American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Passing the Bodrie baton

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It's been said you spend more time with the people you work with than your own family, but what if they're one and the same? At the Robert W. Baker Integrated Operations Center (IOC) in Fort Worth, Texas, you're never more than a few feet away from a Bodrie.

The Bodrie family story begins at a small chain grocery store in Flint, Michigan, nearly 2,000 miles from the IOC. "My husband Bruce and I met in 1982 at the Hamady Brothers grocery store. Strange to say, but we've worked together our whole lives," Deb Bodrie said. Nearly 40 years later, Bruce, a Dispatch Operations Coordinator, and Deb, a Crew Coordinator, live and work in Fort Worth with their two sons Max Bodrie, an Aircraft Router; Alex Bodrie, a Flight Dispatcher; and Alex's fiancé Ashleigh Broyles, also an Aircraft Router, all call the IOC their office.

"In 1984, I got a call from Deb's brother, and he asked me if I knew anyone that wanted a job with USAir in Detroit," Bruce said. "Well, I did. So I applied and shortly thereafter my career began. It was a defining moment for our family — one that would lead to us all working for American."

Bruce's aviation career took him across the Northeast, working in several cities and positions before making his way to the Operations Control Center (OCC) at Pittsburgh International Airport, and finally to the IOC in Fort Worth.

Deb's airline career came about in a similar way. "In 1988, there was a woman at the US Airways headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, that needed help in accounts payable and asked a family member if I'd be interested," she said. Deb accepted and after spending a few months there, she transferred to an administrative job in Pittsburgh, where she began to work at the OCC in Crew Scheduling. She's been in Crew Scheduling ever since.

When Bruce and Deb began their family — Alex born in 1989 and Max born in 1993 — it was natural that they'd share their love of aviation with their boys. Both would go to college at California University of Pennsylvania (Cal U),

where they graduated and worked various jobs before landing at American.

“I was always interested in being a pilot and in between semesters at Cal U, I attended Air Traffic Controller School at Community College of Beaver County,” Alex said. “It was a great program because they required you to get your private pilot license, which I’ve maintained to this day.”

At his dad’s suggestion, Alex took a chance and was hired at the OCC in early 2015.

When the IOC opened in August of 2015, Bruce, Deb, and Alex moved to Texas. Max, who stayed in Pennsylvania to finish his MBA, followed shortly thereafter.

“So many coworkers have come up to me and told me they remember me when I would play around in the old office,” Max said. “It’s a humbling feeling seeing so many people still around the company that remember me after almost 20 years.”

The Bodrie family is about to get bigger. Alex met his fiancé, Ashleigh, four years ago.

“We were introduced to each other when Ashleigh started at the IOC and began dating a month later. We just got engaged on one of our annual family trips to Hawaii this past September,” Alex said.

“We see each other more at work than we do at home,” Ashleigh said. “We all understand each other, and it’s just great getting to be a part of a family that’s in the same field.”

When you ask the Bodries about what they love most about their jobs, their answers are consistent. “It all comes down to taking care of people and making sure we keep our passengers safe and run a smooth operation,” Bruce said. “I’d like to think we passed the importance of caring and our values down to our sons.”

Bruce and Deb Bodrie share a smile during their early years together.

Max, Deb, Bruce and Alex Bodrie connect between shifts. The family works at the Integrated Operations Center (IOC) in Fort Worth, Texas.