



The Update Message from the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers representing Flight Attendants in the 2339 Local Lodges

Friday, December 4, 2009

Flight Crews Look Forward to Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Coverage

Flight crews will soon have the same family and medical leave coverage that other working Americans have enjoyed since 1993. IAM flight attendants have had the ability to use FMLA for many years because it was a negotiated contractual benefit. Transportation labor applauds the passage of the Airline Flight Crew Technical Corrections Act, which is expected to be signed into law soon. "Congress never intended to exclude flight crews from this coverage," said Edward Wytkind, President of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO. "But flight attendants and pilots have had to trade away other benefits in contract negotiations in order to receive Family and Medical Leave Act coverage that should have been theirs from the start." The FMLA guarantees that eligible workers can take up to 12 weeks off to care for themselves or a family member. But because of the unique way their work hours are counted, pilots and flight attendants have found it difficult – if not impossible – to meet the 1,250-hour per year threshold required for FMLA eligibility. For example, pilot duty time is capped at 1,000 hours per year, making it virtually impossible for them to qualify for this important coverage. "It's time that flight attendants and pilots get family and medical leave just like millions of other American workers," Wytkind said. Transportation unions are grateful to Sen. Patty Murray, Rep. Tim Bishop, and Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, as well as many others, who championed this long overdue, common sense legislation.

ExpressJet announced this week that its President and CEO, Jim Ream, will retire effective January 1, 2010. Pat Kelly, currently an ExpressJet Board member will act as interim CEO. The company advised the union that operations will continue as usual. Crew members entering Canada must fully complete the Customs Declaration form to avoid being detained or deported. Please declare all food stuffs when entering Canada. Full information on prohibited items may be found at <http://www.beaware.gc.ca>. Crew members have reported that Customs officers are warning that security is being tightened due to the upcoming Winter Olympics. UAL pairings are now available. Please remember that the show time for deadheading is 30 minutes prior at the gate. Please allow yourself plenty of time to complete any additional duties.

ExpressJet Reminder: December 21, 2009 is the last day to add family members for pass travel. Please make sure that you follow all instructions for adding your family members.

ANA, Continental, United to merge key routes – Japan's second carrier All Nippon Airways Co. (ANA) plans to integrate its Japan-US passenger operations with those of United Airlines and Continental Airlines, a report said Thursday. The three Star Alliance partners expected the move, which could come into effect next autumn, to raise efficiency, reduce costs and boost earnings, the Nikkei newspaper's evening edition said without citing sources. The carriers plan to establish sections within each others' companies that would work together like a single company, to strengthen and broaden the existing ANA-United code sharing pact, the report said. ANA declined to comment. The reported deal comes as the Japanese and US governments were expected to sign an "Open Skies" agreement as early as next week, under which airlines would get greater leeway to decide their flight routes and frequencies. If the agreement is signed, the three carriers are likely to file applications by the end of the month with the Japanese and US authorities to exempt their integration from antitrust laws, the Nikkei said. The review would likely last about six months, after which authorities could give the green light next October, the report said. The planned integration would give the trio a 38 percent share of all Japan-US flights, topping the 33 percent share of industry leader Delta Air Lines, the Nikkei said.

URL: http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j15vbzV22ZFRr_-Xjbv0dT25CzsQ

We would like to encourage all members to attend your Local Lodge business meeting. Each Local Lodge must have a quorum to conduct business. The following is a schedule for upcoming meetings:

Newark: Tuesday, December 8, 2009, 3:00 p.m. at the Renaissance Newark Airport Hotel

Cleveland: Thursday, December 10, 2009, 1:00 p.m. at 669 North Rocky River Drive

Houston: Tuesday, December 15, 2009, 1:00 p.m. at 15710 JFK Blvd
December Monthly Union Meeting to be Held at LL Office

Guam: Wednesday, December 16, 2009, 2009, 4:00 p.m. at the Airport Conference Room