American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Women's History Month: Different Paths, Same Success

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At American, we are proud to celebrate Women's History Month and the contributions women make to our company and our communities. Throughout the month, we're sharing some of their stories and highlighting the vital work they do to make us the world's greatest airline. Today, we put a spotlight on women who are forging their career paths in aviation maintenance.

Although many young women grow up intrigued by careers in aviation, few might look at aviation maintenance as their potential way in. Today, women represent roughly one in 20 Maintenance team members. But that doesn't mean their roles in the operation are any less significant.

"I never thought that I'd be changing engines or tires on a Boeing 777," said Crew Chief Nanean Warren, Line Maintenance, LAX. "But once I got into this career, it opened up new opportunities to do things I didn't think I could."

Nanean has had the rare opportunity to follow in both of her parents' footsteps, having spent more than 10 years of her career as an educator, like her mother, and the last 20 years as a mechanic with American, like her father.

Other women have followed different paths into aviation maintenance and found a similarly rewarding outcome.

"I told my mom I wanted to join the Navy," said Crew Chief Bertha Gallardo, Line Maintenance, LAX. "She said no and started introducing me to her friends for guidance." Eventually that led Bertha to the Compton Airport Volunteer Center, where she figured out that she liked working with her hands. She also met Technical Crew Chief Dave Mansker, who has been a mentor to Bertha ever since.

“People think women are intimidated by lifting heavy stuff,” she said. “They shouldn’t feel intimated. A lot of times, things that look difficult at first really aren’t. I know I can’t do everything — there are some things I can’t lift — but that hasn’t been a challenge in my career.”

Both Bertha and Nanean want to encourage more women to consider careers in aviation maintenance.

“Maintenance is not for everybody, but it is a field for women,” said Nanean. “Young girls today should know that this is a great opportunity for them. It’s a way to explore new things and take chances. I’ve been able to see the world, further my education and raise my family. There’s nothing stopping more women from doing that, too.”

Crew Chief Nanean Warren, Line Maintenance, LAX

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