This is the CWA Agents Connected newsletter. CWA represents over 20,000 passenger service and fleet service employees at American Airlines, including mainline American Airlines and regional carriers Piedmont and Envoy. In this newsletter we cover stories of interest to agents at all three airlines. If you’d like to suggest a story or share a picture of you and your co-workers taking action to build our union, email us at info@cwaagents.org.

**Envoy Stewards Train as Agent Advocates at DFW and ORD**

In November more than 20 Envoy stewards trained as agent advocates at DFW and ORD, learning to handle a variety of questions and procedures under their new contract.

In Dallas, Texas, seventeen Envoy agents representing eight stations across District 6 joined Chris Kress and Mike Lo Vuolo for intensive steward training. The agents learned how to write and handle grievances and how to represent their coworkers at hearings. They spent much of the two days learning about their new contract so they can share that information back home. The stewards left Dallas with the goal of signing up new union members at all their stations.

Waldo "Toby" Lane, an Envoy agent and steward from Springfield, Missouri (SGF), said the training will help him process coworkers’ grievances and educate them about their rights. “This was a productive and fun two days. I became a steward to help my coworkers sleep better, knowing that someone has their back when there are problems or they’re treated unfairly on the job,” said Toby. “What I’ve seen after the ratification of our new contract,” he added, “is an increase in people’s willingness to push back against unfair treatment. They know it’s okay to speak up now. And on the other side, I see a greater willingness of management to listen to workers. They know there are clear rules, policies, and procedures to follow. No one can just make up the rules! For myself, I’m glad to help people have a better experience every day at work.”

Crystal Roberts, a new Envoy steward at DFW spent several years as a mainline agent before joining Envoy six years ago. Crystal wanted to step up and get more involved when Envoy launched its official steward program. “I think I can be a real advocate because I respect my coworkers, and I think they respect me,” said Crystal. “I loved the training because Mike and Chris are honest about the challenges and there’s no fluff! We received a great deal of information about the nitty-gritty of the grievance process. There were also a lot of questions and concerns addressed about the union and its history. I’m looking forward to putting all this information to use to assist our agents and management to become more unified.”

In November about 45 Piedmont agents gathered for a major Leadership Training event in Charlotte, North Carolina. They held mock hearings and learned all the practical details they will need to help fellow agents navigate positive solutions for grievances and other problems at work.

Piedmont gate agent Teresa Cooley says she has always been a motherly figure at work, so becoming a union steward seemed like a logical move. “I care about and want to help other agents. I feel I really owed it to them—and to myself—to attend the leadership training for Piedmont stewards in Charlotte this year,” said Teresa. “I want to make sure that workplace procedures are fair. At CLT there are a lot of different managers, and they should all treat employees with respect. No favoritism, no arbitrary decisions. In general, we do have good relationships, so I want to continue that and improve it where I can.”

The leadership training that Teresa attended at CLT in November went well beyond her original steward training, she said, providing additional practical details about what’s involved in advocating for fellow agents. Read More: [https://bit.ly/35eLwnl](https://bit.ly/35eLwnl)

More Actions Against Airport Assaults

In September 2019, AFA-CWA President Sara Nelson spoke on the topic of assaults on passenger service agents before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Aviation, sharing shocking stories from her own experience.

“I came around the corner on an evening in an airport when there were severe storms and flights were being cancelled everywhere. Because staffing has been reduced both on the plane and at the gates to the lowest level, there was one customer service agent. . . . And there was a family of five going on their vacation who . . . scratched up [the agent’s] arm so badly that blood was dripping from her arm by the time I got there. There were no other airline personnel there to see it, and there was no law enforcement there to respond.”

CWA passenger service agents worked hard last year to get language included in the FAA Reauthorization Act to protect agents from assault, and we continue to demand more progress from airlines. The language included in the act requires that airlines develop clear procedures for reporting verbal and physical abuse, immediately notify law enforcement, and stop passengers involved in violent incidents from proceeding onto aircraft before law enforcement has assessed the situation. In mid-September, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report looking into assaults and harassment over the past year with disturbing results. Take a look at the full story here: [https://bit.ly/2KElcjG](https://bit.ly/2KElcjG)
American Agents Take a Stand Against HBR Closures

On October 24, 2019, a sea of red shirts greeted CEO Doug Parker and other American Airlines executives at the company’s quarterly State of the Airline meeting in Fort Worth, Texas.

Members of the CWA-IBT Association of Passenger Service Employees, including home-based agents (HBRs) and office-based agents, spoke out against plans to close the Reno reservations office in March 2020 and move all HBRs into offices over the next two years. Renee de la Garza, Secretary of CWA Local 6001 in Dallas, was part of the delegation in Ft. Worth. “It was important for us to be there and make our statements on behalf of our coworkers. We asked Parker to look at the employees who are being affected and see how devastating the closures will be for our lives,” said Renee.

Later in October, representatives of the CWA-IBT Association met with Doug Parker and other executives to deliver more powerful statements from employees. At that meeting, a union representative read a statement by Trish Muir, an HBR in Tucson and Chief Steward with IBT Local 104 in Phoenix. Trish talked about going through challenging times in the past with the company, the dedication of her coworkers, and the hope that the company will change its plan.

Read More: https://bit.ly/2KGeBOT

Supporting Our Sisters and Brothers at Delta

Thousands of Flight Attendants at Delta Air Lines are fighting to join our CWA family by becoming members of AFA-CWA. Delta is the industry’s most profitable airline, and at this point management retains full control of flight attendants’ pay, benefits, and working conditions. Delta flight attendants have no voice at work and no seat at the table when the company plans for the future. Their lack of power undermines CWA members at other airlines as well, undercutting our efforts to achieve proper staffing, rest, job security, and safety standards for all airline employees.

An MIT study of flight attendants’ total compensation found that, on average, Delta flight attendants made $14,000 less last year than United flight attendants, and Delta pays $100 million less per year than United for flight attendant costs in the same size operation. As passenger service members of CWA, we support Delta flight attendants in their fight for a voice on the job.

Visit AFACWA.org/deltawelcome to learn more about how you can support Delta Flight Attendants.

STAY CONNECTED

If you haven’t visited our website for awhile, please check out CWAAgents.org. We’ve updated the “Find Your Local” section and have added several new Piedmont locals. To stay up-to-date on bargaining, mobilization, and other issues, be sure to follow us on Facebook at American Agents Connected, Piedmont Agents Connected, and Envoy Agents.