

TWU WANTS YOU!

Programs to support IFCs struggling with substance abuse and personal crises being formed

The Transport Workers Union is looking for a few good men and women.

The mission: helping fellow Inflight Crewmembers overcome substance abuse, depression, domestic violence, financial stress, family crises and other personal problems.

The TWU/JetBlue work group is recruiting volunteers for a union Employee Assistance Program and a Flight Attendant Drug and Alcohol Program to help troubled IFCs overcome their obstacles – and keep their jobs. Ideal candidates are people who are warm, caring, confident, patient and resourceful, program organizers said. They also must be able to maintain the strictest level of confidentiality, organizers said.

IFC Anthony Falcone, who is spearheading this new initiative with IFC Nick Campanile, said they are looking for candidates who have the time to volunteer, can commit for at least one year, and are willing to refrain from posting on social media.

“We don’t require special knowledge, just an honest desire to be of service,” Falcone, who is based in JFK, said.

The EAP/FADAP Reps’ duties will include connecting IFCs with services they need. That could mean a bed in a detox or rehabilitation center; placement in an out-patient addiction program; counseling; a financial advisor; trauma therapy or temporary housing in a shelter.

“The role involves supporting and helping your fellow crewmembers during difficult times and life experiences,” Campanile, who is based in Boston, said. “We will offer hope and support, and opportunities for change. The goal is to get them through to the other side.”

Right now, struggling IFCs must go to the company’s People Department, or deal with their situation on their own.

Campanile and Falcone believe IFCs will feel more comfortable with the peer-to-peer program in which a fellow flight attendant, not someone in management, serves as their confidential caseworker.



IFCs Nick Campanile (left) and Anthony Falcone (right) with Dio Briceño, an Allegiant Flight Attendant and Employee Assistance Representative with TWU Local 577. Photo was taken in Phoenix, Arizona, where Campanile and Falcone completed EAP/FADAP training.

“It’s peer-to-peer so you will be talking with someone who knows the job,” Campanile said. “There’s an already established level of understanding and camaraderie. You speak the same language. It’s a relationship, an equal relationship, not imbalanced.”

Volunteers would also deal with management if a leave of absence is necessary, Falcone said.

Falcone and Campanile completed three days training in December conducted by the Association of Flight Attendants and the Flight Attendants Drug and Alcohol Program (FADAP).

They will be meeting with other TWU Locals to learn how they established their Employee Assistance programs after unionizing, including the flight attendants at Southwest.

The programs organizationally will fall under the Professional Standards Committee. Anyone interested in participating as a volunteer should contact the Professional Standards Committee through our website: b6.twu.org (go to Committees on the drop down menu).