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LAKELAND, FL: The Aerospace Center for Excellence (ACE) is excited to announce that Dr. Orathai Northern has been named the organization’s Enrichment Director commencing February 12, 2024.

Dr. Northern brings to the Aerospace Center of Excellence twenty-five years of experience in teaching and learning as an instructor of English and a college administrator. Moreover, she brings several years of community engagement in Polk County having served on the Bartow Chamber Board, Polk Vision Operating Board, Central Florida Development Council Board of Directors, and Sheriff’s Advisory Council. Most recently, Dr. Northern served as Associate Vice President of Career Pathways & Articulation at Polk State College.

As Enrichment Director, Dr. Northern will serve as the central point of contact for communications and public relations efforts at the Aerospace Center for Excellence while also overseeing our scholarship programs, community partnerships, and adult learning programs.

Dr. Northern’s love for aviation and the sound of aircraft overhead was launched at MacDill Air Force Base, where her life began. When asked about her thoughts on this new opportunity, she stated, “I am ecstatic for this amazing opportunity. This is the perfect marriage of two passions: aviation and education. I look forward to serving on this fantastic team, expanding my knowledge of aviation, and contributing to the community impact of ACE.”

Gene Conrad, President and CEO of SUN ‘n FUN and ACE, stated, “Orathai is well known in our community as a thought-leader and an incredibly capable individual. She has a talent for generating consensus and getting the work done. We are lucky to have her on the team, and I am very excited about where she will take us in the future.”

Eric Crump, Vice President and COO of Aerospace Center for Excellence, stated, “Having known Orathai for almost a decade, I am confident that we really could not have found a more passionate, committed, capable leader for this role. Orathai is a force, and our capability to serve our audience has been exponentially increased by adding her to our ACE team.”

Dr. Northern can be reached at [onorthern@flsynf.org](mailto:onorthern@flsynf.org).

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About the Aerospace Center for Excellence:

The Aerospace Center for Excellence (ACE) seeks to build a brighter future through the power of aviation. ACE works to engage, education, and accelerate the next generation of aerospace professionals through the 14-building aerospace STEM facility located at the Lakeland Linder International Airport. Aerospace-themed summer camps, school field trips, and student outreach programs are presented to over 30,000 students annually, and educator assistance programs provide STEM-based curriculum and lesson plans for teachers. ACE also provides educational support to the future workforce of the aerospace industry through pilot, maintenance technician, and college scholarships.

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4075 James C. Ray Dr. | Lakeland Linder International Airport | Lakeland, Florida 33811  
ACEdu.org | (863) 644-2431

*Aerospace Center for Excellence is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.*