American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Being cared for on life's journey

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My career at American Airlines began by chance. I was looking for a temporary gig to make money before grad school and answered an ad in the newspaper. A few weeks later, I began my career at American in Customer Relations, opening and processing mail at the airline's headquarters. That was 35 years ago.

Shortly after that, I moved to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, where I worked for 15 years doing just about every customer service role possible. I gained a deep appreciation for our customers, my colleagues and all of the complexities that go into the operations side of the business. Eventually, I moved to Customer Experience and later IT at our headquarters office. Today, I work behind the scenes to support the very group I started with more than three decades ago.

And there's a reason a job that was supposed to be for a few months turned into a lifelong passion. I work with amazing people every day, and how well we all care for each other never ceases to amaze me. The partnerships, the perspectives, the support, the values have shaped my way of thinking and helped me become a better person.

Like anything, there have been challenges, but even more opportunity for growth. Now, my job is to find ways to make customers' experiences smooth and seamless. Our group is tasked with constantly looking for new ways to transform the travel journey when customers choose American. Underpinning every decision is the purpose to care for people no matter the disruptions that may arise. I love it.

It wasn't that long ago that I needed care. In 2017, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. We were on the cusp of delivering a brand new self-service tool for customers. It was an important project for our airline, and I knew I needed the support of my team and colleagues more than ever. They stepped up and took on responsibilities they might not have otherwise.

Their response was incredible. My colleagues were generous and caring beyond imagination. Their acts of kindness and care made all the difference, giving me the strength and encouragement I needed throughout my road to recovery.

Now, at three years cancer-free, I try to return that kindness and support to others who have been impacted by cancer. As often as I can, I volunteer for a program that matches patients with survivors to be a resource. Being able to support others through their journey is important to me. It's what I do here at work and for others going through hardships I can relate to.

Without fail, my work family has always been there for me. We all try to bring that same support to our customers.

Karen Churchill
Senior Manager, Customer Experience Innovation and Delivery