



PDI-POA: Protocol Officers Association
Protocol & Diplomacy International - Protocol Officers Association / PDI-POA



Protocol Symposium

Miami International Airport
Concourse D Auditorium, 4th Floor
(Entrance by door #1 – American Airlines Terminal)

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Agenda

- 8:30 AM. Arrival/Registration/Continental Breakfast
- 9:30 AM Call to Order – **U. Desmond Alufohai**, Director, Protocol & International Affairs Division, Miami-Dade Aviation Department
Welcome Remarks – **Ralph Cutié**, Director & CEO, Miami-Dade Aviation Department
Opening Remarks – **Catherine M. Wilson**, President, Protocol & Diplomacy International – Protocol Officers Association (PDI-POA)
- 10:00 AM [Precedence & Official Seating: How precedence and seating affect your event/meeting](#)
Rose M. Hedgemond, President and Founder, Avenues of Excellence, Inc., Miami, Florida
- 11:00 AM [Know your Ambassadors and their Sovereign Countries](#)
U. Desmond Alufohai, Director, Protocol and International Affairs Division, Miami-Dade Aviation Department
- 12:00 PM Lunch
Keynote Speaker: **Leslie Lautenslager**
Topic: Working with High Level Individuals
Author of *“My Time with General Colin Powell: Stories of Kindness, Diplomacy & Protocol”* & Past President, PDI-POA
- 1:15 PM [“Mindfulness” for Professionals](#)
Retha S. Boone-Fye, CEO of “Healing Leaf International, LLC, Miami, FL.
- 1:30 PM [Benefits of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) for Protocol Professionals](#)
Maurice Jenkins, IAP, C.M., Chief Innovation Officer, Miami-Dade Aviation Dept.
- 2:15 PM [Ask the Experts Panel](#)
Get your questions ready! The presenters will address specific questions and inquiries from workshop attendees about all things Protocol.
- 2:45 PM Author’s corner - Book signing by **Leslie Lautenslager**
- 3:30 p.m. End of session

*Please Park your car at any of the airport garages and bring your parking ticket with you for validation.
Light breakfast and lunch included with your registration.*

About the Speakers



Ralph Cutié is the Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD). He oversees operations at Miami International Airport (MIA) and four general aviation (GA) airports in the Miami area, which together generate \$32 billion in business revenue and support more than 275,000 direct and indirect jobs. MIA leads the way, handling more than 52 million passengers and more than two million tons of cargo annually, placing it among America's busiest international passenger and cargo airports.

Previously, Mr. Cutié served as Assistant Director for Facilities Management and Engineering, overseeing the largest and most diverse division within the Aviation Department, comprised of more than 440 employees, an annual operating budget of nearly \$123 million and a reserve maintenance budget of \$30 million. Mr. Cutié is a 30-year County veteran with more than 32 years' experience in the fields of project control, critical path method (CPM) scheduling, project management, construction contracting, and construction claims administration. He began his County career in 1990 with the Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) Department as a Cost and Scheduling Specialist, later advancing to Manager of MDT's Engineering Cost and Scheduling Section, and ultimately, to Chief of MDT's Project Control Division.

Mr. Cutié worked extensively in various capacities on numerous MDT projects of significance, including the \$248 million Metro mover Extension Project, the \$88 million Metrorail Extension to the Palmetto Expressway and the \$106 million Busway Extension to Florida City.

Mr. Cutié obtained his degree in construction management from Florida International University in 1989. He possesses numerous certificates in scheduling, project management design-build and claims administration from the National Transit Institute and served as an instructor in the County's Construction Manager Training Program - specifically in the areas of project scheduling, project documentation and construction claims, and disputes. He is married with three children and lives in southwest Miami-Dade.



Catherine M. Wilson has expertise in managing international visitor protocol, facilitating benefactor and donor stewardship, and executing event and protocol management for distinguished visitors and delegations. She worked as the Director of Protocol, Stewardship, and Partnerships for Notre Dame International at the University of Notre Dame. Previously, she was director of special projects and media relations for the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney for the 60th Judicial Circuit of Indiana.

She earned both her bachelor's degree in philosophy and her master's in nonprofit administration magna cum laude from the University of Notre Dame, as well as a certificate in hospitality and tourism management from Florida Atlantic University and a Sustainable Events Professional Certificate from Events Industry Council. She is a graduate of The Protocol School of Washington's® (PSOW) protocol officer training and is licensed through PSOW as an intercultural protocol and etiquette trainer. She is also certified in GlobeSmart Profile and Inclusive Behaviors Inventory through Aperian Global.

Ms. Catherine became a member of PDI-POA in 2016 and has served as a Forum volunteer, Member Buddy, Communications Committee Co-Chair, and Co-Chair of the 2022 International Protocol Education Forum in San Antonio, as well as a member of the Events Committee and the Select Committee on Professional Behaviors, Ethics, and Responsibilities. Ms. Catherine joined the board in 2020, serving as Vice President for Communications (2020-2022), and assuming the role of President of PDI-POA in September 2022.

Luncheon Keynote Speaker & Author



Leslie Lautenslager began her career in protocol when she was hired by U.S. Chief of Protocol Selwa “Lucky” Roosevelt. In addition to working on state and official visits of chiefs of state and heads of government, she organized and lead delegations representing President Reagan at various events around the world. After her administration appointment ended, Leslie joined the Battle of Normandy Foundation where she oversaw special events and protocol for over five years leading up to the 50th anniversary of D-Day.

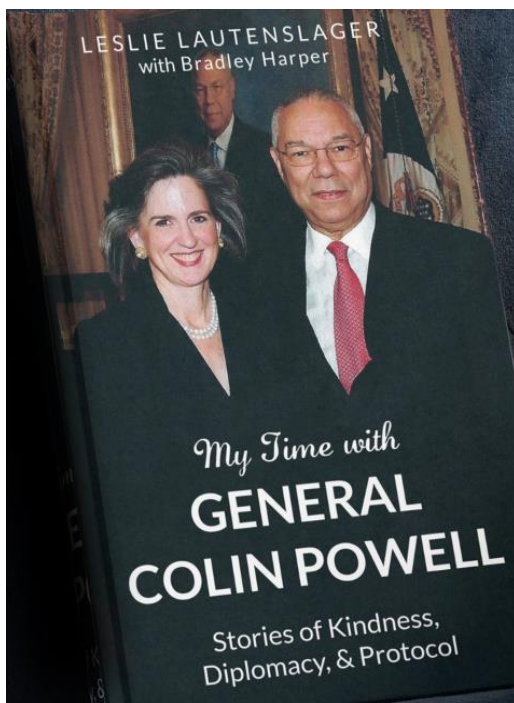
Her life changed in April 1996 when she was hired by the co-founders of the Washington Speakers Bureau to assist one of the most popular speakers on the international stage: General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.). Despite their different backgrounds, they quickly developed a unique rapport and language that lasted until his death over 25 years

later. On the professional speaking circuit, she was his liaison to clients, responsible for the logistical details of travel and preparations to make him “smart” about each event.

When General Powell was confirmed as the U.S. Secretary of State, she served as the Assistant Chief of Protocol for Ceremonials and Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, responsible for a staff tasked with planning and organizing all functions hosted by the Secretary to honor foreign dignitaries. Additionally, she supported ceremonies on behalf of the President and Vice President for national commemorations, the annual opening of the United Nations General Assembly, and state funerals, among many others. In 2005 after the General’s four-year tenure as the world’s top diplomat, she returned with him to the speaking circuit.

A graduate of the College of William & Mary, she has a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Psychology and in Fine Arts.

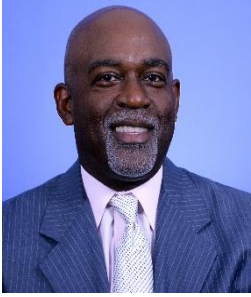
About the Book



At some point, we have all wondered what it would have been like to be the proverbial “fly on the wall to history.” In ***My Time with General Colin Powell: Stories of Kindness, Diplomacy, and Protocol***, Leslie Lautenslager pulls back the curtain on her 25 years spent at the side of one of America’s greatest public servants, General Colin L. Powell, sharing a very personal narrative on his time as America’s chief diplomat and his professional speaking career.

To the world, he was a military leader, a diplomat, a senior statesman, and a tireless advocate for young people. To his family and close friends, he was so much more – funny, charming, self-deprecating, practical, generous, gracious and kind. He was also a song and dance man, a car aficionado, a handyman, a lover of comfort food, a standup comedian, and a storyteller.

Through the pages of her book, Leslie Lautenslager shares the stories of her time with General Powell, allowing us, two years after his death, the privilege of seeing a very personal side of Colin Powell that few knew but can now be added to our collective history on one of America’s greatest heroes.



Maurice Jenkins, IAP, C.M., serves as Chief Innovation Officer for Miami International Airport. With more than thirty years of experience committed to achieving strategic growth and technology objectives for MIA. Mr. Jenkins has been a keen adopter to self-service technologies and has encouraged airlines serving the airport to embrace innovation also.

Prior to his role as a CIO, Mr. Jenkins was responsible for defining and managing IT capital assets and IT management processes to ensure their successful implementation and project integration. In addition, Mr. Jenkins served as the Aviation Department's Chief Information Officer/Director of Information Systems, responsible for the development and implementation of standards-based policies and procedures that support business operations which improved the overall quality of service of enterprise IT systems.

Mr. Jenkins' strategic vision has successfully culminated in the integration of new technology in the opening of the new South and North Terminals at Miami International Airport. In addition, the success of these new system implementations such as Biometrics, Virtual Queuing and new innovative technologies show his technical acumen and dedication to serve the residents of Miami-Dade County. Mr. Jenkins has implemented an area wide marketing information service to both hotels and conventions centers using current flight information data from Miami International Airport. AAAE and ACI best in practice initiatives are strictly adhered to that display his commitment to providing the highest level of service governed by industry standards. Mr. Jenkins graduated from the University of Miami with a bachelor's degree in business and computer information systems.

He also earned certifications in Strategic Management from Florida International University and Human Resources Management from Nova Southeastern University. Mr. Jenkins served as the Chairman of the Business Information Technology Committee (BIT), which was established by Airports Council International (ACI) to set strategic objectives future technology direction for airports. He was also served as Chairman of the Florida Airports Council's Information Technology Committee from February 2019 until December 2021. Mr. Jenkins has given presentations on implementation solutions to key IT leaders and airport IT conferences in the U.S. and internationally sharing his proven successful practices with his peer group.



Rose M Hedgemond is a distinguished professional known for her multifaceted expertise and unwavering commitment to excellence. She is a wife, mother, author, former corporate executive, and a distinguished veteran of the United States Navy-N.A.T.O.

Her presence exudes social graces and sophistication. Further enhancing her expertise, Rose is a Protocol School of Washington graduate, specializing in protocol, etiquette, and professional development. A true visionary, Rose is the President and Founder of two distinct entities: Avenues of Excellence, Inc., a 501(c)(3) community organization with a heartfelt dedication to training underserved youth in the community, and Avenues of Excellence Finishing School, Inc., a formal learning institution specializing in top-notch decorum and protocol training for both youth and adults.

The latter focuses on imparting social graces and upper-class cultural rites, emphasizing the importance of refinement and sophistication. Rose Hedgemond is a trusted authority on protocol, decorum, and professional development, featured in numerous national media outlets such as SIRIUS XM Radio, HOT 105, TBN, CBS, and various magazines and newspapers. Rose Hedgemond's commitment to excellence and her dedication to the betterment of individuals, companies, and organizations continue to make a lasting impact. She is a graduate of the Protocol School of Washington®.



U. Desmond Alufohai is the Director of Protocol and International Affairs Division, Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD). The Office of Protocol and International Affairs Division was created in 1988 to facilitate the movement of diplomats and dignitaries through Miami International Airport and to support the airport's international programs and initiatives. He leads the largest Protocol Office

Prior to joining Miami-Dade Aviation Department, Mr. Alufohai served as Senior International Trade Coordinator and head of the International Trade Programs for Miami-Dade County's Economic Development and International Trade Agency. He also served as Executive Director and head of membership services & training department for Junior Chamber International (JCI) as well as JCI's Director for Growth & Development for Africa and the Middle East.

Mr. Alufohai has worked as a leader in the international community for more than 30 years. He made notable contributions during his tenure at JCI as the liaison to the following organizations: United Nations Agencies (UNICEF & UNESCO); World Health Organization [WHO]; and the African Union (AU). He was a delegate to the International Model United Nations (IMUN) in New York (1991).

Mr. Alufohai is fondly referred to as "Mr. International" by his peers and associates due to his extensive international travels and proficiency in international affairs, intercultural etiquette, protocol and diplomacy. He obtained a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree from the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Anna Maria University in Paxton, MA, USA.

Mr. Alufohai is an honored listee of Who is Who in America (2024-2025) and he is the founding chairman of the Florida International Affairs Foundation (FIAF) and founding chair of the Black Hospitality Initiative (BHI) Board of Directors (Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau). He is recipient of the Consular Corps of Miami, Florida "2023 Person of the Year Award," inductee – 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, founded by Congresswoman Frederic S. Wilson, South Florida's 50 Most Powerful & Influential Black Professionals in Business & Industry [2015], and featured in the inaugural edition of "Who's Who in South Florida" [2007].

He is fondly referred to as "Mr. International" by his peers and associates due to his extensive international travels and proficiency in international affairs, intercultural etiquette, protocol, and diplomacy. He was instrumental in establishing the Sister Cities engagement between Miami-Dade County and Dakar, Senegal and Miami-Dade County and Cape Town, South Africa.

Mr. Alufohai is a Certified Meeting Professional and a graduate of the Protocol School of Washington. ®



Retha S. Boone-Fye is currently the CEO of "Healing Leaf International, LLC, a wholistically based business catering to health-conscious individuals as well as a certified "Mindfulness Facilitator" through Mindful Schools based in Emeryville, California. Introduced to Mindfulness while serving as a caretaker for a family member, she became acutely aware that the practice could be applied with equal effectiveness in educational, private and corporate environments. Through her "Mindfulness Matters" © platform, she has made presentations locally, nationally and even internationally.

Retha holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Miami and a master's degree in educational leadership from Nova-Southeastern University. She is a graduate of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Miami program; a member of the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce; and Vice Chair, Black Hospitality Initiative (BHI) Board of Directors, which provides educational and professional opportunities in the tourism industry for African Americans through the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB).