



CONTACT: Lauren Maturo  
Senior Publicist  
Blackstone Publishing  
lauren.maturo@blackstoneaudio.com  
832-741-0688

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Flying Free

My Victory over Fear to Become the First  
Latina Pilot on the US Aerobatic Team

## Cecilia Aragon

**“Cecilia Aragon’s riveting journey (and love of math!) led her from bullied Latina schoolgirl to aerobatic superstar, demonstrating not only courage to perform upside-down airplane stunts, but courage of the heart to overcome her fears and the low expectations of those around her. I hope her story reaches girls around the world, to show them how rising above hateful stereotypes truly is possible for anyone. She’s an inspiration, and I’m proud to have included her in my book *Hot X: Algebra Exposed!*”**

—Danica McKellar, actress (*The Wonder Years*, Hallmark movies) and *New York Times* bestselling author of McKellar Math books

**“A message of inspiration for those seeking to break free from societal norms.”—*Kirkus Reviews***

**“You don’t have to be a math whiz or a science geek to learn from her story. You just have to want to soar.”—*Hip Latina***

**“Cecilia’s story shows us how empowering and rewarding it is to be in the pilot’s seat, and that we can do it, not fearlessly, but in spite of our fear, flight by flight.”**

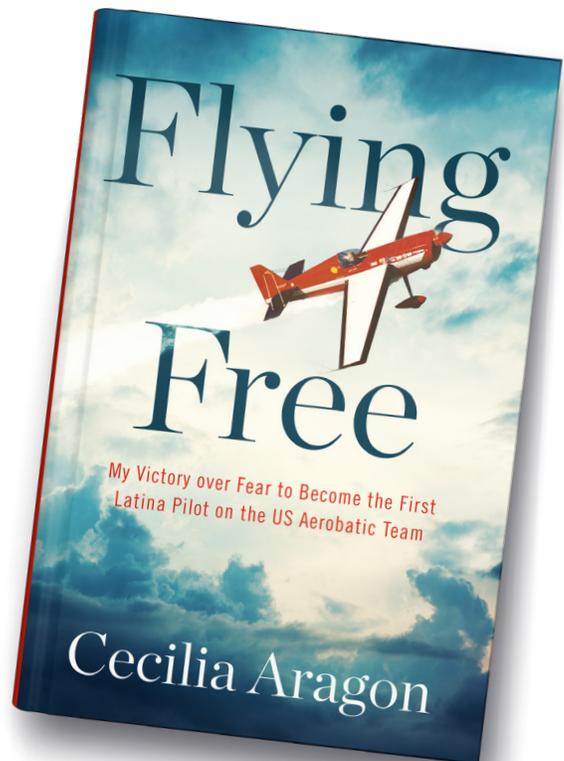
—Jan Redford, author of *End of the Rope: Mountains, Marriage, and Motherhood*

**“Cecilia Aragon is a master storyteller who reminds us that a bigger life is possible for each of us. Read this book!”**

—Theo Pauline Nestor, author of *Writing Is My Drink*

**“*Flying Free*...should be required reading for everyone...Dr. Aragon’s struggles as a youth, and her fight to win those struggles, provides motivation to others facing similar situations.”**

—Ann Quiroz Gates, professor, University of Texas at El Paso, and director, Computing Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Institutions



**“Dr. Cecilia Aragon in her book *Flying Free* tells a story of courage and perseverance, one that needs to be heard. Her story is one laced with grit and determination.”**

—Dr. Telle Whitney, cofounder, Grace Hopper Celebration Conference

**“This is a must-read book for anyone who has ever had any doubts about what they can achieve! Cecilia chronicles her path from a young Latina, who experienced racism verbally and physically, to a confident and very successful professor in computer science at a top university.”**

—Valerie Taylor, CEO and president, Center for Minorities and People with Disabilities in Information Technology

**Blackstone Publishing** is thrilled to announce the forthcoming release of *FLYING FREE: MY VICTORY OVER FEAR TO BECOME THE FIRST LATINA PILOT ON THE US AEROBATIC TEAM* [Blackstone Publishing; September 22, 2020; hardcover, e-book, audiobook], by Cecilia Aragon. In her memoir, *FLYING FREE*, Cecilia Aragon brings to life her exhilarating and inspiring journey from shy, fearful daughter of immigrants to champion pilot for the US Aerobatic Team.

The daughter of a Chilean father and a Filipina mother, Cecilia Rodriguez Aragon grew up as a shy, timid child in a small midwestern town during the 1960s. Targeted by school bullies and dismissed by many of her teachers, she worried that people would find out the



CONTACT: Lauren Maturo  
Senior Publicist  
Blackstone Publishing  
lauren.maturo@blackstoneaudio.com  
832-741-0688

truth: that she was INTF. Incompetent. Nerd. Terrified. Failure. This feeling stayed with her well into her twenties when she was told that “girls can’t do science” or “women just don’t know how to handle machines.”

Yet in the span of just six years, Cecilia became the first Latina pilot to secure a place on the United States Unlimited Aerobatic Team and earn the right to represent her country at the Olympics of aviation, the World Aerobatic Championships. How did she do it?

Using mathematical techniques to overcome her fear, Cecilia performed at air shows in front of millions of people. She jumped out of airplanes and taught others how to fly. She learned how to fund-raise and earn money to compete at the world level. She worked as a test pilot and contributed to the design of experimental airplanes, crafting curves of metal and fabric that shaped air to lift inanimate objects high above the earth. And best of all, she surprised everyone by overcoming the prejudices people held about her because of her race and her gender.

*FLYING FREE* is the story of how Cecilia Aragon broke free from expectations and rose above her own limits by combining math and logic with her passion for flying in unexpected ways. You don’t have to be a math whiz or a science geek to learn from her story. You just have to want to soar.



**CECILIA ARAGON** is an author, air-show pilot, and the first Latina full professor in the College of Engineering at the University of Washington in Seattle. She coauthored *Writers in the Secret Garden*, has worked with Nobel Prize winners, taught astronauts to fly, and created musical simulations of the universe with rock stars. Her major awards for research, and a stint at NASA designing software for Mars missions, led President Obama to call her “one of the top scientists and engineers in the country.”

#### **PUBLICATION INFORMATION**

TITLE: *Flying Free: My Victory over Fear to Become the First Latina Pilot on the US Aerobatic Team*  
AUTHOR: Cecilia Aragon  
PUBLICATION DATE: September 22nd, 2020  
PUBLISHER: Blackstone Publishing  
FORMAT: Hardcover, E-book, and Audiobook  
HARCOVER PRICE: \$26.99  
HARCOVER ISBN-13: 978-1-982642-46-4