



SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

77th Edition



Columbia, South Carolina, USA · March 25 – 27, 2026



MARCH 26 - 27

PLATINUM



GOLD



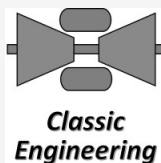
SILVER



BRONZE



CONTRIBUTOR





WELCOME NOTE FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

As we gather at the University of South Carolina, we extend a warm welcome to the AIAA community. We have an exceptional program in store, featuring over 100 talks and topped off with engaging activities. We encourage you to seize this opportunity to connect and forge relationships with colleagues from around the globe.

Please reach out to our conference volunteers for anything that can make your conference more enjoyable, **just look for the white lanyards!**

We hope you enjoy the conference to the fullest!



USC Map
sc.edu/visit/map/



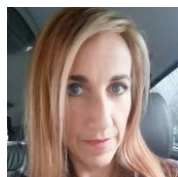
Conference Website
region2.aiaastudentconference.org



Dr. Kurt Polzin
AIAA Region 2
Director Emeritus



Jay Dellinger
Judging
Coordinator



Cassy Dellinger
Conference
Coordinator



Alan Lowrey
Conference
Treasurer



Dr. Wout De Backer
USC AIAA
Faculty Advisor



Michael Cargill
USC AIAA
Branch Chair

In Memory Of

Ronald Erwin McNair (October 21, 1950 – January 28, 1986) was a physicist and NASA astronaut. McNair died during the launch of the Space Shuttle Challenger on Mission STS-51-L



Ronald Erwin McNair

RUSSEL HOUSE: PARKING



We have arranged parking in the Bull Street Garage. Our Conference volunteers will lead you to the Russell House.

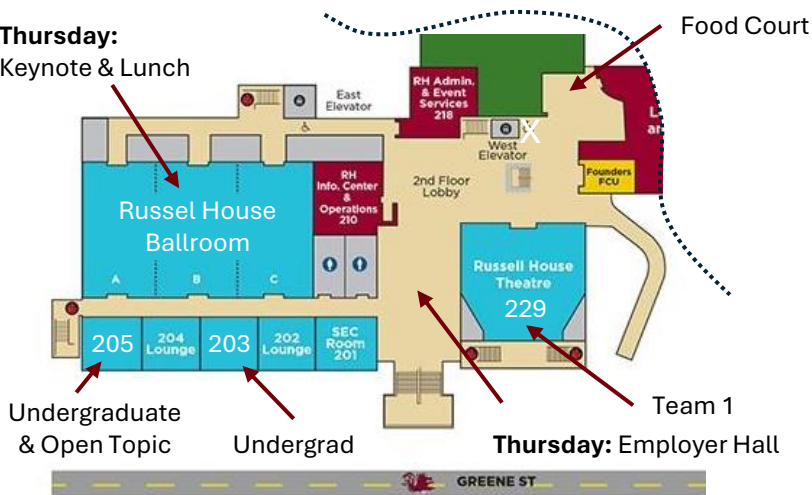
Be sure to bring your parking pass!

611 Bull St, Columbia, SC 29208

RUSSEL HOUSE: SECOND FLOOR

Thursday:

Keynote & Lunch



RUSSEL HOUSE: THIRD FLOOR

Thursday AM: Graduate

Thursday PM: Branch Activity

Friday AM: High School



WIFI Network: uscguest or eduroam



Conference Programming:

8:00 am ● Welcome Keynote: Mr. Joseph Peña

8:45 am ● AM Technical Sessions

10:15 am ● Break

10:30 am ● AM Technical Sessions

12:30 pm ● Boxed Lunch Pickup

BIOGRAPHY:

Mr. Joseph Peña leads a global team of over 400 engineers and technical professionals whose work ensures the safety, integrity, quality and regulatory compliance of the 787 cabin interior. His team's mission is to create innovative designs and engineered solutions to connect people around the world safely and comfortably. Throughout his 20-year aerospace career, Joseph has led engineering teams across all Boeing twin-aisle airplane programs (777, 767, 747-8, 787), overseeing design and production engineering, stress analysis, flammability, and certification. Joseph holds a BS in Mech. Eng. from the University of Houston and an MBA from Washington State University.



Joseph Peña
The Boeing Company
Director & Chief Engr.
787 Interiors Design

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

Thursday PM, March 26, 2026

@USC Russell House Union
1400 Greene Street, Columbia, SC 29208



Conference Programming:

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- 12:30 pm ● Lunch Speaker: Dr. Lee Jasper
- 2:00 pm ● PM Technical Sessions
- 3:30 pm ● Break
- 3:45 pm ● PM Technical Sessions
- 5:15 pm ● End of Technical Sessions

BIOGRAPHY:

Dr. Lee Jasper received his BS, MS and Ph.D. degrees in aerospace engineering from University of Colorado - Boulder. He currently works for the Space Dynamics Laboratory as a Systems Engineer supporting the Air Force Research Laboratory. Lee has worked on many small satellite (including CubeSat) missions, the University Nanosatellite Program, as well as the large Earth science mission NISAR managed by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at California institute of Technology. His research has included orbital debris, controls, and many astrodynamics topics.



Dr. Lee Jasper
Systems Engineer
Space Dynamics Lab



NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

@South Carolina State Museum
301 Gervais St, Columbia, SC 29201



Thursday Evening Social: 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Get to know your peers! Join for an evening of socializing and exploring the South Carolina State Museum. Watch a show in the planetarium, grab a bite, and wander through the museum's many exhibits featuring Apollo 16 astronaut Charles Duke, South Carolina birdlife, award-winning bird photography, and the history and culture of Native communities in the state. There are plenty of easy conversation starters!

6:00 pm ● **Social at the Museum Starts**

9:00 pm ● **Museum Closes**



LUNCH & DINNER



Student Lunch Favorites

Quick Bites at Russel House

- \$, Chick-fil-A **
- \$, Einstein Bros. Bagels **
- \$, Panda Express **
- \$, Panera Bread **
- \$, The Halal Shack **
- \$, Local Restaurant Row **
- \$\$, Fresh Greene's **

Nearby Campus

- \$, Beezer's Gourmet Sandwich Shop**
- \$, JJ's Tea House
- \$, Groucho's Deli**
- \$, Palmetto Pig BBQ Buffet **
- \$, Doc's BBQ Buffet **
- \$, Rosewood Dairy Bar
- \$\$, The Green Olive
- \$\$, DiPrato's Delicatessen ***
- \$\$, Pawleys Front Porch **
- \$\$, Burger Tavern 77**

Downtown, The Vista & Cayce

- \$, Toasty Hot Spot
- \$, D's Wings**
- \$, Zesto's**
- \$, The Kingsman Restaurant**
- \$\$, Gather Cola (food hall)**
- \$\$, Home Team BBQ**
- \$\$, Kao Thai Cuisine
- \$\$, Market on Main**

* Reservations recommended

More options: See the 2026 Columbia SC Insider's Guide pages 43 - 48

Local Dinner Favorites

Casual Sit-down Quick Bites

- \$, Thirsty Fellow Pizzeria & Pub**
- \$, Menkoi Ramen House
- \$, Publico Kitchen & Tap* **
- \$, Cantina 76 **
- \$\$, The War Mouth
- \$\$, Villa Tronco,
- \$\$, Backstreets Grill* **
- \$\$, Blue Marlin ***
- \$\$, Il Giorgione*

Nicer Bites

- \$\$, Black Rooster ***
- \$\$, Mr. Friendly's New Southern Cafe*
- \$\$\$, Terra* **
- \$\$\$, Cola's* **
- \$\$\$, Motor Supply Co. Bistro*
- \$\$\$, The Hollow* **
- \$\$\$, Hendrix*

Near the Hotel

- \$, Rush's, Irmo area **
- \$, The British Bulldog Pub**
- \$\$, Red Sake**
- \$\$, Mission BBQ**
- \$\$, Sun Ming Chinese Restaurant** **
- \$\$, KPOT Korean BBQ & Hot Pot** **
- \$\$, Real Mexico Restaurant y Tienda**
- \$\$, Liberty on the Lake**
- \$\$, Don Tequila**

** Great for Groups



ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

Friday, March 27, 2026

Starting at @USC Russell House Union
1400 Greene Street, Columbia, SC 29208



Conference Programming:

8:00 am ● AM Technical Sessions

10:00 am ● Break

10:15 am ● AM Technical Sessions

12:15 pm ● Lunch (Not Provided)

Track 1

1:15 pm ● State House

2:30 pm ● Transit

2:45 pm ● Owens Field

4:00 pm ● Free Time

Track 2

2:00 pm ● Owens Field

3:00 pm ● Transit

3:15 pm ● State House

4:30 pm ● Free Time

5:30 pm ● Awards Banquet

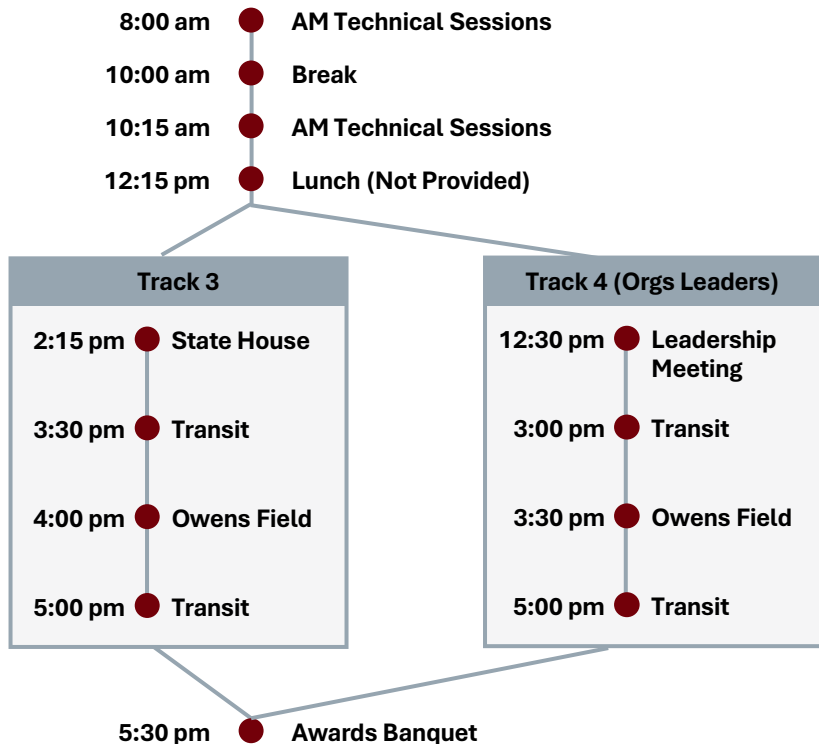
ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

Friday, March 27, 2026

Starting at @USC Russell House Union
1400 Greene Street, Columbia, SC 29208



Conference Programming:



Jim Hamilton - LB Owens Airport

1400 Jim Hamilton Blvd, Columbia, SC 29205

Free Parking Provided, 10 min drive from Russel House

Take a short trip to Owens Field, one of the region's historic aviation landmarks that was established in the 1930s and used as a World War II training site. The airfield continues to serve general aviation today. This unique event, organized together with our **USC Carolina Flight Club** and **Experimental Aircraft Association #242** has you meet volunteers at the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation, visit the South Carolina Aviation Hall of Fame, see the various aircraft up close, and meet pilots who built their experimental aircraft.

South Carolina State House

1100 Gervais St, Columbia, SC 29208

Paid Street Parking Nearby, 15 min walk from Russel House

Explore South Carolina's history with a 45-minute **guided tour of the State House** and enjoy the wonderful grounds. Knowledgeable staff will provide insight into the building's architecture, legislative process, and the events that have shaped the state's political and cultural landscape. From historic chambers to significant monuments on the grounds, the tour offers an engaging overview of South Carolina's past and present. It is an accessible way to add a substantive historical perspective to your visit.

Student Organization Leadership Meeting

Russell House - Senate Room 322

Student leaders are invited to participate in the Student Organization Leadership Meeting, hosted by The University of Alabama in Huntsville. This session is **open to current Branch Chairs, Co-Chairs, Secretaries, Treasurers**, and designated proxies representing their student branches. The meeting provides a forum to exchange best practices, discuss operational challenges, and strengthen collaboration across branches. Attendees are encouraged to come prepared to share updates and practical insights from their respective organizations.



VENTURE OUT ON YOUR OWN

Explore what the Midlands have to offer!

Not in the mood for the scheduled professional development sessions?

No problem! Go explore the Riverbanks Zoo, wander through the Columbia Museum of Art, stroll along the West Columbia & Canalside Riverwalks, or simply take a well-earned nap back at the hotel.

Plan wisely, Friday traffic is not a myth. The trip between the venue and the hotel during rush hour can **easily stretch to 45 minutes each way**.

Join us again at the Founders Zone at 5:30pm for the awards banquet.



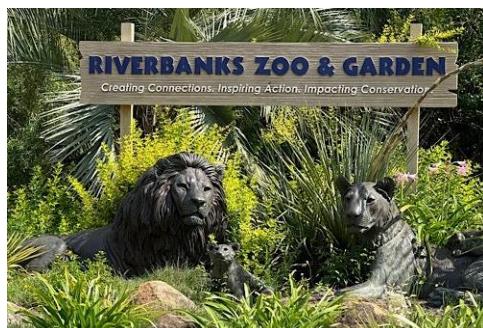
Relax at the Revitalized Finlay Park
Downtown Columbia



Explore Main Street and State House
Downtown Columbia



Get your Steps in on the Riverwalk
5 min drive from Downtown Columbia



Visit the Riverbanks Zoo & Gardens!
10 min drive from Downtown Columbia



AWARDS BANQUET

@Williams-Brice Stadium, Founders Zone
1017 Key Road, Columbia, SC 29201



Awards Banquet: 5:30 pm - 9:45 pm

Sponsored By:



- 5:30 pm ● Evening Social
- 6:00 pm ● Dinner Opens
- 6:30 pm ● Awards Banquet Welcome
Dr. Hossein Haj-Hariri
Dean; Molinaroli College of Eng. & Computing
- 6:45 pm ● Banquet Speaker
The Honorable Charles F. Bolden Jr.
U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)
12th NASA Administrator
Founder & CEO Emeritus, Charles F. Bolden Group
- 8:00 pm ● Awards Ceremony
- 9:15 pm ● Winners Reception (Awardees Only)



Dr. Hossein Haj-Hariri
Dean, MCEC

"South Carolina is a major aerospace state. Our college embodies the essence of South Carolina: resilient, resourceful, and forward-thinking. We are not just an institution but a launchpad of social mobility, lifting our students from all walks of life to sustained professional success."

Our commitment to South Carolina is the foundation, and our outcomes are the proof."



BANQUET SPEAKER



BIOGRAPHY:

THE HONORABLE CHARLES F. BOLDEN JR. Major General,

U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)

12th NASA Administrator

Founder & CEO Emeritus, The Charles F. Bolden Group

Retired Marine Corps Major General Charles Frank Bolden Jr. was the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) from July 2009 until January 2017.

Bolden's 34-year career with the Marine Corps included 14 years as a member of NASA's Astronaut Office and four Space Shuttle missions. He piloted Space Shuttle Columbia in 1986 (STS-61C) and Space Shuttle Discovery in 1990 (STS-31) – the mission that deployed the Hubble Space Telescope. He served as Mission Commander on Space Shuttle Atlantis in 1992 (STS-45) and Space Shuttle Discovery in 1994 (STS-60).

Today, in addition to his numerous professional affiliations, General Bolden serves as the Founder and CEO Emeritus of The Charles F. Bolden Group, providing leadership in the areas of Space/Aerospace Exploration, National Security, STEM+AD Education and Health Initiatives.

Bolden is a graduate of C.A. Johnson High School in Columbia, SC. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Naval Academy and a Master of Science degree from the University of Southern California.

Bolden is married to the former Alexis Walker of Columbia, SC. They have two children, A. Che' Bolden, Colonel, USMC (Ret.) and Dr. Kelly M. Bolden, MD and five grandchildren – granddaughters Mikaley, Kyra and Talia and grandsons Walker and Lenox.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING



Thank you for attending the 2026 AIAA Region 2 student conference. We are grateful for your participation, your scholarship, and the conversations that make this meaningful.

We hope you enjoy the sessions, exchange ideas, and connect with colleagues from across the region. It is our pleasure to host and welcome you here in our home,
Columbia, South Carolina.

If you share moments from the conference, please tag us on social media so we can celebrate the event with you.



@USC AIAA Student Branch
@AIAA Southeastern Regional Student Conference



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@aiaaregion2



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**We are grateful to our sponsors
without whom this event would not be possible.**



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