American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

The art of aviation: New campus structure showcases talent of American AMTs

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American Airlines aviation maintenance technicians created works of art to be displayed at the airline's new campus. You can hear from the creators themselves and get a look the sculpture in the video. And read below about how one piece displayed in the new dining area went from idea to installation.



The new Robert L. Crandall Campus was designed and decorated to inspire team members and visitors about the

wonders of aviation and, more specifically, American Airlines. The building design pays homage to the various professions you can explore in the airline industry, including engineering, finance and aviation maintenance, to name a few. Visitors will notice aviation equipment, team member uniforms and other recognizable aviation symbols built into the structures and décor.

But it is a 160-foot art installation that snakes through the dining area amid sky-high glass windows that catches your attention as you walk in the front doors. And it is a fitting tribute to the airline's aviation maintenance technicians (AMTs) — whose creative vision and skills built the piece from design to installation.

When the new campus design team approached Randy Swartwood, an AMT who works in the Structure Shop at the Base Maintenance facility in Tulsa, Oklahoma, they had a simple idea. They showed him a twisted string piece of paper with fringed ends and asked if he could build it. "I told them, 'We can build anything here,'" Randy said.

Because of their ingenuity, Randy said that the Tech Ops — Tulsa team has been called on to do more and more creative or "out of the ordinary" projects across the system. And although this request was the largest by far, he had no doubt that the team could deliver.

Designed to resemble the contrail of an airplane, the work of art was crafted using materials found on American's fleet by the professionals that service our aircraft every day. Carbon fiber, the same material used for aircraft panels, was used to create the blades that extend from an electrical aluminum conduit spine. The materials were picked specifically to create a structure that is both lightweight and strong.

Randy started with the measurements provided by the design team and called on his fellow AMTs to help. Randy asked Gavin Punch, an AMT and craftsman who spends his spare time rebuilding cars, to help build the structure. Team members from across the Base Maintenance facility — from the Structure, Composite Repair, Machine and Paint shops — contributed. They designed, organized, created and built the signature art installation over the last year.

The installation was built in Tulsa using only measurements of the space, which was still under construction. Randy drew three separate swirled lines on the ground at their shop because they did not have enough space to draw the continuous structure.

Randy said that working from Tulsa made the final installation a little stressful, not being in the location where the structure would hang. But ultimately, as he watched the final structure being installed, he said it had been a rewarding experience.

"There wasn't a lot of margin for error while we were making this," Randy said. "And bringing the pieces down was

probably the most stressful. You're always thinking, 'Did I miss something? Is it going to come together the way we intended?'" But as Randy looked around the dining area during the installation process, he smiled.

"But I think we nailed it."