

Airline Dispatch Federation
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Washington DC:.

The Airline Dispatch Federation is celebrating #ADFblackhistorymonth by spotlighting members who are proud dispatchers in our profession.

Joe Jackson was Delta Air Line's first African American dispatcher back in 1968. Joe led the way for additional African American dispatchers to join the profession.

[Link to Joe Jackson First Black Dispatcher](#)

ADF would like to spotlight the below members in honor of Black History Month



Kevin Daniels – Dispatcher/ ATC Coordinator American Airlines

Member Spotlight

Kevin Daniels
Dispatcher/ ATC Coordinator at American Airlines
September, 2012

How did the Dispatch Profession find you?
My Dad, he started working for Piedmont Airlines in 1979, so I've been around aviation all my life.

What about the future of Dispatch inspires you?
Learn as much as you can from the Senior dispatchers, before you know it, you'll be asked those questions that they seem to only know the answers to one day.

CELEBRATING
BLACK HISTORY MONTH
2024


#ADFblackhistorymonth

Melissa Fisher-McSween – Flight Superintendent - Delta Air Lines



**Member
Spotlight**



 **#ADFblackhistorymonth**

Melissa Fisher-McSween
Flight Superintendent at Delta Air Lines

August, 2007



How did the Dispatch Profession find you?

While working in the Delta JFK Tower, we went on a business trip to visit Delta's Operations Control Center at Delta's world headquarters in ATL. On that trip is where I learned about the dispatch career and decided on the spot to make it my ultimate career goal.

What about the future of Dispatch inspires you?

My advice to future dispatchers is to dispatch each flight as if one of your loved ones were on that flight. This helps me to never become complacent when it comes to safety. Always keep an open mind to the ever changing regulations and procedures of the airline industry.

F E D E R A T I O N

Ben Lock – Flight Dispatcher - Southwest Airlines



**Member
Spotlight**



#ADFblackhistorymonth

Ben Lock

Dispatcher at Southwest Airlines

*Southwest Airlines' first African American Customer Service Coordinator
Dispatcher - November, 2006*



How did the Dispatch Profession find you?

After working in operations and interacting with dispatch on a daily basis, learning and understanding the process of what it takes to get our planes in the air and back on the ground safely. A few key influencers along the way helped encourage me to go get my certificate and apply for the career change. A majority of those folks are still in our office today.

What about the future of Dispatch inspires you?

For any future dispatcher, I would recommend they take a day in the field from any of the Legacy Airlines and learn the ins and outs of what a Dispatcher does. Understand the importance of communication and planning for our flights to be safe. Realize the amount of care it takes, to do a dispatchers job the right way on a daily basis.

Zaffrenarda “Z” King – Dispatch Trainer - Southwest Airlines



**Member
Spotlight**



#ADFblackhistorymonth

Zaffrenarda “Z” King

Dispatch Trainer at Southwest Airlines

January, 2016



How did the Dispatch Profession find you?

I got my start in aviation through an aviation program at my high school. There I was exposed to different careers in aviation and also eventually earned my private pilot certificate shortly after graduating. I went on to college at Middle Tennessee State University. It was there where I first learned about dispatch after a school trip to Delta OCC in Atlanta. I mainly focused on Air Traffic control CTI program while in college but I graduated with my dispatch certificate as well. It wasn't until I started my first dispatch job at GoJet airlines is when I really developed a passion for dispatch.

What about the future of Dispatch inspires you?

The advice I would give to future dispatchers is to gain as much knowledge as possible from all aspects of the operation. Learning how every role works together as a team will help you become a better dispatcher along the way.

Zakiya Minter– Flight Dispatcher - United Airlines



Zakiya Minter
Flight Dispatcher at United Airlines

*First African American Female in United Airlines Navigate Program
Dispatcher - October, 2023*

How did the Dispatch Profession find you?
I began my career in the airline industry as a customer service agent while attending school. I soon realized how multifaceted and intrinsic the airline industry was holistically, capturing my fascination with its intricate blend of entities and the seamless orchestration required to make air travel a reality. It's a world where each component plays a vital role, and the complexity of it all sparked my genuine interest. After dedicating the majority of my career to airport operations and station operation roles, I felt a compelling desire for a new challenge. The realm of flight dispatch caught my attention, sparking a genuine interest to explore this dynamic and crucial aspect of the aviation industry. I was fortunate to receive an incredible opportunity to participate in United Airlines' dispatch school, Navigate Academy. This unique experience allowed me to be instructed by United dispatch trainers, offering a valuable learning environment within an operation I was already very familiar with. The synergy between my existing knowledge of the operation and the specialized training provided by Navigate made it a win-win situation. This not only enriched my understanding but also facilitated a seamless transition into the world of dispatch once I earned my certificate.

What about the future of Dispatch inspires you?
What motivates and excites me about the future of airline dispatch is the recognition that safety and efficiency stand as paramount elements of this profession. As the industry evolves, new challenges emerge, calling for advanced technology and innovation. I am eager to contribute and be a part of the advancements that will shape the future of flight dispatch, ensuring a safer and more efficient air travel experience for all. And with the talk of new modes of transport, who knows what awaits us.

 #ADFblackhistorymonth

About ADF:

The Airline Dispatchers Federation represents the professional interests of the dispatch profession. ADF's constituency is comprised of licensed aircraft dispatchers and operational control professionals from aerospace companies, regional and cargo carriers and every major U.S. airline. ADF's membership as of January 2024 stood at 2,734 members. The vast majority of airline passengers traveling each day in the United States, do so under the watchful eye of ADF members.

The ADF is an all volunteer organization (all working dispatchers) and in accordance with our bylaws is an advocacy organization for working dispatchers and not a labor organization.