American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Appreciation is the key to success in Chicago

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American Airlines team members at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport (ORD) made a commitment to thank their colleagues in other departments for the work they do to care for our customers. In a series of appreciation events, team members from ORD focus on collaborating across workgroups to promote a more cohesive team and improve performance metrics that play the biggest role in getting our customers to their destinations safely and on schedule.

ORD Gate Agent Natalia Duque came to work on Nov. 12 with an attitude of appreciation. She, along with her managers and peers who serve our customers at the gate and on the ramp, prepared for weeks to recognize more than one thousand team members from a vastly different part of the airline.

Equipped with a token of appreciation, Natalia and her colleagues walked onboard the aircraft of their flight assignments that day to deliver a personal thank you to the flight crew. Their efforts support the airline's commitment to creating a caring work environment, and in turn, motivate the team to provide the greatest level of care for customers at every stage of the travel journey.

The gesture was met with smiles, hugs, applause and even tears from crew members who were moved by the thoughtful intention "I got a little emotional because I've been here for over 30 years, and I know that we can lose touch and forget that we're all one team," said ORD-based Flight Attendant Loreen Scott. "It's nice to see we're coming together again and getting to know each other."

Natalia enjoyed being part of the gifting, especially when the crew showed that they valued the sentiment. "The reaction we just got from Loreen makes the preparation worth it," said Natalia. "I hope we'll all keep this day in the back of our minds and remember the work relationships we made today to keep them going in the future."

In the latest of a sequence of cross-departmental appreciation events, ORD gate agents and ramp crew chiefs delivered gift bags to the pilots and flight attendants of all 192 mainline departures out of Chicago that day. A handwritten thank you note was enclosed inside every bag with a package of “Chicago mix” popcorn for each crew member.

Manager of Customer Care Spencer Losinski helped spearhead the effort, which he said was a simple, heartfelt and genuine way to show their gratitude. “By saying ‘Thank you. We appreciate you,’ we are promoting a culture of collaboration to continue growing as one team and working toward one goal,” Spencer said.

At American, that goal is to take care of people on life’s journey, and the best way to care for our customers is getting them to their destinations safely and on time. That’s why the airline focuses on turn management — the process in which team members turn an aircraft from an arrival to an on-time departure.

Spencer is one of the airline’s One Team, One Turn leaders deployed at ORD to energize coworkers on turn performance. The One Team, One Turn initiative ensures that team members are ready, prepared and in position to successfully turn aircraft and get our customers to their destinations on time. A successful turn requires strong coordination between all frontline work groups — on the ramp, at the gate and onboard the aircraft.

“It’s easy to get lost in the pressures of meeting your own deadlines before customers can board the flight, so it’s nice to be reminded that all of our different duties support the same goal,” said Randy Lallkissoon, a NYC-based flight attendant. Randy received the gift bag while working the first of four flights that day and said it meant a lot to him. “It’s the little things in life, and it’s important to do things like this for each other because it made a long day ahead that much better.”

The appreciation events are a direct result of a cross-departmental meeting among frontline team leaders to brainstorm ways to encourage more interdepartmental collaboration aimed at a more reliable operation. ORD-based flight attendants kicked off the initiative on Nov. 6 with a special thank you to their colleagues who manage the gates and ticket counters by setting up breakfast and treats in agent breakrooms throughout the day.

“There’s no greater way to foster a unified team than promoting meaningful peer-to-peer appreciation across all work groups,” said Franco Tedeschi, Vice President of Hub Operations in Chicago. “I’m proud to be part of a team that appreciates each other and I enjoy watching that same level of care and respect reach our customers for an unrivaled travel experience.”

Flight crew and agents pose for a photo after their appreciation huddle.