



WIA VIRTUAL SPEED MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

CONNECT. LEARN. SOAR.



program structure for mentees

- Choose which mentor tables to visit with no pre-matching, and move freely between virtual rooms like an in-person networking event
- Participate in multiple rounds of small-group mentoring sessions
- Connect with aerospace and space professionals while asking questions about careers, leadership, technical pathways, and industry insights
- Access mentorship preparation resources and a training video from WIA Canada featuring Nikki Morshedi and Brenda Landry from Evoke Consulting
- Learn how to define your goals, craft your elevator pitch, strengthen communication skills, and build meaningful mentor relationships

After the program Mentees will:

- Understand the purpose and objectives of mentorship
- Understand how to choose a mentor and the rules of engagement
- Have prepared a draft development plan, a network map, and an elevator pitch to review with their mentor
- Feel more confident networking with industry professionals
- Know how to introduce themselves professionally and effectively
- Gain insights into aerospace and space career pathways
- Feel prepared for mentorship and networking conversations
- Build stronger communication and professional relationship skills
- Be ready to actively participate in future WIA networking and mentorship opportunities

Be a mentee

Today

MELISSA CASS

Sr. Director Business
Transformation

MDA SPACE



As Sr Director of Business Transformation, Melissa uses her 27 years in the aerospace industry to lead strategic company-wide business transformation projects that enable the simplification and modernization of how we work at MDA Space.

She is a systems, operations and safety engineering professional with Masters degrees focused in Aviation Safety & Accident Investigation and Space Science, from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.



MENTOR
&
PANELIS

NANCY BARBER

President

WOMEN IN AEROSPACE - CANADA



An aerospace senior executive with over 20 years of in-depth experience in operations, supply chain, and program management, Nancy Barber has spent much of her career in a product development environment involving large-scale clean sheet commercial and business aircraft programs. Nancy owns her own consulting business, Barber Complete Consultancy Inc, and is currently active in the aerospace industry, focused on leadership development, mergers & acquisitions, commercial strategy, product strategy and business development.

Nancy previously held positions at Bombardier Business Aircraft of Chief Operating Officer, as well as Vice President, Program Management, Global 7500, where she led proactive management of milestones and cost commitments supporting the successful entry into service as well as the subsequent ramp up of the largest purpose-built business aircraft world-wide. Nancy is a passionate promoter of women in aerospace serving as a mentor, coach, and speaker.

In 2020, Nancy was named one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women, and the Northern Lights Aero Foundation awarded her with the Elsie Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions to aviation and aerospace in Canada.



MENTOR

SILVIA BIANCHI

Director programs
DEHAVILLAND CANADA



Silvia Bianchi is the Director of Programs at De Havilland Aircraft of Canada. Silvia's passion for Aerospace has led to a truly global career, gaining professional experience in Canada, the USA, Italy, South Africa and Japan. With a strong focus on leading multinational product development teams, Silvia worked for companies such as Ferrari, Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation and Bombardier. Notable products include the Ferrari Enzo, the award-winning Diamond DA42, Bombardier Global 7500 and Mitsubishi Regional Jet.

Silvia holds the Advanced Management Program from Harvard Business School, a Master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering from the University of Pisa, a Master's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Kansas, and an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. Additionally, Silvia is a designated PMP and registered professional engineer both in Canada and in Italy.

Silvia is a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, a mentor of the Space Generation Advisory Council and of the Royal Aeronautical Society (ALTA). She is one of the funding members of the Women in Aerospace Europe working group created to increase the number of women in C-Suite. Silvia has been also selected as Mentor for the Space4Women Mentorship Program created by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA).

Silvia is also a Director of the Board Women in Aerospace Canada and of Harvard Aerospace & Defense Alumni Organization (HADA0).

MENTOR



SAJEDAH RUSTOM

Chief Executive Officer AVIAPRO CONSULTING



A seasoned Aerospace Executive, Sajedah brings over twenty five years of expertise in global strategy, business transformation, and operations leadership across commercial and business aviation. Her career spans product and service design, sales enablement, aftermarket innovation, and customer experience excellence.

Sajedah is the Chief Executive Officer of AviaPro Consulting, a leading global aviation advisory firm serving airlines, airports, authorities, and industry partners with specialized strategic, operational, and technical solutions. Under her leadership, AviaPro delivers high-impact consulting services that optimize performance, resilience, and growth across the aviation ecosystem.

Prior to joining AviaPro, she served as CEO and Board Director of AJW Technique, the MRO arm of AJW Group. She led the company's strategy, innovation, and execution across European and Canadian service centers, while also overseeing the Group's global People and Marketing strategies, fostering a culture of quality, inclusion, and learning.

Previously, Sajedah held senior leadership roles at Bombardier Aerospace, where she designed and managed cost-by-hour programs for the Q400, CRJ, and CSeries aircraft. She also drove reliability and supply chain programs and later executed the transformation of the Global Express, Challenger, and Learjet aftermarket, delivering double-digit growth and operational efficiency worldwide.

A recognized industry leader, she was named one of Canada's Top 100 Employers in Aerospace in 2020. She currently serves as Vice Chair of the Women in Aerospace Board, is a Tech Board Member, and coaches executives through her "Lead to Learn" transformation programs.

Sajedah is fluent in English and French and holds a Bachelor and Masters degree from the University of London, England, along with certifications in Six Sigma, Lean Management, Agile, and Business Process Engineering. Outside of aviation, she is passionate about mentorship, charitable work, and youth development. She enjoys art, food, global travel, kickboxing, and spending time with her three daughters.

SANDRA HOWELL

Vice-President of Program
Development and Government
Relations
De Havilland Defence



Sandra Howell is the Vice-President of Program Development and Government Relations for De Havilland Defence, where she plays a pivotal role in advancing the organization's defence growth strategy, strengthening government and industry partnerships, and supporting long-term operational excellence.

Since joining De Havilland Canada in 2022, Sandra has held senior leadership roles marked by strategic vision and execution. Previously, as Vice-President of Corporate Operations and Programs, she led enterprise-wide program and project activities, the Program Management Office, Quality Management Office, and Certification—building a strong foundation for sustainable growth.

Sandra brings extensive experience across both the public and private sectors. During a decade in federal service, she held senior roles at Transport Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard, including leading the nationally recognized Helicopter Renewal Program. Under her leadership, a new fleet of 22 helicopters was delivered ahead of schedule and under budget, earning multiple federal awards for excellence in public service.

Her private-sector career includes senior leadership roles at Provincial Aerospace and Provincial Airlines, where she developed deep expertise in aviation operations, quality, safety, and program management.

A committed advocate for women in aerospace and defence, Sandra mentors emerging leaders through De Havilland's PropelHER Program and actively supports Women in Security and Defense. She is also deeply engaged in community leadership, volunteering extensively in women's hockey and co-founding the annual "Skate for the Cause" fundraiser supporting leukemia research.

Recognized with the 2024 Community Champion Award, Sandra is known for her integrity, humility, and lasting impact across industry and community.

A large, vibrant image of a yellow and red De Havilland helicopter in flight, viewed from a low angle looking up. The helicopter's rotors are blurred, suggesting motion. The word "MENTOR" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters on the bottom left of the image.

MENTOR

JIVAN MALHI

Senior Program Manager
MDA Space



Jivan is Senior Program Manager working at the MDA Space and Robotics division. She have enjoyed many years as a program manager managing programs for Space and Aerospace, which involved US and Canadian Defense programs, commercial satellite programs for North American and European markets, and commercial aircraft upgrades for the Airbus line of products.

Her journey started in Process and Quality Engineering and has taken off from there. Working with various Engineering teams from across the globe and the intense problem-solving has been a humbling experience which I continue to enjoy.



MENTOR

ADAM PIERCEY

Director, Safety & Mission
Assurance

KEPLER COMMUNICATIONS INC



Adam has been working in the space industry for the last 5+ years, building, developing, and leading teams on programs as large as Canadarm3! His journey started out in more humble beginnings though, and has taken me to roles in the green energy, medical device, nuclear, and industrial sectors. I enjoy talking about how to help people reach their goals and the steps needed to get there.

His specialties include: Product Design, Project Management, Public Speaking, Risk Management, System Testing, Team Leadership, Technical Presentations, Quality Assurance, Quality Management

Adam is not only a technologist and tester, he is also an innovator and leader.



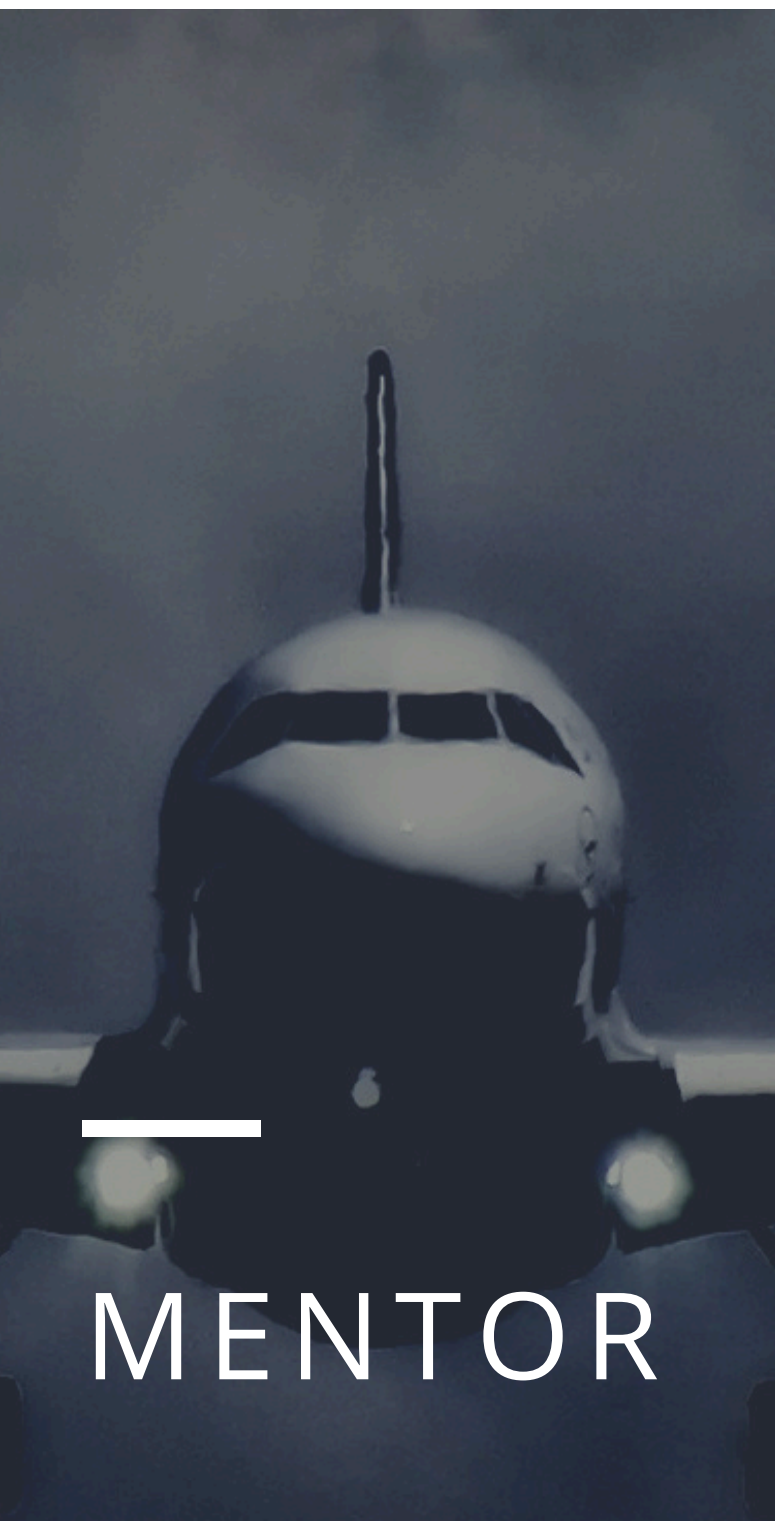
MENTOR

TIM YEE LEE

Manager of Core Airworthiness
BOMBARDIER



An industrious, Industrial Engineer, Tim Yee Lee is Bombardier's Aircraft Design & Development Safety Officer and Manager of Core Airworthiness. Marking over 25 years with Bombardier, she is a Principal Engineering Specialist having worked on commercial and business aircraft programs; ensuring safety and reliability, from clean sheet design to designs of the next generation.

A dark, atmospheric photograph showing the front view of an aircraft cockpit, with the windshield and instrument panel visible against a dark background.

MENTOR

ALEX TSOULIS

Senior Advisor Bus Dev & Advanced
Technologies
MITSUBISHI HEAVY INDUSTRIES
CANADA AEROSPACE (MHICA)



Alex has over 37 years of experience with McDonnell Douglas, Boeing and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Canada Aerospace (MHICA).

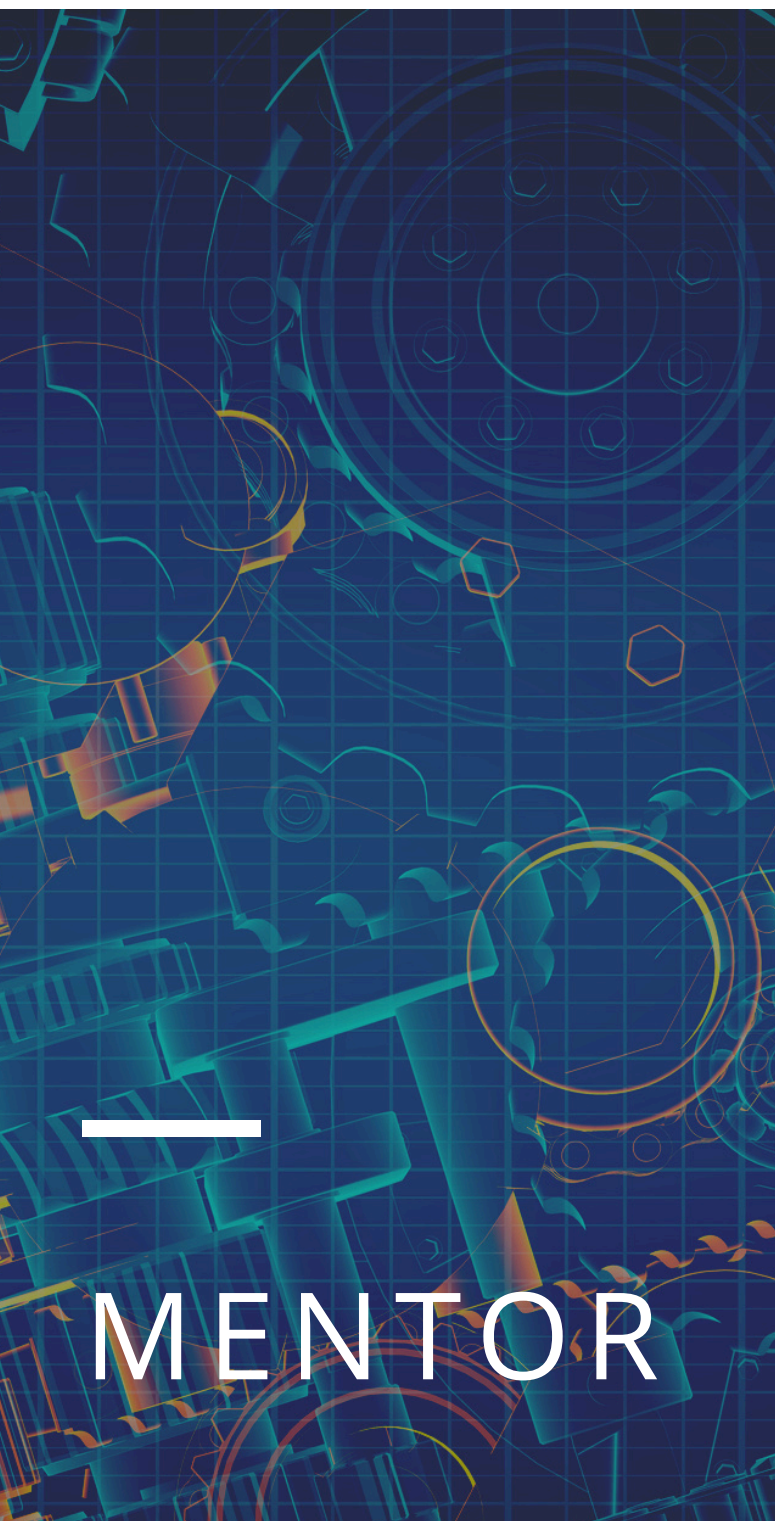
Alex has extensive experience in the design and development of commercial aircraft (regional jet through wide body), military aircraft (transport, helicopter, fighter) and business jet (light to heavy) platforms.

He is involved in initial concepts, product implementation and product / fleet support. Covering life cycle technical, quality, schedule and cost activities in an Integrated Product Team (IPT) environment.

Alex has put a large emphasis on advanced design, advanced manufacturing technology, global collaboration and business development.

He has had considerable long term interaction with government, university, research and industry organizations.

Alex graduated with a Bachelor of Technology Degree in Mechanical Engineering, and Diploma in Aerospace Engineering Technology from Ryerson University (now Toronto Metropolitan University).



MENTOR

HOSS MORSHEDI

Founder
MORENG



Hoss Morshedi is the Founder of MorEng, a Canadian recruitment firm focused exclusively on aerospace and defence. Before MorEng, he spent over a decade in agency recruiting and led talent acquisition for a Canadian aerospace firm, scaling engineering and technical teams inside regulated programs. He helps startups, primes, and MROs across the country hire the engineers, technicians, and licensed professionals they need to build, deliver, and scale. Hoss mentors students and early-career professionals navigating their first steps in the Canadian A&D market.

A large blue chess king piece and two smaller grey chess pawns are positioned on a reflective surface. The king piece is on the left, and the two pawns are to its right. The surface reflects the pieces, and the word "MENTOR" is written in large white letters at the bottom.

MENTOR

BRENDA LANDRY

President
EVOKE CONSULTING



Brenda Landry is the President of Evoke Consulting. She brings over 20 years of experience in consulting and executive facilitation roles with expertise in leadership, communications, and executive advisory. Brenda is passionate about developing and empowering others and has worked with thousands of leaders around the world to develop their courage and confidence.

Brenda has a Master of Business Administration in executive management consulting from Royal Roads University and a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Saint Mary's University. Brenda is also the author of the book, FLAUNT.

Evoke Consulting Inc. is a corporate training organization who is committed to helping leaders to achieve their vision through adopting a strategic mindset, feeling and projecting confidence, and communicating with impact.

A decorative background graphic on the left side of the page. It features a dark blue background with a grid pattern. Overlaid on the grid are several elements: a line graph with circular data points, a bar chart with vertical bars of varying heights, and a close-up image of a hand holding a pen, positioned at the bottom left. The word 'MENTOR' is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the bottom of this graphic.

MENTOR

CHRISTIE GIBSON

Lawyer
MCMILLAN LLP



Christie Gibson is a leading lawyer and trusted advisor whose practice focuses on the space sector and sophisticated land development matters. She is praised for her meticulous and collaborative approach, practical advice, strategic insight and exceptional focus on client needs, qualities that continue to set her apart in the field. Highly skilled in navigating legislative and policy reform and advising clients in rapidly evolving markets, she offers timely expertise on novel matters and high-stakes disputes.

Christie leverages her deep expertise in municipal, land use planning, and environmental law and remarkable skill developed from working closely with technical experts in STEM to navigate the rapidly evolving regulatory landscape of Canada's aerospace industry. Notable for her thought leadership, Christie has published on relevant topics, including the seminal proposed Canadian Space Launch Act, the country's first purpose-built legislation supporting the space sector.

Christie has held several leadership roles in industry, including within the Ontario Bar Association, Canadian Bar Association, Cambridge Forum, and Urban Land Institute, and is a member of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. She also volunteers with Shad Valley Canada, running workshops on lunar development.



MENTOR

MELISSA REYES (LCOL)

Lieutenant-Colonel
(retired)
CANADIAN ARMED FORCES



Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Melissa Reyes served over thirty-five years as a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) officer (Communications and Electronics Engineering Officer (CELE) and specialized in space capabilities for the CAF. Her various military experiences, around the world and Canada, have given her a sound knowledge of satellites and space systems, operations, and management. Among her many assignments, Melissa worked at the Canadian Space Agency, 12th Space Warning Squadron Greenland, North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) Headquarters, and Kandahar Airfield (Afghanistan). She finished her CAF years as the Section Head for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Space Systems, within the Royal Canadian Air Force. She is now working as a civilian space analyst to help address military space capability gaps in order to build a Canadian military that is shaped, prepared and ready for the future.

Melissa received her Master of Sciences Degree in Remote Sensing (satellite imagery), from the University of Colorado, and completed the International Space University / Space Studies Program in 2012. Melissa has been involved in many Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives and employment equity groups and events throughout her military career. She is grateful and honoured to have served with an extraordinary group of military members, public servants and colleagues as well as civilian organizations, making some lasting friendships and to have also made friendships through her participation in CAF sports. She is also honoured for the opportunity to be a mentor for Women in Aerospace – Canada.

A large background image of Earth from space, showing the curvature of the planet and the starry night sky. The word "MENTOR" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the bottom left. A small white horizontal line is positioned above the word.

MENTOR

MARITZA BLASQUEZ

Program Engineering
Specialist
BOMBARDIER



Experienced engineering professional originally from Monterrey, Mexico, living in Canada for over 25 years. Holding a degree in Industrial Engineering from Universidad Regiomontana, complemented by a postgrad in Project Management from George Washington University, along with a PMP certification.

Maritza brings a diverse and well-rounded background across manufacturing and engineering, with experience spanning heavy equipment, telecommunications, and—most notably—the aerospace industry. This includes close to three years at Honeywell Aerospace as a Systems Project Engineer.

Over the past 14 years, she has continued to build deep expertise in aerospace, including 12 years at Bombardier where she played key roles starting as a Project Engineer on the Global 5500 and 6500 programs and later progressed to Program Specialist on the Global 7500, supporting sustaining engineering activities across multiple aircraft systems. Also contributed to the Global 8000 program, supporting engineering, systems integration, and flight test activities. Most recently, she has been involved in new development programs (currently under NDA), further strengthening her experience in complex program execution and cross-functional collaboration.

MENTOR

LUCY MA

Biomedical Engineering, PHD
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Lucy Ma is a 3rd year Biomedical Engineering PhD student at the University of Toronto, whose research integrates synthetic biology and regenerative medicine. Co-supervised by Dr. Michael Garton and Dr. Penney Gilbert, she engineers human-induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) and derived skeletal muscle tissues to deliver therapeutics for chronic genetic disorders. With an interest in merging the outer space and medicine, she is also working on engineering gene therapies designed to protect astronauts from ionizing radiation induced DNA damage in collaboration with the Canadian Nuclear Lab.

Beyond her research, Lucy is deeply committed to community building and being a connector in STEM. She founded the first graduate mentorship program within the Faculty of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Toronto, and she serves as the Space Biomedical Sciences Chair at SEDS Canada.

Through leading the Canadian Space Health Research Network and subsequently establishing the Canadian Space Radiation Research Group, she is dedicated to funding trainees, disseminating opportunities, and organizing bi-annual national symposia. Her long-term vision is to leverage business as a vehicle to build a sustainable ecosystem for space health research and innovations worldwide. As a part-time content creator @lucyinthesky.astro, she enjoys capturing moments of her grad life journey, sharing advice, and inspiring others to dream ambitiously.



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