

GESTA NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2019



[www.gesta-goddard.org](http://www.gesta-goddard.org)



# Newsletter

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## About GESTA

GESTA is the professional employee association for the approximately 1700 federal scientists, engineers, and technicians employed at the NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) in Greenbelt, Maryland, as well as employees at Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) in NYC and Katherine Johnson IV&V Facility (KJIV&V) in Fairmont, West Virginia. We are run by volunteers, and advocate on behalf of our members in order to improve our working conditions in support of NASA's missions and the critical service we provide to the scientific community and to the American public.

GESTA is a local affiliate of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), along with other NASA centers. Working together with other federal IFPTE local affiliates, we network, learn, and advocate together regarding our working conditions, NASA policies, and other important issues that affect federal employees.

## Officers & Representatives

**President:** Anel Flores

**Executive Vice-President:** David R. Williams

**Secretary:** Romae P. Young

**Treasurer:** Michael E. Stark

**Area Vice-President (AVP):** Tryshanda T. Moton

**Area Vice-President (AVP):** Steven J. Horowitz

**Area Vice-President (AVP):** Monica E. Gorman

**Area Vice-President (AVP):** Ronald S. Zellar

**Area Vice-President (AVP):** Steven L. Hard

## Email

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## Mail

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Technicians Association (GESTA)

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC)

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## Phone

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## Location

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Conference Room: Building 23, W131





# Newsletter

## New Newsletter & Website Design

What do you think of our new newsletter template and website? If you have not seen our new website design, follow the link below. We're also considering a new logo, so let us know what you think! We'll have a general vote soon on whether to adopt it officially.

[www.gesta-goddard.org](http://www.gesta-goddard.org)

Over the past month we have been working to improve our outreach with the assistance of our national parent association, the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE). The goal is to ensure we provide a professional look and feel to our organization.

As you review this new newsletter, please let us know what you think about the information presented, what you'd like to see in the next newsletter, and most importantly, how GESTA can best serve our members.

Please email your thoughts and suggestions to [gestaifpte@gmail.com](mailto:gestaifpte@gmail.com).





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## How to Join & Stay Informed

GESTA is a volunteer professional association with exclusive bargaining rights with NASA GSFC. As such, we are funded and run by NASA employees who voluntarily join our organization. We are not some third party organization, nor are we a traditional trade union.

As an employee based organization at GSFC, our purpose is to meaningfully engage with NASA Management and federal government policymakers and leaders to address issues relevant to our careers, working conditions, NASA's mission, and the critical service we provide to taxpayers.

Working together we have, and can continue to, with your support:

- partner with Management to achieve success and resolve issues that impede organizational goals;
- support fair, equitable and objective evaluations;
- negotiate improvements over our working conditions;
- advocate for training and professional development;
- ensure no one has to compromise safety and their professional integrity over politics or favoritism;
- enforce and continue to improve our contract with Management that spells out our rights and conditions of employment while ensuring flexibility and professional discretion to get our work done; and
- advocate for or against legislation that currently or will impact GSFC, NASA at large, and our professions.

To become a member, visit [www.GESTA-Goddard.org](http://www.GESTA-Goddard.org) and fill out both our [GESTA Membership Form](#) and the [Payroll Deduction Form](#), and then return to any of GESTA's elected representatives. Alternatively, [contact us](#), and we will drop off and pick up your forms at your convenience.

Have a question? Feel free to [contact us](#).

**[www.gesta-goddard.org](http://www.gesta-goddard.org)**



# Newsletter

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## Upcoming Events

Come to our July General Membership Meeting on **Thursday, July 11th**, from 12-1 in Building 23, Room W131. Meet other members and officers, raise issues facing you and your colleagues, become a voting member, and enjoy some delicious pizza (free for dues-paying members, otherwise \$5). Most general membership meetings occur on the first Thursday of the month.

Mark your calendars now for our first annual **Labor Day Cookout** at the September General Membership Meeting on **September 5th at the GEWA picnic pavilion!** We'll offer grilled food, cold drinks, and solidarity and fellowship with your fellow bargaining unit members.

## Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July!

GESTA wishes all of you a happy and safe 4<sup>th</sup> of July! Check out the AFL-CIO's round-up of [union-made food](#) for your cookout, so you can be confident you're eating food made by workers who are treated fairly and have a voice in their workplace, just like you. You can find more union-made in America brands and products [here](#).

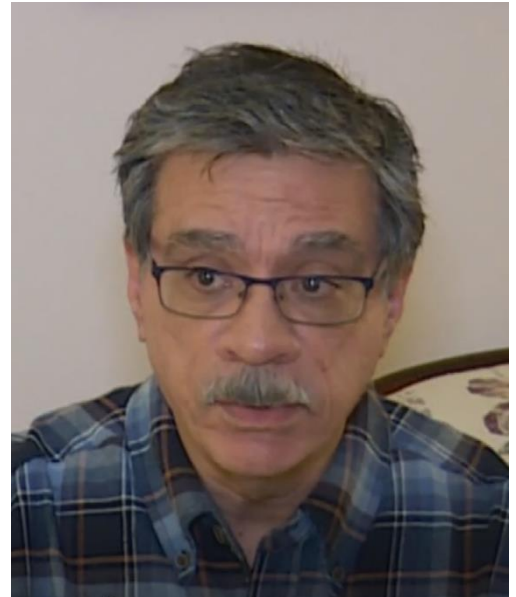




## Meet the Executive Council: President Anel Flores

Anel Flores has served as a NASA GSFC civil servant aerospace engineer in various capacities since 1983. He's currently a Mission Systems Engineer (MSE) in Code 599.0. During his first 15 years he served as a Sounding Rocket Project Manager at Wallops Flight Facility, managing 29 missions launched throughout the world including Greenland, Australia, Puerto Rico, and Brazil.

At Greenbelt he served as a Commercial Technology Manager for about six years, then returned to systems engineering, serving seven years at GSFC's Mission Design Lab (MDL) on over 120 mission studies. Along the way, he learned Portuguese for his Brazilian Campaign and earned a certification for parametric cost modeling. He also lead that function in the MDL and eventually became the Lead Systems Engineer. Thereafter, Anel has been assigned as the lead MSE on several proposals at GSFC, recently completing two planetary mission proposals for the 2019 Discovery Announcement of Opportunity (AO).



Anel also served as a GESTA Area Vice President (AVP) from 2003 through 2005 before being elected President in 2010. Anel has served as GESTA's president since 2010 to the present.

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*"NASA has a great mission, but it's even greater because employees have a voice through our unions regarding our working conditions."*

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## **President's Corner**

Since it's performance evaluation time, most non-GESTA employees have 15 days to request reconsideration, which is mandated by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). However, please be advised that GESTA Bargaining Unit Employees (BUEs) have 30 days to request reconsideration of your critical ratings, performance ratings and summary rating, or narrative. If you are a GSFC non-supervisory scientist, engineer or technician, then you are very likely a GESTA BUE. Please feel free to check with [any GESTA officer](#) if you are unsure whether you are a GESTA BUE. The performance evaluation app "SPACE" has the reconsideration button available for the first 15 days of your performance evaluation, but GESTA BUEs can still submit their reconsideration election directly to their supervisor from the 16<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup> day (email is recommended for the record).

Additionally, as a GESTA BUE, you are entitled to union representation during your performance evaluation meeting or any performance meetings you have with your supervisor or Management. Under our [GESTA-GSFC Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) (CBA), a.k.a. our contract with Management, you can request from your Administrative Supervisor a copy of any material relied upon by your Supervisor to support either the individual performance element rating or the overall rating. Email communication with your Supervisor is best in order to keep a written record. The NASA official adjudicating your reconsideration is referred to as the "Reviewing Official." Once you elect reconsideration, you have 30 days to submit additional supporting information and performance feedback to the Reviewing Official. If you are requesting a higher performance rating, for example, it is best to show how you meet or exceed each of the listed or bulleted items in your Performance Plan during the reconsideration meeting. Ideally, you should provide the supporting information to the Reviewing Official before the meeting. Feel free to reach out to any GESTA office for advice, support, or representation.

Finally, the GESTA CBA, Article 31 (*Performance Appraisal System*) addresses the agreement between GESTA and Management for the Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS). If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome of your reconsideration decision, you can submit a Step 2 Grievance 10 workdays (not counting holidays or annual or sick leave) after you receive your reconsideration decision from the Reviewing Official. Employee grievances, in general, are addressed in Article 16 (*Grievance Procedure*) of our CBA.

In Solidarity,

*Mr. Anel Flores, President*

[IFPTE Local 29 / GESTA](#)