

Spotlight 1 - FAA Aviation Workforce and Education



Melissa Cooper, A.A.E.

Manager

Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport

(Moderator)

Melissa Cooper, A.A.E, has served as the Manager of the Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport since March 2017. Prior to her current position, she was the Field Maintenance at Kansas City International Airport, Deputy Director of the Johnson County Airport Commission serving as the Airport Manager for New Century Air Center and Johnson County Executive Airport and the Assistant Airport Manager at Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport in Kansas City, Missouri. Prior to her positions in Airport Management, she worked as a Contractor with the FAA Central Region Runway Safety Program, as a System Controller for Vanguard Airlines, and a scheduler for Executive Beechcraft. Melissa holds her commercial pilot certificate with an instrument rating. She has a MS degree in aviation safety and a BS degree in aviation technology both from University of Central Missouri. Melissa currently serves as a member of the Bombardier Safety Standdown Advisory Council, the 1st Vice President for the Great Lakes AAE Chapter and the Past-President of the Missouri Airport Managers Association.



Chris Sharp

Aviation Workforce and Education Division Manager

FAA

Christine (Chris) Sharp is the Manager of the Aviation Workforce and Education Division at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). In this role, she is overseeing the agency's efforts aimed at introducing students of all backgrounds to aerospace careers and providing them with pathways to get the necessary skills to ensure a diverse and robust aerospace workforce of the future.

Previous to her current role, Chris served as the Staff Director in the FAA's Office of Aviation Workforce Outreach, where she worked with senior executives and staff from across the agency to build strong collaborative networks of stakeholders focused on all aspects of aerospace workforce issues, including: regulatory oversight; congressional mandates; student outreach; partnerships with industry, academia and government; strategic communications; and diversity and inclusion.

Prior to focusing on aerospace workforce issues, Chris was the Manager for Social Collaboration and Engagement in the Office of Communications at the FAA. In that role, she and her team focused on engaging employees to involve them in finding innovative solutions to challenges facing the FAA and the aviation industry.

Chris also spent 20 years in the FAA's Office of International Affairs, where she held a variety of positions, including Desk Officer for Russia and the CIS and Manager for the Europe/Africa/MidEast

Staff. She also led agency international efforts as the Program Manager for the Global Leadership Initiative where she focused on bringing together stakeholders from around the FAA to collaborate on the FAA's international strategy and programs.

Chris has a degree from Colgate University in International Relations and a Master's Degree in Organizational Communication from George Mason University. She enjoys spending time with her family and is also heavily involved in her church where she leads a yearly mission trip to rural Ecuador to work with a children's center focused on bringing children out of poverty.