



NEWS RELEASE

American Airlines Tulsa base maintenance facility celebrates 80 years of excellence

~~2026-06-18~~ This aerial photo of Tech Ops – Tulsa shows the growth of the maintenance base with the four original hangars visible and still in use today.

- Former military aircraft plant grows exponentially into the world’s largest commercial aircraft maintenance base.
- The facility now employs nearly 5,000 team members and is the backbone of the airline’s technical operations.

TULSA, Okla. — For eight decades, the American Airlines base maintenance facility in Tulsa, Oklahoma (Tech Ops – Tulsa), has stood at the center of the airline’s technical operations, evolving into the world’s largest commercial aircraft maintenance base and a cornerstone of the airline’s commitment to safety and reliability.

“American is proud to celebrate Tech Ops – Tulsa, a cornerstone of our aircraft maintenance operation,” said Senior Vice President of Technical Operations Kevin Brickner. “Our team of skilled aviation maintenance professionals — in Tulsa and across our system — is the best in the business, and they set the standard for safety, quality and ingenuity. We wouldn’t be where we are today without our team members, the City of Tulsa and the State of Oklahoma. We’re eagerly looking forward to the next 80 years in Tulsa and beyond.”

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Aerial photo of the surplus military aircraft plant in early 1946.

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Tech Ops – Tulsa team members working in the propeller shop in 1947.

It all started in 1945 when the U.S. government listed a military aircraft plant as surplus property. The property, with four large hangars anchoring more than 260 acres, caught the eye of American’s leaders who soon negotiated



a lease with the City of Tulsa and began relocating its maintenance and engineering operations from New York's La Guardia airport to the new Tulsa facility. The move reflected American's growth and Tulsa's emergence as a major aviation and aerospace hub, bolstered by a skilled local workforce, which still holds true today.

The maintenance base opened in June 1946, and started overhauling Douglas **DC-3 aircraft**. American's then CEO and industry pioneer Cyrus Rowlett "C.R." Smith celebrated the facility's opening with an eye toward the future.

"We plan to become citizens of Tulsa and Oklahoma," Smith said. "We plan a great expansion and development in this city and this state. Our future is ahead of us. We are looking forward."

Over the years, almost every aircraft type flown by American passed through Tulsa's hangars. Early propeller-powered models such as the DC-3 and Convair 240 soon made way for turbofan engines powering DC-8s and Boeing 707s. Boeing 727s and 747s and the McDonnell-Douglas DC-10s and legendary MD-80s later occupied hangars. Modern Boeing 737 and 787 families of aircraft touch down at the base for scheduled maintenance work today.

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Tech Ops – Tulsa, which is currently undergoing \$400 million in improvements, has grown to 3.3 million square feet of hangar and shop space sprawling across 330 acres at Tulsa International Airport. Together with the airline's nearby offsite composite repair and wheel and brake facilities, these technical centers of excellence provide maintenance and related support to more than 400 aircraft that visit the base annually.

The source of the base's success — and the standard set for the industry — is the people. Today, nearly 5,000 team members (including more than 2,300 licensed aviation maintenance technicians) work in aircraft overhaul, component repair, **engine overhaul**, engineering, supply chain, facilities maintenance and information technology, to keep Tech Ops – Tulsa moving 24/7. And they're not just individual team members — the base has familial roots with generations of families working at the base over the decades.

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The Flagship San Francisco, a Douglas DC-3, leaves the hangar July 17, 1946, after undergoing the first aircraft overhaul at Tech Ops – Tulsa.

Eighty years after the maintenance base opened, the airline continues looking forward to welcoming the next generation of aviation maintenance professionals through its hangar doors. In 2024, American **announced** a partnership with Tulsa Tech — the alma mater of many current Tech Ops – Tulsa Team members — providing interviews to top students and ongoing engagement opportunities with the airline's team members, formalizing a decades-long relationship with the school. American also sponsored Tulsa Tech's adult student team at the 2026 Aerospace Maintenance Council Competition. Tech Ops – Tulsa team members mentored students leading up to

the competition, and that partnership paid off — **the team took first place** among all 47 schools.

About American Airlines Group (NASDAQ: AAL)

American Airlines is a premium global airline connecting more of the U.S. to the world. With roots tracing back to an air mail carrier in the Midwestern United States in 1926, American now operates more than 6,000 daily flights to more than 350 destinations in more than 60 countries and serves more than 200 million customers annually. Powered by a proud and talented team of 130,000 aviation professionals, American’s team lives out the airline’s purpose of caring for people on life’s journey every day.

The world’s largest airline proudly celebrates its centennial year in 2026, reaching a milestone that reflects a century of innovation and the Forever ForwardSM spirit that changed the industry and the world. American introduced the first scheduled air cargo service, the first airport lounge and the first airline loyalty program and continues to reinvent the customer experience today. The airline is also a founding member of the oneworld alliance, whose members serve more than 900 destinations around the globe.

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