

LIFESTYLE RESOURCES

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CEVAN FORRIST MASTER OF HARDSCAPE

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PROFESSIONAL BALLROOM DANCER

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THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL
DESTINATION



By LINDA ALMINI

Photo: SFMP Media

FLITE LOGISTICS

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR PRIVATE JET TRAVEL

Victoria Collom, president and managing director of Flite Logistics, Inc., founded the company in April of 2013. Born and raised in the Bay Area, Victoria attended both Stanford University and Santa Clara University, which helped her appreciate the innovative creativity of Silicon Valley. While waiting a year to apply for medical school, she pursued another

one of her passions—flying. She earned her pilot certificates, became a flight instructor, and was then accepted as a flight officer with United Airlines. Victoria realized early on that with her husband being a pilot for Delta, their flight schedules clashed with raising their young children. With family as her first priority, she declined United's assignment and to this day does not regret her decision.

Remaining in aviation, Victoria was later employed by Hewlett-Packard as a flight planner in their aviation department. She recalls being encouraged by the flight department manager to earn her Flight Dispatcher's License. This training placed her at the same level as the flight captain, but in a ground support position, which added another safety dimension for the corporate flight department.

Victoria openly praises Hewlett-Packard's flight department for setting the highest safety practice standards, which she implements today with her own company, Flite Logistics. She emphasizes, "Safety is the first priority of every flight. We qualify the crew, the company, and even the jet for each charter flight to the highest level of standards."

Every aspect of each flight is taken into consideration—from planning the type of aircraft best suited for each flight mission to selecting which jet fits best the needs of the passengers. Flite Logistics looks at the crew experiences in specific jet types since each one handles differently. For instance, first-time travelers may wish

a jet with a wider cabin and stable flight characteristics, while others may wish higher speeds since corporate schedules are tight and time is money. Regardless—safety is paramount.

Weather conditions, as well as length of runways at each airport, are considered. Flite Logistics evaluates the restrictions of a high-altitude, mountainous airport on a winter day the same way it would a busy international airport on a summer day. Attention to personalized detail and communication throughout the process is key. Pilots are matched to the aircraft, beyond hours logged or credentials earned. Flite Logistics puts forth great effort knowing all aspects of the flight plan, and its clients' needs are equally matched to ensure the most successful experience for all.

When asked about customer service and how she defines it, Victoria replies, "It's in a handshake. I can learn so much about the customer. And through a handshake, I can address concerns. It may be a 'thank you' for selecting Flite Logistics. Or it may show appreciation to the flight crew. It conveys integrity. It says 'have a great flight; you're in exceptional hands,' or it says 'welcome home.' The handshake is multidimensional."

Victoria is a welcome sight for both her passengers as well as the crew. She watches the flight taxi down the runway and become airborne. When the landing gear retracts, you can see that look of pride on her face and her satisfaction knowing that all went well and that the details of the mission were executed flawlessly.



Photo: SFMP Media

In talking with Victoria about her experiences with jet management companies, the benefits of private aviation today for the business customer become clear. Efficient use of the executive's time is key to the success of their company. With Silicon Valley companies growing

internationally into such areas as Asia, India, and South America, ensuring that key executives reach their destinations safely, rested, and in a timely manner becomes vital. Security of CEOs in remote locations, or even the privacy of prominent government



officials, is a tremendous benefit of private jet travel. Among Fortune's 2009 "World's Most Admired Companies," 95 percent of the top 50 S&P 500 companies on that list were users of private jet travel (Nexa Report, 2009).

Flite Logistics' clientele is about 70 percent business travel and 30 percent personal travel for passengers with special needs, with a primary focus in the Bay Area. Private jet travel allows companies and business travelers to manage tight schedules, giving them the option to get where they need to be when they need to be there. Many personal travelers elect to fly private due to difficulties that may come with flying commercial: long lines and wait time, or the higher risk of exposure when there may be a health concern—or they may just have the desire and means to fly private. Either way, it's a good time

to fly private—and always the time to fly safely.

Throughout each step of her career, Victoria has taught aviation classes beginning first at Foothill College and Moffett Field, and then transitioning to San Jose State University's aviation department. Even today in the early mornings, she still teaches courses, from private-pilot ground school to international flight planning to business aviation management, sharing her real-life experiences and respect for the private aviation industry. As a board member of the Northern California Business Aviation Association, Victoria actively encourages students to network and get involved with business aviation. "We need to encourage college students to contribute to the industry with fresh ideas and enthusiasm so that we both may benefit and evolve with today's technology." www.flitelogistics.com **LRSV**