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ASA & ExpressJet Flight Attendant Voting Now

Voting instructions have arrived in the mail. Atlantic Southeast (ASA) and ExpressJet (XJT) Flight Attendants are calling 855-VOTE-AFA throughout the system to celebrate after casting their vote for our Flight Attendant union. We are hearing loud and clear that Flight Attendants want a union that is their own – with their own structure specific to their airline and representatives who walk in their shoes. They want AFA’s seniority protections and the union understands the importance of pay protections for our unique jobs. They want the union that is focused on achieving the best of both contracts. They are voting for a strong future with AFA.

Voting Timeline:

• Voting instructions were mailed to Flight Attendant homes on November 30 according to the address on file with the airline.
• Duplicate instructions must be requested from the NMB by December 16.
• Results will be announced on December 21, 2011 after voting closes at 1400 Eastern Time.

Flight Attendants at the new ExpressJet are not voting for a contract, but for their careers and for a union:

• that understands our job.
• with the experience to negotiate pay protections for all of our time at work and away from home.
• that can guarantee our seniority.
• that is focused on Flight Attendants - our safety, our security, our health and all of the unique facets of our jobs.
• that is run by and for Flight Attendants.
Stay up to date with the election on www.yourafa.org.

**American Eagle in Bankruptcy: Defending Our Contract**
The American Airlines bankruptcy filing on November 29 prompted pledges of solidarity among the work groups at the airline and its subsidiaries, including American Eagle. Too many AFA members understand the challenges of bankruptcy. But, all of AFA’s experience in defending our contracts, our jobs and in pressing management for good decisions for the future of the airline will be put to use to support our sisters and brothers at American. We will have the best representatives in the bankruptcy court. AFA will vigorously defend the Flight Attendant contract and to utilize the union’s best resources, as we have done in more than a dozen recent bankruptcies where AFA has represented Flight Attendants. In addition to mobilizing full support for our sisters and brothers at American Eagle, AFA extends our support to our Flight Attendant Coalition partners at APFA, who represent the American Airlines Flight Attendants. We will work to best protect all Flight Attendants in this bankruptcy.

**Airline Focus: Continental Airlines**
On the same day the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) granted a single operating certificate to the combined United-Continental-Continental Micronesia which allows it to operate flights as one airline in name, the newly-elected Continental (CAL) AFA leaders from Councils in Newark, Cleveland and Houston came together for the first meeting of the CAL AFA MEC. At the November 30 meeting, the MEC elected the new CAL MEC officers. While Continental Flight Attendants have had peer representatives from day one in AFA, this November 30th meeting fulfills the purpose of our union’s Constitution and Bylaws to have representatives in place based on a democratic vote of the membership. The temporary officers are to be commended for stepping forward from day one to set up our union’s structure at Continental and ensure not a minute passed without Continental Flight Attendants representing Continental Flight Attendants.

The moment votes were counted and AFA was established as the legal collective bargaining representative at the merged CAL, Continental Micronesia and United Airlines, the building of the AFA structure began. Immediately, a membership drive aimed at full Flight Attendant participation was launched and volunteers began to step forward to form the AFA committees that address the different areas of our work lives. While the committees at each of the three airlines remain independent, they will coordinate for the benefit of Flight Attendants and will tap into the significant AFA committee network. For example, in forming the CAL AFA Safety Committee, Flight Attendants worked with and drew on the experience of their flying partners at United and are now part of the AFA safety network that includes hundreds of Flight Attendants with years of practical experience and specialized Flight Attendant training.

With their own AFA structure in place, the CAL Flight Attendants are assured full representation as they, along with the Continental Micronesia and United
Flight Attendants, prepare for the merging of their three work groups.

Since 1934, when Continental Airlines began operations as Varney Speed Lines in the American Southwest, the carrier expanded service to hundreds of destinations throughout North America, South America, Europe and Asia to an estimated 61 million passengers annually.

“Continental Flight Attendants have a long history of dedication to the Continental brand and of pride in the level of service we provide to our passengers,” said Continental Flight Attendant Frank Brown, who served during the transitional period following the union representation election. “We look forward to blending our proud traditions as we prepare for the future with our new flying partners.”

“Today begins a new chapter for us as Continental Flight Attendants as we unite in common purpose,” said Marcus Valentino, CAL AFA MEC President. “We now have elected officers in all positions from the LEC to the MEC – officers who will work together as one. We call for unity as we navigate this merger together – how we arrived where we are is not as important as where we need to go.”

The merged airlines will use the United Airlines name with the Continental logo, forming the world’s single largest airline in revenue passenger miles.

**Court Upholds Seniority Protections for All Flight Attendants**

AFA’s seniority integration policy promotes unity and protects a Flight Attendant’s years of service. This is the ideal as we recognize the contributions all Flight Attendants make to our careers. But, in cases where Flight Attendants are not represented by AFA, we have also successfully lobbied for seniority protection under the law. And now through AFA’s persistence, the court has confirmed that this law will protect a Flight Attendants’ right to a fair and equitable process for seniority integration.

In 2007, AFA was instrumental in getting legislation passed by Congress, the McCaskill-Bond Amendment, which protects a Flight Attendant’s seniority in the event of a merger at their airline. AFA’s latest legal victory for Flight Attendants comes with this Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that McCaskill-Bond should have applied when Republic Airlines purchased Midwest Airlines.

The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a district court grant that allowed the Midwest Flight Attendants to be stapled to the bottom of the Republic seniority list. AFA filed suit to compel a McCaskill-Bond seniority integration arbitration for the Midwest Flight Attendants, even though AFA no longer represents the Flight Attendants. It is the first appeals court to firmly establish the absolute requirement that fair and equitable seniority integration must occur whenever two groups in the same craft or class are merged.

The 7th circuit found that a merge of "air carriers" had occurred and the operations of Midwest had been
integrated into Republic. Therefore, a merger of seniority lists through fair and equitable seniority process is mandated. The court rejected the argument that Republic only bought some assets of Midwest and, since Midwest was going out of business anyway, there was no merger of air carriers.

“This is a victory for the hundreds of former Midwest Flight Attendants whose years of dedicated service will now be honored,” stated International President Veda Shook. “It is an example of AFA’s tireless dedication to the Flight Attendant profession and will have an enduring impact. Flight Attendants at merged carriers now have some career protections regardless of union representation. AFA never walks away from a fight that is important to the Flight Attendant profession.”

**Delta Flight Attendants Denied Right to Fair Election**
The National Mediation Board (NMB) issued a decision on November 18, 2011, denying charges of management interference in the November 2010 union representation election at Delta Air Lines. AFA strongly condemns the decision, a year in the making, which threw out 60 years of contract bargaining and discounted the voices of nearly ten thousand Delta Flight Attendants who stood up to vote for AFA in the face of serious management interference.

This ruling cannot break the ties that unite us. As long as management knows Flight Attendants at Delta want AFA, some of management’s worst plans will remain at bay – there is a measure of protection. AFA’s first objective is to unite all cabin crewmembers. Every Flight Attendant with membership in AFA benefits as we build our voice in the work place. Without a union and a contract there are no guarantees – management controls our employment. And, while one group of Flight Attendants remains unrepresented management will continue to use that against us at the bargaining table where Flight Attendants are represented. There are tangible reasons why we all need to unite and take ownership of our future.

If you know any Delta Flight Attendants, please show them your support. We are all Flight Attendants. Visit [www.yourafa.org](http://www.yourafa.org) for more information.

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**AFA's Negotiations Update** page features a summary of negotiations or a statement of contract status at each AFA carrier.

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