet Your APA Strike and Tactical Operations Planning Committee



These pilots were among about 120 APA members who picketed at LGA on May 1.

On May 1, APA staged one of the largest pickets in airline history. More than 3,000 pilots showed up across 10 domiciles to support our drive for a new contract. While this show of unity required every single person who took the time to be there, there was also a major driving force behind the pilots: the APA Strike and Tactical Operations Planning Committee, also known as STOP.

“A lot of people don’t know who we are, because we haven’t been needed,” STOP Committee Deputy Chair CA Andrea Hoover says. “We’re the guard dogs of our new contract. We’re responsible for engaging the pilots and bringing the union to them. We want the membership to understand that their involvement matters.”

This incredible group of volunteers has been working tirelessly for months. CA Hoover and STOP Committee Chair CA Steve Pacheco both came on board right before the Strike Authorization Vote was announced. “It’s been seven days a week since then,” CA Hoover says.

STOP has found themselves touring the country in the last several months. CA Pacheco and CA Hoover both participated in Concourse Conversations at all 10 domiciles, encouraging members to get involved. “We’re incredibly engaged,” CA Hoover says. “This new contract is important

enough for us to chase down pilots to talk to them.” But it hasn’t just been concourse events. “We’re sending out texts, robo calls, emails, mailers, and even directly calling the membership.”

Yet there is more to STOP than just getting the pilot group involved in the Strike Authorization Vote. “We also find ourselves at the pilot recruiting events. Our goal is for pilots coming in to fully understand what’s involved with being a pilot at American Airlines,” CA Pacheco says.



STOP Committee volunteers assisted the 200-plus APA members who participated in informational picketing at LAX on May 1.

“We also want them to know what being a part of APA looks like. They have to know the union that will represent them. But they also need to know to prepare themselves for the possibility of a strike – mentally, financially, etc.”

CA Hoover adds, “We have a lot of fresh faces. This union is constantly evolving. We have to figure out the best way to bring the union to the pilots. We’ll take a look at the unions at other carriers. If something works there, we won’t reinvent the wheel.” On

the other side of that coin, she says, “If things didn’t work for APA in the past, we’re not going to try that again. It takes a lot to get 15,000 pilots involved.”

Yet getting a large pilot group involved in such a short time is just what STOP did on May 1. “We put together one of the largest pickets in American Airlines’ history in pretty much a week,” CA Pacheco says. “We work alongside the STOP chairs at each individual base. We tell them what we’re looking at, then help them get the permits they need, and support them any other way we can. That might be signs for the picket, or pens, or business-type cards.”

But more than anything, there is one big thing that STOP wants you to know. “Keep involved. Stay engaged. If you’re mad, or you’re happy, send a Sound Off; each one is read. You can call us directly,” CA Hoover says. “We were tasked by the Board of Directors to get the pilot group involved, because pilot involvement is what’s moving the needle on the table. And it’s critical in this phase of our careers – from those retiring in a month to those in Indoc now. This new contract might be the difference for those retiring to get one extra paycheck. And for the new hires, this will dictate what your next several years look like. At the end of the day, we’re all wearing the same wings.”



## STOP Committee Chair CA Steve Pacheco



CA Steve Pacheco spoke to the media during the PHL picketing event on May 1.

When it comes to serving others, CA Steve Pacheco is no stranger to the concept. A career Marine, he joined American Airlines in 2016. It was his dream job. Yet from his perspective, achieving your dream doesn't mean the work stops. There's always more to be done.

"I was hearing a lot of complaining about how this place could be better. But I believe that if you want change, you have to be a part of that change," CA Pacheco says. "We have to help those that can't help themselves."

CA Pacheco got involved with STOP on the domicile level in 2019. He was named Deputy Chair of the national committee last October, and he became the Chair in March after his predecessor, CA Gemma Meehan, joined the Board of Directors.

CA Pacheco knew from a young age that flying was for him. "My father was in the Air Force. I fell in love with aviation watching planes fly over in England. I always knew it was something I wanted." As the son of a servicemember, his path was clear. "I joined the Marine Corps 23 years ago, after graduating from Texas Tech. I received my ratings through the Corps."

Having served his country all over the globe – in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East – CA Pacheco hung up his military uniform in 2022, after a 22-year career in the Marine Corps. He flies the

A320 these days, but he has spent time on the MD-80 as well as the 737. He's also got three sons; one is in the Coast Guard, another is a student at the University of Texas at Arlington, and his youngest son is a high school baseball player.

"When you picture the classic Marine, that's Steve," STOP Deputy Chair CA Andrea Hoover says. "He's an incredibly stoic and professional pilot. He's a great Chair for STOP." Indeed, the work he is putting in on behalf of APA members is certainly nothing to sneeze at. "I'm up at 3 a.m. most mornings to read Sound Offs. From there, I formulate who I want to contact, and then try to grab a few more hours of sleep."

It's been a busy year for CA Pacheco, between his time spent as the STOP Committee's Deputy Chair, and then taking over as Chair just a couple of weeks before the strike vote was announced. It's been go-go-go since then. CA Pacheco has spent time touring the country on behalf of STOP, talking to pilots about the contract, the strike vote, and anything else they may want to discuss. He has also been working with the STOP chairs at each base to assist in any way he can.

"I do things for the betterment of the collective group," he says. "I don't care who gets the accolades; I just want us all to win. There's no stopping until the ink is dry on our new contract."

## **STOP Committee Deputy Chair CA Andrea Hoover**

**P**ilots who are familiar with CA Andrea Hoover know she is a warm, fun, kind person – but they also know she is a woman with a lot of fight in her. That fight is for her two sons, their school district, her friends, and her fellow pilots. And with a strong leadership background like hers, there is no better choice for the Deputy Chair of the national STOP Committee.

CA Hoover learned what it looks like to be a leader from a young age. Her father was a captain with the L.A. County Fire Department, and her mother was the vice president of a civil engineering firm. Yet for young Andrea, there was nothing quite as interesting as aviation.

"I'm a first-generation pilot. As such, I knew nothing about the aviation world," she says. "So I did what most others interested in aviation do – I Googled it."

CA Hoover got her private pilot's license via an FBO, then enrolled at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, where she earned a Bachelor of Aeronautical Science – normally a four-year degree – in three years. "It was a bit of a jump for me, going from an all-girls private school to Embry-Riddle. It certainly made me motivated," she says. "I wound up getting a job in the scheduling department at Riddle and scheduling myself to fly as much as was possible."

While working toward finishing her degree, CA Hoover was offered internships at multiple carriers. She wound up taking the internship with American. Yet, as many know, the early 2000s were not the best time to begin an aviation career.

“I was hired at a regional carrier just before 9/11. I never went to class,” CA Hoover says. “I found a new job flight instructing and instructed for seven years before I got hired at American Eagle.” She flew the Saab 340 and Embraer 145 for 13 years, flowing through in 2017.



CA Andrea Hoover (center) was part of the APA contingent at the Women in Aviation International Conference in February.

“It seems like everyone knows Andrea, and Andrea knows everyone,” says STOP Committee Chair CA Steve Pacheco. She has certainly spent time at a good portion of our bases. She was initially awarded the 737 in MIA, then spent a few months on TDY in BOS. From there she spent a year based out of LGA before finally returning home to ORD. She upgraded to Captain in late 2022.

“I initially began volunteering at the base level, doing communications work. If a Zoom meeting needed to be set up, that was me,” she says. “I got involved with STOP when

the ‘It’s Time’ campaign started. I would send out blasts, organize meetings, that sort of thing. Then I started going to hiring events, where I helped educate potential applicants on APA.”

In addition to her work as a pilot and union volunteer, CA Hoover is a single mom to two boys. In her spare time – not that she has a lot these days – she helps with their homework, drives them to sporting events, and serves on the board of a foundation that benefits their school district. “Smart kids around other smart kids make even more smart kids, which is why we help raise money for teachers’ grants,” she says.

CA Hoover has had zero days off since she was asked to take over as Deputy Chair a few months ago. More than anything, she wants the pilot group to know “if you want to participate or help, feel free to call or email. We value your thoughts, input, and ideas. We are doing our best to take what the pilots are putting out there and taking it to the Board of Directors. We want the pilots involved.”