

Aviation enthusiasts celebrate National Aviation Day with American Airlines



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BY ANDREA AHLES

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Aviation enthusiasts are celebrating National Aviation Day with American Airlines.

Working with AirlineGeeks.com, the Fort Worth-based carrier offered several behind-the-scenes tours of its airport hubs, headquarters and operations facilities on Friday to commemorate the day.

Although National Aviation Day was started by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1939, choosing August 19 since it was Orville Wright's birthday, the #AAviation Day event with American is the idea of 17-year-old Ryan Ewing. Ewing has over 15,000 Twitter followers on his @AirlineGeeks and initially approached American about a National Aviation Day event just in Washington D.C., where he lives.

"It was a fun thought and we were just going to do it in D.C.," Ewing said. "We didn't think we'd go too far with it and we're now having tours in 13 different locations."

Ewing, who is entering his junior year of high school in Bethesda, Maryland, started AirlineGeeks.com in 2013 and said he has always loved aviation. He hopes to attend Purdue University and get a degree in aviation management and airline operations.

About 110 tickets to tours in London, Chicago, Los Angeles and other American facilities were available to followers of AirlineGeeks.com and were snapped up within hours after they went online in May, Ewing said.

In Fort Worth, American allowed aviation enthusiasts to tour the archives of the C.R. Smith Museum, the headquarters of regional subsidiary Envoy Air, the new Integrated Operations Center and Dallas/Fort Worth Airport. American flight crew members will also ring the closing bell on the NASDAQ exchange on Friday to commemorate National Aviation Day.

If you weren't lucky enough to snag one of the tour tickets, those who did will be posting pictures of their tours with #AAviationDay.



Seventeen-year-old Ryan Ewing, founder of AirlineGeeks.com, organized National Aviation Day events with American Airlines. **Ryan Ewing**



“It is a pivotal time in their legacy and growth,” Ewing said on why he approached American instead of another airline to celebrate the day. “They are just going through the merger. They are taking a lot of new airplanes into their fleet. It’s a great time for aviation enthusiasts to come out and see how far they’ve come.”

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