American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Geeks flex their aviation muscle to support fellow team members in need

11/25/2019

Team members from around the American Airlines campus in Fort Worth, Texas joined forces for a fierce afternoon of aviation trivia, raising more than $62,000 for the American Airlines Family Fund.

Each year, the Geek Off is a great place for team members who are also aviation enthusiasts to show off their knowledge of commercial aviation and airline history to help support a worthy cause. Teams of one or two test their skills and battle it out to see who can take home bragging rights for the next year.

This year's winners were from team DFW 1000, consisting of Andy Egloff, Flight Dispatcher at American's Integrated Operations Center (IOC) and Robert Pepe, Customer Service Manager, also at the IOC. The pair overcame 15 other teams during the three-round competition and received bragging rights, the coveted Geek Off trophy and 25,000 AAdvantage miles.

For the past nine years, the Geek Off benefitted the American Airlines Education Foundation, which cares for team members by making higher education for their children more affordable. Geek Off has raised more than $41,455 for the American Airlines Education Foundation in the last five years alone.

This year, organizers decided to put Geek Off donations towards the American Airlines Family Fund, which gives team members the opportunity to give back closer to home — to fellow team members during unexpected tragedy or natural disasters. Last year alone, the foundation awarded more than $800,000 in grants to 348 team members.

The 10th Annual Geek Off raised a record-breaking $62,840, thanks in part to a $50,000 retirement donation from Senior Vice President of Customer Experience Kerry Philipovitch. Kerry has been a longtime supporter of the event

and an executive sponsor for eight years.

The competition started in 2010 when a group of team members from the US Airways Finance department were looking for a way to raise money for a national giving partner.

In 2012, when the original founders could no longer manage the competition, Kevin Trinkle, Sr. Systems Analyst, IT Applications, took over. Kevin has been involved with the competition since its inception and now runs Geek Off alongside the Council of Geeks. Each year, Kevin and the Council of Geeks help procure prizes, reels of nostalgic airline commercials and the graphics displayed at the event.

In the end, DFW 1000 was able to edge out team Cheesy and Corny; Lance Goulet, Sr. Specialist Communications, Digital Engagement, and Lori Waffenschmidt, Manager of Audio/Visual Communications. The pair won an hour in a Boeing 787 simulator. Rounding out the top three teams are Network and Schedule Planning Analysts Chad Rachubinski and Alex Mcintyre from team Latin Lifestyle.

“I look forward to Geek Off every year. First and foremost, it’s a great opportunity to raise money for a good cause that helps our fellow team members,” Robert said.

“I've been into commercial aviation since I was four years old and entered the competition for the first time this year. I was happy just being in the competition but was even more thrilled to win it. I'm looking forward to defending our title next year,” Andy said.

Winners of the 10th Annual Geek Off, Andy Egloff, Flight Dispatcher at American’s Integrated Operations Center (IOC) and Robert Pepe, Customer Service Manager, also at the IOC.

The Geek Off is hosted by Sam Mendenhall, Managing Director of Crew Scheduling and Support, seen here wearing a gold jacket.