American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Proud To Be Me

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Starting June 1, we join the LGBTQ community in recognizing Pride Month. In the June issue of American Way, Reservations Representative Kostas Manthos, who works at the office in Liverpool, England, shares how working at American has allowed his pride to take flight in new ways.

When you boarded your flight, you might have heard one of our team members greet you with a friendly, "Welcome aboard." If you're a frequent flyer, it's possible you've heard the phrase more times than you can count. The thing is, at American Airlines, we really do want you to feel welcome throughout the flying experience. But what does it mean to feel welcome, exactly? Your answer is probably different than that of the person sitting next to you.

For me, feeling welcome means being in an environment where I can be proud of who I am — a member of and an advocate for the LGBTQ community. Like so many others, I haven't always felt that way. Growing up in Greece, the fight to be seen as an equal was difficult. I found greater acceptance when I moved to the U.K., and working for American has allowed me to take my pride to a whole new level.

As a Reservations representative in Liverpool, I'm among the first people our customers in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region interact with when they choose to fly American, which gives me a chance to make them feel welcome right away, no matter their background. I'm also president of our local Pride Employee Business Resource Group, which allows me to help foster an inclusive workspace so that our LGBTQ team members and their allies feel supported as they support our customers.

When I was the lead organizer of our participation in the Liverpool Pride Parade, I was able to fulfill a dream by marching with my colleagues in front of my community — Europe's permanent capital of culture, in my view — to celebrate who we are. To say I felt a sense of total happiness and fulfillment would be an understatement. And the

best part is, I’m not alone in my efforts. Around the world, our team members are working to ensure equality always wins, regardless of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, job title or walk of life, not just during celebrations like Pride Month, but every day of the year.

Why does that matter to you? Because, in addition to being the world’s largest airline, we want to be the greatest. And we won’t get there without embracing our differences and treating every individual as respectfully as we treat ourselves.

So, whether you’re traveling to Liverpool or anywhere else around the world, my 130,000 colleagues and I sincerely welcome you, as you are, and we thank you for flying with us today.

Kostas Manthos
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