

NEWS RELEASE

American Connects Young Ambassadors from Los Angeles to the World

8/23/2019

LOS ANGELES — For the second year in a row, American Airlines helped transform the lives of young people from Los Angeles as the official airline of the Los Angeles Mayor's Young Ambassador (MaYA) Initiative.

First launched in 2018, the MaYA Initiative connects young Angelenos with the international community, making them aware of global opportunities in Los Angeles and imparting an international perspective that will guide them for years to come. The trips abroad include visits to cultural and heritage sites, community service projects, home stays, meetings with government officials, and exchanges with college students and academic institutions.

"The Mayor's Young Ambassador Initiative proves the power of partnerships and the importance of enduring global connections," said Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. "With American's support, this program has helped bring young Angelenos to the world — and the world to Los Angeles."

The program provides free international travel for community college students that qualify for free tuition under the Los Angeles College Promise program including airfare, lodging, travelers insurance, and meals. Flights are provided by American and oneworld® partner airlines through a partnership with the Mayor's Office of International Affairs.

"My life completely changed after I participated in a foreign exchange program as a teenager," said Suzanne Boda, American's Senior Vice President – Los Angeles. "I gained a new perspective on the world and learned how important it is to be a global citizen. It's increasingly important for young people to adopt that mindset today, and I could not be happier that American is helping these Young Ambassadors realize it for themselves."

This summer, 44 Young Ambassadors visited Paris and Hanoi, Vietnam. Among them, 64% had never traveled internationally before and 25% had never flown on an airplane.

“The ability to welcome the unfamiliar and bring the best out of something new and different is a wonderful skill to have gained,” said Cristian Gaspar, a student at Los Angeles Southwest College who flew for the first time during his trip to Paris. “It is always easier to find the differences between each other but it takes true insight to see the ways we can improve from one another.”

During a 10-day trip to Vietnam in August, students attended a briefing at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, visited the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and participated in an exchange with 20 local students from the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam.

Hahn Tran, a student at Mission College, had never traveled internationally before visiting Vietnam this summer. “After this trip, I realized that any culture could feel different depending on what someone is used to in their own,” she said. “However, seeing how the people of Vietnam welcomed other cultures made me believe that other places in the world could be just as welcoming as long as people keep an open mind.”

Since its inception last year, the MaYA Initiative has taken 90 Young Ambassadors from across the diverse Los Angeles metro area to five destinations around the world.

After returning from their trips abroad, students are enrolled in the MaYA Alumni Network, allowing Young Ambassadors to continue exploring global opportunities in Los Angeles, engaging with international cultures and communities, and making an impact in their city through community service and mentorship projects.

American is the largest carrier at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) with more than 200 daily flights to 70 destinations and is the only airline at LAX with nonstop service to five continents. Since 2013, American has grown to become the largest airline employer at LAX, having increased its employee presence by more than 60%. Today, more than 7,300 team members are based at the hub, producing a \$14.5 billion total economic output in the region last year — a figure which grew by 10% in just one year.

Earlier this month, American was announced as the first Founding Partner of LA Stadium and Entertainment District at Hollywood Park (LASED) and the official airline of the Los Angeles Chargers and the Los Angeles Rams. The carrier continues to grow and strengthen its 70-plus year presence in Los Angeles through significant direct and indirect investments in the region, including a \$1.6 billion modernization project to fully reimagine LAX Terminals 4 and 5 — the largest individual investment at an airport in American’s 93-year history.

Young Ambassadors depart Los Angeles International Airport for London Heathrow on the first leg of their trip to Cairo, Egypt, in 2018.

Since the program began, 50% of Young Ambassadors have received passports for the first time.

As part of their cultural experience, Young Ambassadors attended a briefing at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam, this month.

About American Airlines Group

American Airlines offers customers 6,800 daily flights to more than 365 destinations in 61 countries from its hubs in Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix and Washington, D.C. With a shared purpose of caring for people on life's journey, American's 130,000 global team members serve more than 200 million customers annually. Since 2013, American has invested more than \$28 billion in its product and people and now flies the youngest fleet among U.S. network carriers, equipped with industry-leading high-speed Wi-Fi, lie-flat seats, and more inflight entertainment and access to power. American also has enhanced food and beverage options in the air and on the ground in its world-class Admirals Club and Flagship lounges. American was recently named a Five Star Global Airline by the Airline Passenger Experience Association and Airline of the Year by Air Transport World. American is a founding member of oneworld®, whose members serve 1,100 destinations in 180 countries and territories. Shares of American Airlines Group Inc. trade on Nasdaq under the ticker symbol AAL and the company's stock is included in the S&P 500. Learn more about what's happening at American by visiting news.aa.com and connect with American on Twitter [@AmericanAir](https://twitter.com/AmericanAir) and at Facebook.com/AmericanAirlines.