



The Four Winds

National Weather Service Employees Organization

NWSEO MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

NWSEO Secretary/Treasurer, Eastern Region Chairman David Solano

(June 17, 2020) Congratulations to our very own, David Solano, who is retiring later this month with nearly 31 years of service with the National Weather Service. Mr. Solano has served as an active leader, supporter, recruiter, and organizer of NWSEO and has worked with members from all over the country. He took a moment to share his experiences as a leader of our organization.



David Solano
Senior Hydro-Meteorologist
NWS-Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center
State College, PA

Dave, when did you begin your Hydro-Meteorologist career?

I began my Meteorology career back in 1984 upon graduating from Penn State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Meteorology. Upon graduation, I went to New York working for private industry until late 1989. It was in New York that I met and then happily married my wife Linda, and we just celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary this past September 2019. I have been blessed with three children who have successfully “left the nest” to begin their own careers. In early 1990, I applied for and accepted employment in the NWS and since that day, I never looked back. My 30+ years of service began back at the Weather Service Office (WSO) at the Wilkes-Barre Scranton, PA International Airport as a Meteorologist Intern. I applied for and was promoted to Hydro-Meteorologist at the NWS Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center (MARFC), in State College, PA. Eventually, I was promoted to Senior Hydro-Meteorologist at MARFC, the position I will be retiring from later this month.

Please share your experience(s) with NWSEO.

There are so many. Where do I start? I have had so many experiences throughout the years. To keep it simple, I have been a NWSEO member for nearly 30 years. I joined NWSEO upon my arrival into the NWS in 1990. Once I joined NWSEO, I immediately became active within the Union and continued to remain active my entire career. I served as Office Steward several times, Eastern Region Vice Chairperson for several years, Eastern Region Chairperson and national Secretary/Treasurer. I absolutely loved working for the NWS and NWSEO. I have a passion for supporting employees and supporting the NWS mission. Becoming a NWSEO member nearly 30 years ago was likely one of the smartest career moves I ever made.

As an active NWSEO member, I was able to serve on so many local, regional, and national teams and worked collaboratively with management to drive the NWS field offices forward with new products, services, technology, and innovation. Most recently was my involvement working collaboratively with management from the very beginning on the formation of the National Water Center (NWC). I cannot express my gratitude of having served as the NWSEO representative on several NWS/NWSEO Teams since 2009.

Once the NWC was built, the NWC has continued to grow each year, reaching Initial Operating Capability, and created new, exciting positions within the NWS. More importantly, as the NWSEO representative, I have been invited to the NWC many times and I contributed, presented, and spoke to the leaders in the NWS Hydrology program representing the bargaining unit employees.

From an employee standpoint, as a past Steward, Vice Chairperson and Chairperson for Eastern Region and Secretary/Treasurer for NWSEO, I did my best to represent and provide representational services to those bargaining unit employees in need. I did my best when serving on the numerous local, regional, and national teams as an NWSEO representative. While I have done so much throughout the years, I am most proud of my two terms as NWSEO Secretary/Treasurer. During my years in this position, I am happy to report that our financials and investments continue to grow as the NWSEO balance sheet, income statements, and cash flow statements are solid. I feel assured the NWSEO is in the best financial state since its existence back in 1976. I know NWSEO has a bright future and will be stronger than ever in the years to come.

Recruiting new NWSEO has always been a passion of mine. I am also happy to report our NWSEO membership continues to grow and currently stands at ~1,625 members which is just off our all-time high of 1,632 members, even with the headwinds of promotions and retirements through the units under the NWSEO umbrella. I believe with a little effort from Stewards and NWSEO Members across the country throughout AOC, AOML, NAG, NWS and NESDIS, NWSEO can easily reach 1,700 members by years end.

With all the recent new hires, there's opportunity to drive our numbers even higher and I call upon every NWSEO member to continue recruiting new AND existing employees from AOC, AOML, NAG, NWS and NESDIS into our professional organization.

Dave, why should AOC, AOML, NAG, NWS and NESDIS employees support the work of our union?

Why wouldn't anyone want to support the work of our Union and the Labor movement? Think of it. Everything we have and enjoy, all the benefits we take for granted every day like days off, planning schedules, fixed schedules, alternate work schedules, entitlements to overtime, health benefits, pension benefits, health club reimbursements, paid vacation, annual leave, sick leave, retirement, unemployment insurance, social security, Family Medical Leave Act, parental leave, workers compensation, holiday pay, age discrimination laws, sexual harassment laws, collective bargaining rights, employee representation, lobbying and so much more, is because of the work of Unions like NWSEO.

As I said before, when you become an active NWSEO member, there will be the opportunity to work on both local, regional and national teams with Management to help develop and design new technology, integrate new science into operations and help develop new products and services to serve the nation. Serving and contributing on work teams will strengthen your resume and help propel your career and advancement. You need to be a NWSEO member to serve on these teams and by becoming a NWSEO member, you would be making the best investment decision in your life, *an investment in yourself.*

Your membership support and those who contribute separately to the NWSEO Political Action Committee (PAC) fund is the backbone for NWSEO in getting much needed vacancies filled, saving jobs, enhancing your working conditions, providing employee representation, forwarding the mission of saving lives and property, *lobbying Congress to obtain full and adequate funding levels all agencies under the NWSEO umbrella (AOC, AOML, NAG, NWS and NESDIS)*, negotiating new collective bargaining agreements (CBAs), work schedules that are work-life balance friendly, health club reimbursements, telework options (work-life balance) and so much more. Remember, some CBAs are open or about to become open and being renegotiated and you need to be a NWSEO member to ratify any new CBA (Contract). So, have your voice be heard. Be active and join NWSEO!

And finally, Dave, I'm sure members would like to know, what are you going to do now with all of your free time?

Ha-Ha! I'm going to do even more of my favorite hobbies: hiking, outdoors, travel and spend even more quality time with my beautiful wife and family. I'm looking forward to hopscotching around the world.

"In closing, I want to thank you, the employees of the NWS, AOC, AOML, NAG, and NESDIS around the country for your service. I want to personally thank everyone who served on the NWSEO National Council throughout the years, all Vice Chairpersons, and Stewards who give up their personal time to represent and serve the membership. I had so many people who helped mentor me throughout the years and for all those who assisted me, thank you. I also want to thank all the Stewards. Without your work as Steward, neither I or the NWSEO National Council and Chairpersons could do our jobs. Thank you all again for your support and service.

I respectfully ask: If you are not an NWSEO member, I strongly urge you to join the professional organization representing the women and men of AOC, AOML, NAG, NWS and NESDIS, the National Weather Service Employees Organization. I will be supporting NWSEO as an Associate Member in retirement for many years.

I am sure I will stay in touch with many of my NWS, AOC, AOML, NAG and NESDIS friends and colleagues".

***My best regards and in solidarity,
David Solano***

No one cares more for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) employees than NOAA employees.

No one works harder for NOAA employees than NOAA employees.

We are NOAA employees. We are NWSEO.

NWSEO proudly represents more NOAA employees than any other Union. NWSEO serves bargaining unit employees of the National Weather Service, NESDIS Office of Satellite and Product Operations, Office of General Counsel, Aircraft Operations Center, and Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory.