American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Getting to know Guyana: a pre-flight celebration at JFK

11/6/2019

On a typical day, Customer Service Manager Vanita Jagnarain is busy supporting her team and helping customers on the concourses of Terminal 8 at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK). More recently, however, she put on a different hat in an effort to help educate our customers and fellow colleagues about her native country of Guyana, which American will begin serving from JFK. Service commences on Dec. 18 with a daily flight to Cheddi Jagan International Airport (GEO) in Georgetown.

Vanita and American's Caribbean Employee Business Resource Group worked with the Consulate of Guyana in New York to teach others about the country's history and rich culture with a special event — Get to know Guyana Day.

"When service was announced earlier this year, I was thrilled and felt a deep sense of pride knowing that the company I work for will now serve my home country and my fellow Guyanese," Vanita said. "The thought of a legacy carrier serving the market was almost unimaginable."

As it turns out, 2019 marks a five-year milestone at American for Vanita. In celebration of her tenure, she led this initiative to teach the JFK community about Guyana.

The standing-room-only event featured steel pan music, Guyanese food, native dance and presentations hosted by various entities. Barbara Atherly, who serves as Guyana's Consul General to New York, delivered the feature presentation, telling others about what Guyana has in store for them. Representatives from Wilderness Explorers also educated onlookers with information about tours and attractions.

Several elected officials also participated in the Get to Know Guyana event, including New York State Senator

Roxanne J. Persaud, who was born in Guyana.

Courtney Noel, a representative with the Guyana Cultural Association in New York, performs Guyanese music.

Dancers from the Sanasani Cultural Organization perform dances traditionally seen in the West Indian-Caribbean region.

JFK Customer Service Manager Vanita Jagnarain worked with American's Caribbean Employee Business Resource Group and the Consulate of Guyana in New York to celebrate Get to Know Guyana Day.

"Many travelers at Get to Know Guyana Day were excited that American connects the United States with Guyana, making it the only legacy carrier with regularly scheduled service between Georgetown and New York," Vanita said. "Guyanese have lacked reliable airline options between the United States and Guyana for decades, so they are excited about this service."

In addition to Get to Know Guyana Day, American supported the West Indian Day Parade — one of the most colorful and vibrant events in Brooklyn. The parade unites people with ties to the West Indian-Caribbean region for a celebration of culture and tradition.

The efforts of Vanita, American's New York Sales team and the company's Caribbean Employee Business Resource Group didn't go unnoticed. This year's parade drew nearly 2 million spectators.

"Being of Guyanese decent and having worked in the aviation industry in both Guyana and the United States, I understand the importance of having a reliable carrier with affordable fares serve the Guyanese people," Vanita said. "Apart from the corporate travel needs, the largest community of Guyanese migrants is in the U.S., so I'm glad we are able to meet their needs."

American will operate the new flight on a Boeing 737-800 with 160 seats, including 16 seats in Business Class. Customers can enjoy power outlets at every seat while streaming free live TV and Apple Music to their personal devices.

The daily flights are scheduled to leave JFK at 6 p.m. and arrive at GEO at 12:40 a.m. the following day. The return flight will leave GEO at 1:35 a.m. and arrive at JFK at 6:29 a.m.