

IPAAC Conference 2025

11/09/2025 – 11/13/2025

First, let me explain what I learned IPAAC is and how this organization intersects with the programs and challenges we encounter in Tech Ops and labor.

The International Peer Assist Aviation Coalition's primary focus is on peer support programs on the international stage. The kinds of programs that affect all levels of aviation, above the wing, below the wing, from the boardroom to the ticket counter.

The world of aviation is such a complex industry that many of us take for granted. With the massive focus on safety, performance, unconventional work schedules, and geographical work locations, your work family and peers, are the only ones to lean on in times of struggles and challenges.

Everyday these worlds intersect without us realizing it. We come to work, do our job as we are required to and then go home with satisfaction of accomplishment. Until that one thing happens, be it our company or another, commercial or cargo, domestic or international. We pause and inside ask ourselves, "could that or will that happen to me? We hear of injuries, loss of limbs, or even worse the loss of life. Then it hits you, I do the same job or encounter the same situation and that could have been me. Most of us cope just fine without a second thought, but some of our co-workers don't have that coping ability or have the support of others to address what they are going through.

We at TWU along with American Airlines try to use multiple systems and organization to address the needs of our members during their time of stress and confusion. Sometimes a formal organization can't focus on the moment, but your peer, co worker can. They live in your world and can sometimes clear up the picture.

During the 9/11 tragedy the world focused heavily on the passengers, flight crew, and building occupants, as we should have. But what about the gate agent that closed the flights, the ground service crew, the mechanic that did a last-minute repair, or the crew scheduler that made changes to the crew assignments. Those worlds collided that day and were forever changed because they were doing their job. In our case, when you are on a field trip and find out there has been a major tragedy with your family, your job takes the very back seat.

We have a lot of available resources, but we have limited, trained resources. Evie Gares, vice-president AA line maintenance, mentioned that the **FACES** group is trying to be better prepared to reach the 2 percent of women in aircraft maintenance. We should continue to work closely with our EAP reps and employee resources groups when available, and learn from trusted organizations such as Just Culture, IPAAC, the Red Cross, the United Way and the AA Cares Team. We also want people to be truly invested and willing to support their peers.

IPAAC brings together the professionals in their respected fields to share ideas and offer guidance on how to approach a workplace situation or deal with an unforeseen tragedy. They remind us that

we are all part of a unique world that has no geographical boundaries. Our common bond is the job we do every day around the world. Our assignment is to support one another with whatever resources we have; in whatever fashion we know how. We might want to consider more trained and dedicated resources in the future.

Tracy Hardin
Executive Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tracy Hardin". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Tracy" and the last name "Hardin" clearly legible.