

Volunteer Spirit Inspires TAP



Boston Local 1726 member Tom Raiche was in the first class to receive training for duty in the new Transportation Activists Program. The all-volunteer program prepares members for organizing drives, legislative activity and community services projects.

The IAM has a rich history of individual members stepping forward in times of need or crisis to ask, "What can I do to help?" That spirit of volunteerism is alive and on display in the IAM's Transportation Activists Program (TAP), a unique program that provides members with the resources to get involved.

Air and rail volunteers from more than a dozen IAM locals across the country traveled to the William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center in late February for two days of planning and skills training designed to make them shop floor activists to be reckoned with.

"Anything we do as a union, we can do even better with the help of knowledgeable, volunteer activists at the local level," said Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr. "The forces opposing workers in the Transportation industry today are unprecedented. We need every union resource to succeed in the battles ahead, and no union resource is more valuable than a core group of informed

Honoring September 11th Hero Keith



Keith Maynard

Kevin Maynard yearned for a way to honor the memory of his twin brother Keith, a New York City fireman who died while rescuing people from the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

The 33-year old aircraft mechanic now divides his time between Newark, New Jersey, where he works for Continental Airlines, and Houston, Texas, where he follows in his brother's footsteps as a fireman in the Houston Fire Department.

"It's like I'm walking in his shoes," said the 33-year old father of three, whose commuting schedule is remarkable. "I start the week in Houston with a twenty-four hour shift on Monday," said Maynard. "After a day off, I work another twenty-four hour shift and then fly to Newark for my job with the airline."

The high mileage commute would not be possible without the flight benefits enjoyed by most airline employees. "I trade shifts when I have

Program

and energized volunteers.”

The TAP volunteers will take part in organizing drives, legislative activity and community service projects that benefit fellow IAM members. With training they received at the Winpisinger Center, they will also serve as mentors for members like themselves who want to be more involved in their union.

“The training was very helpful,” said Christian Ogawa, an IAM Shop Steward at Aloha Airlines in Hawaii. “I’m looking forward to answering members questions about how our dues dollars are spent and how important it is to have a voice in politics. The issues are just too important not to be involved.”

The initial round of TAP training will be followed by additional sessions, both at the Winpisinger Center and on the road. “More than 100 members expressed an interest in the program when it was first announced,” said GVP Roach. “We’re determined to make this program work for the IAM, its members and their families.”

Maynard

to and I know which flights have seats available,” said Maynard, who hopes to work exclusively as a firefighter.

“I was deeply moved by Kevin’s decision,” said Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr., who worked with both Maynard brothers during IAM airline organizing campaigns. “The tragedy of September 11 will always be with us, but we can draw strength and inspiration from these brothers and their acts of bravery and remembrance.”



Steady pressure from IAM retirees led to a legal victory that preserved significant healthcare benefits for thousands of former US Airways’ employees.

IAM Rescues Retirees’ Healthcare Benefits

Healthcare benefits for airline retirees can be the difference between life and death. The physical toll of a lifetime spent herding passengers, aircraft and luggage frequently includes chronic pain, reduced mobility and illnesses made worse from exposure to extreme weather and working conditions.

Thanks to a coordinated campaign by IAM representatives, attorneys and retired Machinists, a bid by bankrupt US Airways and United Airlines to terminate retiree health benefits was derailed and many key health benefits were preserved.

Shortly after entering bankruptcy, US Airways filed a motion to eliminate all health coverage for its retirees and their families. United Airlines filed a similar motion to axe benefits for nearly all of its 55,000 retirees.

When the smoke cleared, US Airways retirees celebrated what many thought was impossible: an agreement that preserved significant health benefits for retired members.

A similar agreement at bankrupt United Airlines gave IAM retirees similar benefits.