American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

# Beyond the day job

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Each month in American Way, we feature an article written from the perspective of an American Airlines team member — a unique way to connect the airline's customers with the people who care for them on life's journey. In the February issue, a team member from Miami shares some of the important work that is being done to help foster inclusivity and equality among team members and the communities we serve.

Working at American means more than simply keeping an airline moving and supporting our customers. Of course, that's a big part of it — especially for me as a member of our Miami International Airport (MIA) Control Center team. Every day, my colleagues and I are charged with managing all aircraft movement on the ground and ensuring safe, on-time departures. While we operate behind the scenes, our focus on our customers' experience is top of mind.

Though the work we do in the Control Center is critical and rewarding, there's other important work to be done, especially as it relates to inclusion and equity for the Black community. As president of the MIA chapter of American's Black Professional Network employee business resource group, I know this firsthand. That's why my colleagues and I, along with our leaders, have leaned into our responsibility to foster inclusivity and equity amongst all team members and the communities we serve.

Our network achieved much in 2020 that we will continue to build on this year, including the moment of silence held on Juneteenth at MIA. The 8 minutes and 46 seconds offered a powerful reflection on the tragic deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks, George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and the brutality and racism that Black Americans have endured for far too long.

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> — Brittney Portes Control Center Manager, Miami International Airport

Last year, our network also helped members of an underserved Black community in Miami. Together with local charities, we provided census and voter registration information, as well as free health care.

Our next focus is on building a talent pipeline with Florida Memorial University, the only historically Black college in the U.S. with an accredited aviation program. I was fortunate to start my career in this industry 12 years ago and, like so many of my colleagues, want to provide the same opportunities for others.

It's the same dream I have for my two boys. My husband, Dwight, and I adopted Dean and Liam, who were first placed in our care as emergency fosters. Every child, no matter their race, ethnic origin, gender or age, matters. They should have the safety and security of a family and a place they can call home.

While there is much to overcome, I am incredibly proud to be part of such a talented and passionate team that is making incredible efforts to foster a society that is more inclusive, equal and just. Beyond the efforts of our network, American, as a company, is laser focused on bringing about change for team members and the communities we serve. Together, we are leading by first listening to concerns.

On behalf of my American Airlines colleagues, thank you for the opportunity to be part of your journey.

Brittney Portes
Control Center Manager, Miami International Airport