



30 YEARS OLD BY NOW, RECORD-SETTING SCHEDULERS & DISPATCHERS CONFERENCE MORE FORWARD-LOOKING THAN EVER

News / Business aviation, Events / Festivals



As the 30th edition of the National Business Aviation Association’s (NBAA’s) Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference (SDC2019) concluded, organizers said the event’s trademark upbeat vibe and forward-looking view were as much in evidence as ever.

2019 edition had the highest attendance count on record, with nearly 3,000 participants, representation from all 50 U.S. states and more than 40 countries, and nearly 600 exhibit booths.

A Dynamic Program

As always, conference sessions focused on timely topics, from the impact of new technologies on business aviation, to navigating the international operation and regulatory landscape, to growing the industry workforce, and more.

Keynote speakers engaged attendees on issues surrounding the intergenerational workplace, embracing change and how to provide exceptional customer service.

“Think of each other as a resource and share ideas, listen to people who have a different point of view than you,” advised Day One Keynote Karen McCullough. “We have to be open to continuous learning and new opportunities.”

Day Two Keynote Louie Gravance discussed world-class customer service, based largely on his many years with The Walt Disney Company. Great service is made up of “moments miniscule and intimate,” he said, adding attendees should always remember their brand’s narrative and not let day-to-day tasks get in the way of the larger mission.

NBAA President and CEO Ed Bolen also addressed attendees, encouraging them to promote the value of business aviation to the next generation of industry professionals. “This is where you can be part of something meaningful, something that helps our companies, our communities and our country,” he said.

An Important Milestone

Although the conference week was busy, show-goers nevertheless took time to celebrate the event’s uninterrupted success since its launch 30 years ago. SDC began in 1989 in Montvale, NJ, with about 70 attendees and a dozen or so exhibitors. Since then, it has added more educational programs, including Professional Development Program courses and two days of keynote speakers, as well as a humanitarian component of giving back to the local community. [View a video about the history of SDC.](#)

“The significant growth of the show in past 30 years is a testament to this show’s importance to the industry, and the innovation and enthusiasm surrounding it position SDC for continued future success,” said Tyler Austin, NBAA senior manager, certification and staff liaison to the Schedulers & Dispatchers Committee.

Paying-It-Forward

As has been a tradition at SDC, the conference included a charitable element and an educational initiative, both designed to give back to the local community.

The educational component, created by the SDC Advisory Council, included bringing a group of 22 students to San Antonio International Airport to talk with various tenants about the numerous career opportunities within business aviation, as well as hear from professionals in the industry about how their careers began.

Also, business attire and accessories were gathered throughout the week to donate to local organizations, with thousands of items collected to help the San Antonio community.

[Read more about SDC’s Pay-It-Forward initiatives.](#)

Scholarship and Award Recipients

SDC also is about recognizing current and future industry leaders, and the opening session on Jan. 29 included a recognition of award and scholarship recipients.

Longtime business aviation volunteer Kellie Rittenhouse, CAM received NBAA’s S&D Outstanding Achievement and Leadership Award. Rittenhouse is a certified aviation manager and holds an FAA dispatcher certification. She is director of aviation for Hangar Aviation Management, LLC. [Learn more about Rittenhouse’s Schedulers & Dispatchers Outstanding Achievement and Leadership Award](#)

Monetary and training scholarships also were presented at the conference.

[Learn more about the 2019 NBAA Schedulers & Dispatchers Training Scholarship winners.](#)

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The 2020 Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference is scheduled for March 10-13, 2020 in Charlotte, NC. [Learn more about SDC2020.](#)

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