NEWS RELEASE

American flies 500th Honor Flight

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Ten years ago, the first Honor Flight departed Asheville, North Carolina, and arrived at Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA). So it was fitting for American's 500th Honor Flight to travel the same route September 24, 2016.

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DCA employees, organized by Customer Care agent Greg Locher, pulled out all the stops, including a quadruple water cannon salute, red carpet and a 39-piece band, to welcome 180 World War II, Korean and Vietnam veterans. Former U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R) Kansas was on hand to welcome the veterans and shared some touching remarks.

What I do every Saturday, I come out and visit veterans from across the country," Dole said. "I've met literally thousands of veterans from every part of the country."

The honored guests received a police escort through Washington D.C., as they visited several memorials and Arlington National Cemetery, where they participated in a wreath-laying ceremony.

Retired American Airlines employee Raymond Dean, who is a Korean War veteran, was a participant on the 500th Honor Flight, making it even more meaningful for the company and the employees who work to make it happen.

"First of all I'm very proud of my company, American Airlines" Dean said. "And you volunteers, as far as the flight attendant, captain and crew, I congratulate you, I thank you so much."

Through the Honor Flight Network, nearly 200,000 veterans have visited their memorials, and many of them were welcomed by American Airlines thanks to Locher and countless other employee volunteers.