



**IAM Air Transport District 142**

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## **MARTIN LUTHER KING JR: A LIFE AND LEGACY OF SERVICE**

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Monday, January 15, 2024, is Martin Luther King Jr. Day. As a union, we commemorate not only the man but also the enduring legacy of a leader who dedicated his life to the pursuit of justice, equality, and service to humanity.

Dr. King played a pivotal role in the American Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 1960s. He became a symbol of nonviolent protest and an advocate for racial equality, inspired by his deep-rooted belief in the principles of love, justice, and service to others.

Many people may not be aware that Dr. King had significant involvement with labor unions during his life, recognizing the connection between civil rights and economic justice. Well before he traveled to Memphis to support the striking sanitation workers in 1968, Dr. King worked to build coalitions between the civil rights movement and labor unions. As far back as 1961 Dr. King was speaking out against “Right to Work” laws in the U.S.:

“In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as ‘right to work.’ It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone...Wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer and there are no civil rights. We do not intend to let them do this to us. We demand this fraud be stopped. Our weapon is our vote.”

Dr. King’s life was tragically cut short in 1968, but his legacy of service endures. As union members, we should continuously look to his words and life for inspiration and guidance as we seek to serve our fellow members through our guiding principle of “Justice on the Job, Service to the Community.”

Sincerely and fraternally,

John M. Coveny, Jr.  
President/Directing General Chair  
IAM District 142

JC/td

cc: R. Johnsen, General Vice-President, Air Transport Territory  
E. Fraser, Chief of Staff, Air Transport Territory  
T. Regan, Airline Coordinator, Air Transport Territory  
J. Carlson, Air Transport Coordinator  
DL 142 Executive Board

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