

NEWS RELEASE

Sharing the love of aviation

2/11/2022

Aviation Maintenance Technical Crew Chief David Mansker strives to inspire the next generation of aviation professionals by sharing his passion for the industry with others.

Growing up, he spent his summers at Tulsa International Airport (TUL), following his dad around as he cleaned planes. David has been bouncing around planes since he was 8 years old, but his own aviation career didn't take off until later. After high school, David joined the United States Air Force, where he pursued a career in computer programming.

After a few years in the military, he dove into the world of aircraft manufacturing, but soon realized that he wanted to be closer to the action, working on the planes he has always known and loved.

In 1990, David joined American Airlines as an Aviation Maintenance Technician, first at TUL and later transferring to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). Thirty-one years later, he said he still looks forward to the spontaneity of each day, fulfilling the purpose of caring for people on life's journey and spreading opportunity wherever he can.

"Being an aircraft mechanic, people rely on what we do in order to get from Point A to Point B," David said. "From flight attendants to pilots to us mechanics, we all do our part to ensure we are safely caring for our customers and doing what we need to do to make sure the experience people have is a good one — especially from the aircraft maintenance standpoint."

David said he doesn't take for granted the vast opportunities a career in aviation has provided him. From getting to travel all over the world and experience new cultures to learning about different professional paths that are available in the aviation industry, he said his ability to love what he does and connect with aviation professionals from all walks of life has led to a successful and fulfilling career. David said he credits the industry and American

with finding the career of his dreams and learning even more about himself and his passions, one of which is environmental sustainability. In addition to his job as a Crew Chief, David also serves as the Lead Environmental Coordinator for aircraft maintenance, where he monitors and manages environmental impacts to day-to-day operations.

"The opportunities of being in this environment and the interactions I've had with people across the organization have allowed me to really discover who I am and all that I'm capable of doing." David said.

A 2021 Chairman's Award winner, David has made his passion for his profession a daily testament at work and his love for aviation shines beyond his career. As a Black leader in the field, David is laser-focused on sharing his passion for the job and spreading opportunity to the aviation industry.

"I've probably reached the pinnacle of my contributions in aviation," he says. "But coming up in the field from my background and environment, I know what this industry has allowed me to do, and that is a story that could be played over and over again to young people from all walks of life."

Living in the hustle and bustle of Los Angeles, David conducts outreach to at-risk youth in underrepresented communities, who aren't exposed to the same opportunities he had as a kid, and with a mission to show them what their life could look like with a career in aviation.

"I feel an obligation to lead by example," David said. "Somebody gave me my chance, my opportunity, to be all I can be, and I want to do the same for these kids. I want to inspire them to look up in the sky instead of looking down at their lives."

David's mentorship outreach has led several of his students to become maintenance technicians at American, including Aviation Maintenance Crew Chief Bertha Gallardo. While interacting with one organization in south Los Angeles, David connected with a young woman in the program who at the time was working at LAX doing contract maintenance. After a 10-minute conversation with her, David knew this was someone that belonged at American. Not only was she beyond qualified for the job, but she had a hunger for opportunity and a passion for aviation — something David was familiar with.

"David is someone who allowed me to see that there is hope in making your dreams come true, or should I say my dreams come true," Bertha said. "I'm so thankful for him and his mentorship."

LAX Aviation Maintenance Technical Crew Chief, David Mansker examining a Boeing 787-9.