



NEWS RELEASE

# Remembering Capt. David E. Harris

3/9/2024

American Airlines CEO Robert Isom issued the following statement following the passing of Capt. David E. Harris:

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of Capt. David E. Harris, a trailblazer in aviation who became the first Black commercial airline pilot when he was hired by American Airlines in 1964. Capt. Harris opened the doors and inspired countless Black pilots to pursue their dreams to fly. We will honor his legacy by ensuring we continue to create access and opportunities for careers in aviation for those who otherwise might not know it's possible.

"On behalf of all of us at American, our thoughts are with Capt. Harris' family, friends and colleagues during this difficult time."

"Reaching back and helping others to succeed, that's what I'd like for my legacy to be." — Capt. David E. Harris  
Capt. David E. Harris



Watch on  YouTube



Capt. Sydney Clark, Capt. David E. Harris and Capt. Sam Samuels

The first all-Black flight deck crew, known as the Soul Patrol: Capt. David E. Harris, Capt. Jim Greene and Capt. Sam Samuels

“It’s the greatest job in the world. I flew and flew and flew and was ready to fly more in my life.” — Capt. David E.

Harris

Capt. David E. Harris joined American Airlines in 1964 flying the DC-6 aircraft.

Capt. Dennis James, American Chief Diversity Officer Cedric Rockamore, Capt. Sydney Clark, Capt. Sam Samuels, Capt. David E. Harris and Capt. Beth Powell.

Capt. David E. Harris and the generations of pilots he inspired.