



HEROES IN THE SKIES

All across the globe, billions are struggling against the coronavirus, which has caused incredible pain, disruption and loss of life. But the world has managed to keep moving – and fighting – because of essential workers in the transportation industry like the Inflight Crewmembers in the TWU/JetBlue bargaining group.

While COVID-19 rampaged through communities during the first half of 2020, Inflight Crewmembers ensured that airline service continued. That enabled doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals to go where they were needed most.

This wasn't an easy task. This wasn't business as usual. IFCs faced fear of the unknown, the risk of getting sick, uncertain schedules, new safety protocols, and many other challenges. Their training and professionalism was tested perhaps like never before. It is still being tested as society increasingly opens up.

“They are real heroes,” Angelo Cucuzza, TWU IFC coordinator, said. “They made sure the skies remained open so that first responders and essential workers could travel to different cities and regions that were suffering.”

IFCs may have not received the type of public recognition that other essential workers have received, but they are just as instrumental in the battle against the deadly virus, TWU International President John Samuelsen said.

“Our IFCs have absolutely played a vitally important role during this ongoing crisis,” Samuelsen said. “More people would have suffered and died if air traffic came to a screeching halt. Air travel is an essential service and they are essential workers.”

TWU International Administrative Vice President Mike Mayes said the IFCs employed by JetBlue are “true professionals. The Transport Workers Union of America is proud to have them in the TWU family.”

Early in the crisis, JetBlue – like many public and private employers – struggled to provide the necessary personal protective equipment. Directions from the Centers for Disease Control proved off-the mark, particularly when it came to wearing masks. Theories on how the virus spread, and what counter-measures were most effective, shifted over time.

