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Air Canada Proudly Salutes its Black Employees, Wraps Black History Month with Celebration Flight

Flight AC660 from Montreal to Halifax was operated and supported by Black pilots, flight attendants, managers and ground teams

MONTREAL, Feb. 28, 2023 /CNW/ - Air Canada wrapped Black History Month today with its second annual Black History celebratory flight. Flight AC660 from Montreal to Halifax was planned, supported and operated by Black pilots, flight attendants, managers and employees on the ground and behind the scenes at Montreal Trudeau International Airport and on arrival at Halifax Stanfield International Airport.

"Air Canada salutes its Black employees who have proudly championed their identity and pride to showcase their achievements and contributions to aviation. This is the second year in a row we have applauded Black excellence with a celebration flight and we are thrilled to highlight our employees' professional achievements. They are incredible ambassadors and role models for the next generation of Black youth," said Arielle Meloul-Wechsler, Executive Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer and Public Affairs at Air Canada.



On today's flight are some Air Canada employees and special guests who will visit Africville to learn more about the rich Black cultural heritage, and the long and deep Black history roots in the Halifax area.

Comments from airline professionals involved in Air Canada's Black Celebration Flight

"Being asked to help lead and organize this second Black Excellence Flight for Air Canada is an honour that I cannot express in words. I am proud of the example we are setting and showing as a Black community and as an Air Canada family. We are highlighting to aspiring young Black kids that there are people in the aviation industry that look like them and that they, too, can be a part of this incredible industry. We are demonstrating to them that Air Canada celebrates Black History and that 'You are Black History'," said Andrew Free, Manager, STOC Oversight for Montreal and Quebec City.

"To me, being a Black aviation professional means having the responsibility to mentor the next generation of young aviators. I am extremely fortunate today because of the efforts of the few Black pilots that came before me. I appreciate and thank all the many hard-working professionals who have contributed to the success of the day," said William Batson, Manager, Line Operations, Flight Operations in Toronto, and Captain of flight AC660.

"Throughout the years, I have had the opportunity to work on many amazing projects within Air Canada, which always been ahead of the trends. I have never felt that my skin colour slowed me down at the airline. Some of my best memories are when I meet little Black kids and I see how their eyes light up when they realize that not only am I working on their flight, I am the one in-charge," said Mendoza Jolly, Service Director, Air Canada.

"My love for aviation started when I was young, with my brother bringing me to the airport to see airplanes, so working at Air Canada was a natural transition for me. Now as a lead station attendant and Health and Safety coordinator, I am proud to be part of a company that recognizes and celebrates my heritage," Keyon Burke, Health and Safety Coordinator.

"My aviation career feels like a family tradition as I followed the footsteps of my late father, who joined TransCanada Airlines in 1957. As a Black woman and an ambassador for the Air Canada brand, it is wonderful to see Air Canada providing leadership on a project as important as Black History Month," said Sharyn Prevost, Air Canada Customer Experience Specialist, Halifax.

Hear more about what Air Canada's Black employees have to say about the importance of being seen, and about race and adversity in these [three short videos](#).

Air Canada has been named one of Canada's best Diversity Employers for multiple consecutive years. Its [Corporate Sustainability Report](#) (CSR) details the airline's diversity and community initiatives.

In its internal voluntary surveys, 684 Air Canada employees self-identified as Black, and work in senior management, leadership, specialized professional positions, and across all work groups including pilots, flight attendants, customer service agents, maintenance technicians and ground support crews.

About Air Canada

Air Canada is Canada's largest airline, the country's flag carrier and a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network. Air Canada provides scheduled passenger service directly to 51 airports in Canada, 51 in the United States and 88 internationally. It holds a Four-Star ranking from Skytrax. Air Canada's Aeroplan program is Canada's premier travel loyalty program, where members can earn or redeem points on the world's largest airline partner network of 45 airlines, plus through an extensive range of merchandise, hotel and car rental rewards. Its freight division, Air Canada Cargo, provides air freight lift and connectivity to hundreds of destinations across six continents using Air Canada's passenger flights and cargo-only flights with its fleet of Boeing 767-300 freighters. Air Canada has committed to a net zero emissions goal from all global operations by 2050.

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