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Speaking Frankly

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(pg. 14)

Homecoming

LET ME INTRODUCE you to Flight Attendant Class 2014-08, or, as I like to call them, our children. I'm not trying to sound paternal or patriarchal, mind you. Nor am I trying to sound pedantic. Rather, I'm crowing about 2014-08 like a proud parent would boast about his star student. That's because AA Publishing sponsored Flight Attendant Class 2014-08 — this fresh-faced collection of talented, capable and enthusiastic co-workers — as they went through the rigors of Flight Service training.

As part of American Airlines' 2014 Flight Service "Adopt a Class" program, AA Publishing was responsible for being the liaison between the mother ship at Headquarters and our new hires, showing them how we're all one big global community. More than that, though, the Publishing team showed continued support and admiration for our adopted class. To look at their faces when they were bused to Headquarters during that first week for a cake party with other members of the Marketing department was to see a reflection of the future of the new American. We got to hear

the eagerness in their voices as they began their seven-and-a-half weeks of training, and, as proud parents, we got to mentor and watch their progress in real time as they evolved into self-confident American Airlines employees (and into the type of folks who will carry on the rich, honored tradition of donning the uniform and being on the front lines of safe, comfortable travel experiences).

That was the sentiment expressed by 23-year-old new hire Logan Meinzer, a recent graduate of The Ohio State University. Logan majored in Russian and European studies, and the idea of seeing the world and putting his degrees to good use was actually secondary to why he applied to be a flight attendant. "I was looking for a profession where I could contribute," he says. "I was looking for something I'd do well and thrive in while making a difference." Affable and well-spoken, Logan will find what he's looking for and then some as he begins his career in the sky. He just found out that he'll be based out of Chicago O'Hare.

It's an attitude that bodes well with the current

flight attendants, who do their best to make sure you have an enjoyable flight, like Kazumi Chapa, a 25-year veteran who was featured in the March issues of *American Way*. Recently, an Executive Platinum flier with close to 4 million miles wrote in about Kazumi and her exceptional career. As life imitating art goes — and in a truly classy manner — Kazumi responded to this passenger with heartfelt thanks and gratitude (page 14).

Which brings us to another fantastic story coming out of Class 2014-08. Linda Prejean has worked as a life coach and a counselor for years. A big part of her practice is to counsel middle-aged people who feel they're stuck in a rut. Indeed, Linda has brought solace and relief to countless patients in her San Diego practice. She decided to practice what she preaches and, at 67, is one of the more life-experienced freshmen in the Class of 2014-08.

"Through the training, I've found that I love to do this," Linda says. "I still have the love and vitality for adventure, and the support of my husband of 49 years. I feel like I just started my career, one that is not all about me; I feel as if something led me here in order to make a difference.

"I'm amazed at how much I'm growing."

Please take a minute to thank the flight attendants on your plane. Welcome our children from 2014-08 and show gratitude to veterans like Kazumi Chapa and Clara Luck, a 42-year employee whose daughter, Traci, is a proud graduate of 2014-08 (page 122).

Graduates of American's Flight Service training are fluent in two languages: strength and growth. Our children are going to continue to grow strong. Welcome home.



ADAM PITLUK
Editor



GRADUATES: Flight Attendant Class 2014-08 with their "adoptive parents," *American Way's* Adam Pitluk (center) and Travis Kinsey (back row)

@ Want to talk to Adam? Reach him at editor@americanwaymag.com

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