

The aviation maintenance and pilot union management essay

[Business](#), [Management](#)



As an airline employee, it can be a good opportunity to be necessary to work with an airline industry labor union. After joining union, employee's wage and work environments can be discussed between airline businesses and union. In general, high-volume or labor-intensive-type of labor forms unions within businesses to protect employee's rights and privileges. Such as fleet service personnel, mechanics, pilots, customer service representatives, reservation agents, ticket agents, baggage handlers, and flight attendants can be these kinds of jobs, and their unions have been working for them. Unions have represented their members to airlines over the years. Through a strong collective bargaining with their opponents, unions try to set the cost of labor higher so that it can make employers put less effort to compete in a global economy. As a result, aviation-related unions have affected modern aviation. There are several airline industry unions that affect the airlines industry. In aviation maintenance union, The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA), Transport Workers Union (TWU), International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) are representative unions. In pilot union, The Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA), The Independent Pilots Association (IPA), Allied Pilots Association (APA), and US Airline Pilots Association are the examples. Most of these unions are associated with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). AFL-CIO is a state trade union center which is the largest federation of unions in the United States. Membership of union signifies that employees do not negotiate reward, sick leave, break time and how it is accumulated, and health and flight welfares at the time of employee's hire. Instead if you have a specific complaint or

formal notice of employee frustration related to appropriateness of pay, job requests, work situations, or other features of employment, in most cases the union will go to respond for workers who are member of unions. An aerospace machinist union is a labor union that negotiates employment terms, lobbies state and federal governments, and provides benefits exclusive only to machinists working in the field of aeronautics. The aerospace machinist union is essentially comprised of workers seeking to achieve desirable salaries, work hours, and working conditions as a single unit rather than as individuals. Due to their specialized skill set, uniting in this way gives machinists leverage in negotiations with employers. The primary purpose of the aerospace machinist union is to secure equitable employment terms and conditions for members. Machinists elect other members to represent their interests during these negotiations and pay dues that go towards hiring legal representation. Employers are not required by law to accept every term and condition offered by the aerospace machinists union, however if the union deems the terms of employment unfair, members will go on strike. Since the supply of aerospace machinists is exclusively control by the union, a delayed work stoppage can be costly for the employer and compel them to reach a reasonable agreement with the union. In terms of working with governments, certain policies can positively or negatively impact aerospace machinists. The union seeks to influence politicians to approve favorable legislation by lobbying. Aerospace machinist unions often push for increased tariffs on aerospace products imported from foreign countries where the cost of labor is cheaper. This discourages manufacturers from outsourcing machinist jobs to other countries. Early in

the 1930s, there was no safeguard for pilots. Company management was able to fire them if they want to. They were pressed to fly in any weather conditions even if pilots judges that is not right to fly. Sometimes, pilot had to over fly more than 120 hours in a month. Many pilots were not able to speak up with their unfair working conditions. If they did, they were fired. As increasing of strong movement within a union, it has created various bargaining agent. This helps to endorse the collective needs and security for union members. The changed flight hours for a pilot to fly, the conditions of a pilot to work, the enhancements of aircraft and airports systems, and other career improvements could be proceed by union members who gave their time and effort with the aim of better the occupation and circumstances. With these benefits, the method of management became fair and reasonable for pilots. Improvement and changes in management for pilots brought a lot of differences in operating business. More and more pilot groups dedicated to work for better treatment received, and the level of safety has been increasing. Unified voice of pilot results many hope to achieve. Until now, many pilots who are member of union have been received benefits, and have enjoyed.

Aviation Maintenance Union

The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA)

The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) is focused on a craft and independent aviation union. It is not an industrialized union, but it characterizes only airline mechanics and related employees in the craft or class with regard to the National Mediation Board Rules and their orders.

AMFA has a goal to support all airline technician and related employees under the AMFA's protection. According to AMFA's mission, it tries to provide protection for AMFA members before government agencies. In addition, their efforts try to extend education of member's human rights and privileges before Congress applies to the craft. As raising awareness of the technician and related class or craft for the protection of occupation, AMFA is dedicated to promoting the professional standards of technicians and to reaching advanced improvements in the salaries, welfares, and working circumstances of the skilled technicians. AMFA was established in 1962, but it could not work for any carrier until 1964 at Ozark Airlines. It later could represent many carriers such as Pacific Airlines, Airlift International, Hughes Air west, Southern Airways, Northwest Airlines, Horizon Air, Independence Air, United Airlines, and ATA. These days, AMFA's craft union supports a number of aircraft maintenance technicians and related employees at Alaska Airlines, Mesaba Airlines, and Southwest Airlines. As representatives of local airlines, AMFA has never operated under a contract associated with in a business within a certain geographic area. It is not also allowed the act of an employee relinquishing certain benefits or atonement to increase an employer's capital. And it has not been accepted to a type of pay system that one group of workers gets lower salaries and employee benefits than another. AMFA trusts in having contribution of its members and preserve contract negotiations. Although many people thing this idea needs to be changed, AMFA has been progressed this in negotiations for years, and it has assisted both sides to comprehend the problems and issues that should be solved during bargaining. During negotiations, AMFA hires specialists to

perform and use their particular professional knowledge. To rearrange the income and welfare areas, AMFA hire a financial expert such as a pension actuary. The contents of agreement are reviewed by AMFA's legal counsel before presenting it to the company. AMFA's legal counsel provides information through many ways such as phone, fax or meetings whenever they need. Therefore, from observing negotiations, members are able to train the membership and progressive understanding of what it proceeds while contracting. When a contract is submitted to AMFA represented technician and interrelated member for a vote, the total combination is offered. Technicians and related members vote on all major subjects including contract approval, letters of agreement, revisions to Local Bylaws, and the AMFA Constitution. They also have the right to elect and revoke all AMFA officers. After it hand over to them, this contract became a significant factor to determine technician's work conditions. AMFA has established to be the one democratic organization for mechanical aviation professionals. Through local independence, the members regulate all parts of their union. AMFA can be the most democratic union in the airline industry. All employees, from Shop Representative to the National Director, are voted through a secret ballot system, and they also can be recalled by the Membership. Safety and Standards is a primary part of their purposes which applies to all members who joined the union. AMFA represents members of machinists, and it supports them to have better work conditions.

Transport Workers Union (TWU)

The TWU has one of the strongest histories with the labor movement today in terms of rights for all workers. The TWU has purpose to improving the live qualities of workers. It has been working to maintain, safeguard and increase some level of environments at workplace and living standards of all workers. It respects worker's demand and needs, and provides equality for all members. TWU includes members who are making airplanes to fly, running subways, driving buses, and any other workers who are related with operating transportation systems. TWU has been influencing America with these transit workers. The TWU is consisted of with several divisions which are Railroad, Gaming, Airline, Transit and Utility, University and Service. The Union has 114 independent locals which represents more than 200, 000 members and retired employees in 22 states across the country. James C. Little, who is currently President of the TWU, has been serving this union during last three years. In the early period of TWU, it had strong goal to provide equality. The first organizers opposed discrimination for any workers under sex, race, or, nationality when many other unions could not. In the early 1930s, the Interborough Rapid Transit Rapid Transit (IRT) reserved dead-end porter jobs for underground workers. Unfortunately, they were still discriminated by union except TWU. The TWU protested with this problem, and tried to support all kinds of jobs workers. After TWU involved in air transportation, TWU has been shown the rapid growth of the airline industry between the 1920s and the late 1940s by contracting with new locals and having thousands of employees in a new aviation industry into membership. The first victory of TWU for airline workers was that they regulated total work

time for employees. Employees were working about 48 hours during a week and they received a half paid for overtime. Later, TWU helped them to have better work condition by reducing work time to 40 hour work per week. TWU supported employees to keep have the forty hour work week without losing of wage for Pan America workers. In the mid of 1940s, TWU established new locals in many areas including Miami, Florida, San Francisco, California, and New York. It tried to expand their power to represent ground service employees. The following year, even if TWU created employees at American Airlines, it was not able to show its ability due to the size and wealth of Pan Am at the time. After 50 years, TWU struggled from notable shutdown of Eastern Airlines and Pan Am, but TWU has shown many victories with advanced development of technology. This step helped them to represent aviation related employees such as ground service employees, maintenance workers, flight attendants. TWU also supports other employees from a number of various representatives' airlines in America. In 1945, the TWU expanded its right of a legal to performance its authority to keep on the ramp service employees of Pan American Airways and the largest airline in the United States. Later, the union took more action by forming mechanics, engineers, flight attendants and other employees at Pan Am; mechanics and navy service workers at American Airlines; and employees at many other airlines and maintenance service provider. Today, TWU represents workers in the airline industry including all class and crafts. The union tries to support inner challenges from employees through its membership, particularly for trained machinists. Sometimes, TWU has to deal with external challenge to other union, AMFA, but it has been working hard to have more influence to

employees than the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA). The TWU has been planning to unify airlines' workers after its first achievement at Pan Am in 1945. TWU's current President, James C. Little, and other members continue to ensure their top priorities. This helps its members to be treated the way that workers should. TWU wants to provide greatest benefits for its members, appropriate pay for their positions, and respect for all hard working people.

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW)

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) was created in Atlanta, Georgia in 1888. Its first Canadian Local Lodge, which is Local Lodge 103, was made in 1890 in Stratford, Ontario. The IAMAW, is a huge union which performances in many parts of industries in accordance with the US Department of Labor. It preserves one or more agreements with most of major employers in the USA and Canada. IAMAW represent more than 40, 000 Canadian employees in air transportation and a variety parts of manufacturing such as aircraft, auto parts, autobuses, aerospace, electronics, light and heavy machinery, tools and appliances. This is the largest airport security screeners union in Canada. In addition, The IAMAW also supports many different workers in the health care and hospitality sectors, technical and other white collar workers. The total number of North American membership is about 600, 000. IAMAW called itself " The Order of United Machinist and Mechanical Engineers." This union stayed secret for several years because many companies had hostility toward union activities. Despite the secrecy, the members have been grown as increasing the

number of air transportation, and number of workers. During that period, machinists used to earn 20 to 25 cents an hour for ten days. IAMAW tried to improve work conditions for machinists. Within a year, IAMAW established 40 locals. Currently, IAMAW organizes with more than 73,000 workers across the country. These members include employees in the airline and other transportation such as ship and railroad. In addition, this union has experiences with legislative issues to labor law in pension improvement, trade, and social security. The purpose of IAMAW is, as increasing of costs of living price, IAMAW tries to raise wages rates. Regardless of sex, race, and national origin, it helps to ensure a fair payment for employees, provide safe and healthy workplace, and guarantee benefits in medical coverage, pension reform, and retirements. In 1995, IAMAW, and Auto and Steelworker unions discussed to plans for unification until 2000. At that moment, unions had more than 2,000,000 active members, and 1,400,000 retirees. From their memberships, plan could create largest and varied union in North America. As unified whole union members, they wanted to speak more opinions. At the IAMAU, there are already many employees experience in North America. Workers are able to associate with the IAMAU to improve power and provide members' benefits. They also represent machinists at Southwest Airlines, Boeing, and other diverse companies. In addition, the National Federation of Federal Employees, Shipbuilders Union, and other representative's organizations have supported the IAMAU. Therefore, as joining this IAMAU, workers are able to secure in their workplace and improve fairness on the job. Within an airline's management, employees who are already members

in this union can negotiate for better workplace conditions such as higher wages and better benefits after retiring.

Pilot Union

The Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA)

The Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) is the biggest airline pilot union in the world and represents more than 51, 000 pilots in the 35 U. S. and Canadian airlines. It was created in 1931, and supported by the AFL-CIO and the Canadian Labor Congress. It was recognized internationally as US-ALPA, it includes member of the International Federation of Air Line Pilot Associations. The purpose of the Air Line Pilots Association is to encourage and support all parts of aviation safety in the aviation community. It also respects all of pilots' interests in commercial aviation, and tries to assist them during negotiating in their workplaces. It endorses the health and benefit of the members of the Association before all governmental organizations, and it has been developed as a strong influential supporter of the airline piloting profession through all types of media, and with the public. In addition, it works as an ultimate guardian and defender to keep the rights and privileges for trained pilots who are members of the Association. ALPLA provides three major services to its members. The first is aviation safety and security. " Schedule with Safety" is ALAPL's motto, and this was choose by ALPL's founder. It still, remains as a significant them for the union's work today. Through its history, ALPA has been supporting most important parts of safety improvement in the airline industry. The Association has assisted to provide safest travel for airline for passengers and airlines employees. On

much area from local to national, more than 600 working airline pilots are volunteering to assist safety and security agencies which want to get help guide from the Association's work. The union's aviation professionals in engineers, safety, and security specialists provide unparalleled independent analysis related with emergent aviation safety and security problems, along with federal and industrial procedures. ALPA is regularly approved "interested party" position in most main airline accidents. ALPA accident investigators support the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Transportation Safety Board of Canada during on-site inspections and contribute in related with public inquiries. The union provides unprejudiced, objective evaluation of airline safety and security issues. From its efforts, ALPL has preserved reputation for excellence in the airline industry. ALPA offers three major services for its members. The second is "Representation." For a long time, ALPA pilot members have negotiated a number of contracts with various airlines. These days, ALPA staff provides the premium financial analysis to its members, detailed information of the Railway Labor Act, and the lawful involvement to protect pilot contracts. By collecting the all kinds of resources from members in the union, ALPA is able to convey unmatched knowledge to negotiate on issues including its members' wage, welfares, and working environments. The last one is advocacy. ALPA's staffs and pilots have been volunteering steadily to represent pilots' opinions to all decision-makers in the airline industry such as Congress, Assembly, the White House, and federal organizations. In Washington, D. C. and Ottawa, ALPA activists effectively enhance regulation that helps to have better work conditions for pilots and to discontinue some policies that damage pilot interests. National

officers and pilot representatives regularly debate to perform their professional opinion before legislative agencies and other influential governmental organizations. At each position of ALPA, members of pilots make decisions through the democratic procedure. Every decisions start from its pilot members. Each pilot group includes all the pilots who are from a specified airline. They active appreciable autonomy in leading their own inside businesses, such as negotiating contracts, applying those contracts, and debating matters of anxiety with their enterprises. Each carrier for associates of ALPA is represented by their Local Council Status Representatives, who forms each pilot group's Master Executive Council (MEC). Each pilot group organizes with one or more Local Councils, which commonly relate with the pilots' main residences. These Local Council Status Representatives work as an ALPA's Board of Directors which is the Association's top of governing body. They select the officers of the MEC, the chairmen of which consist of ALPA's Administrative Board. ALPA's Executive Council, which has responsibility for the Association in elected Executive Vice Presidents and the National Officers.

The Independent Pilots Association (IPA)

The Independent Pilots Association (IPA) is a Specialized Association that was established by flight crew members, which endorses the benefit and interests of Flight Crew, and is possessed and handled by flight crew members. In addition, the IPA is a member of the Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations which is a trade association included of over 22, 000 professional pilots. The IPA Government Affairs Missions statement is " To

promote global aviation safety and security and encourage continued economic growth for the aviation industry". It provides help for all pilots who became a member of the Association. Through its many diverse contacts, pilots are able to get assistance in safeguarding a job. The IPA brings out a wide range of inventiveness that purpose to corroborate and improve in British aviation and its member's working situation and job safety. These plans include enhancing flight security through training and educational programs. Lobbying government, researching funding is also important plans to represent career and employment issues for flight crews. From collapse of Air Europe in 1991, pilots were out of work. When a self-help group was organized at the Gatwick airport Job Centre for these pilots, the beginnings of the Association can be seen that it was created in the early 1990s following that collapse. The Board of Directors, who include current and retired pilots from a variety of UK airlines with a wealth of experience and background in all parts of aviation, still keep having a passion for the continued concept of a self-help group that endorses the well-being and comforts of the members. By the spring of 1992, most of the pilots were able to work again including many new airline Excalibur Airways and a specialist in financial affairs. That helping group suggested for these workers that if many workers, who used to lose their jobs, created a group then it would be probable to get better treats pension provision, loss of license insurance and other similar services. From this starting movement, the Independent Pilots Association was born. The IPA took places in Haywards Heath with its supporter, and started to help others. Although it was not in a situation to help financially, the IPA lent support was able provide office and storage space to office and storage

space to the Dan Air Pilots Action Group. This group sought compensation from British Airways (BA). At that time, Dan Air was taken over by BA and some pilots lost their jobs. These pilots wanted to look for impartial representation by creating a group. As growing of power of IPA, it has experienced with increasing the number of members form various parts in aviation industry over the years. Present membership is extent throughout all British workers, from flying schools and air taxi operators to major airlines, as well as some abroad. In the early 2000s, new member wanted to have more benefits than association could offer. As a result, Noel Baker, who is one of the original members and a long serving Director, recommended the idea of creating a union that provides more benefits that members expect. Later, this union was founded in 2006 and primarily was known as the Independent Pilots Federation (IPF). The IPF Union is able to provide all the benefits of such an organization and offering the chances for some pilots to have a recognition agreement from their airline or related organization. The reason is that the IPA could not become a Union is because a ruling in the IPA's constitution required a 75% majority of all registered members to vote in favors. Since the most of the original establishing members had been seriously disappointed by their own union in 1992, they were not able to be motivated to be a unified group.(add more)

Allied Pilots Association (APA)

Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas near Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, the Allied Pilots Association (APA) serves as the specialized collective bargaining agent for all 10, 000 American Airlines pilots. 45 professional

members serve for association in the headquarters offices, and it provides an extensive range of services, regarding legal representation, contract administration, accounting, public relations, benefits administration and clerical support. APA was created in 1963 by a group of American Airlines pilots who separated away from the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA). With more than 12, 000 members, APA is the largest independent pilots' union in the world. APA provides all of the traditional union representation services for its members. This includes the lobbying of airline pilots opinions to Congress and government agencies. Furthermore, it dedicates more than 20 percent of its charges income to support aviation safety. Structurally, APA is controlled by three general officers -- a president, a vice president, and a secretary-treasurer. They elected by the membership at large to serve during three-year terms working out of the association's headquarters office. The Board of Directors has role to service as the policy-making body of the association. The board is included of the chairman and vice chairman from each of the nine domiciles which are Boston, Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington. The board should have meetings at least three times in each year, with annual meeting which is in fall. The association has various dynamic working groups which are consisted of pilot volunteers that concentration on a pilot's working life. One of recent issue with APA, it is working out with the recent media reports that pilots were disturbing flight schedules with unimportant maintenance requests. According to president of APA, Keith Wilson, American Airlines pilots are qualified as professionals who are accountable for flying their passengers with high level of safety across the world every

day. The list of unsolved maintenance problems appears every day on each of the old aircraft that American Airlines operate, and it should not ignore serious maintenance problems that could cause into safety risks and dangers for passengers. Its pilots should not negotiate with safety procedures.

However, during the past year, American Airlines has continued record FAA fines totaling \$162 million for improper aircraft maintenance procedures. A strong warning that management in maintenance performs have raised worries with regulators, said Wilson, Furthermore, the companies that own and lease American Airlines aircraft have officially protested to the bankruptcy court. It represents that AA management needs to be improved to perform routine maintenance on their aircraft. The issues of maintenance will not be solved, from the time when management stated that plans to contract out many maintenance operations. When maintenance operations are distributed overseas, qualities of control and FAA oversight will become more challenging. As a result, American Airlines decided to reject its contract and the operational procedures and protections that go with it. Wilson suggested that its pilots need to take practical and careful approach in their operational decision-making process. Such like this issue, APA tries to help pilot to have better work conditions, but it is also important APA to keep basic standard which is aviation safety before accepting pilot's needs. When APA thinks both results from changing management, which does not downgrade in safety level, and pilot's requests are corresponded, APA is finally able to work for its members.

US Airline Pilots Association

The US Airline Pilots Association (USAPA) is the collective bargaining agent for US Airways pilots. The US Airline Pilots Association changed the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) in a representative voting and is an "in-house union" signifying the interests of the US Airways pilots. The voting for a collective bargaining agent approved and directed by the National Mediation Board (NMB). It decided on April 17, 2008 with the USAPA dominant by a margin wide enough for the NMB to reject any additional challenges. USAPA became the NMB-certified bargaining agent for all US Airways pilots effective April 18, 2008. USAPA is a member of The Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations. Pilots at many other airlines have selected for their own in-house unions and are not associated with The Airline Pilots Association (ALPA). There has been much disagreement surrounding the formation of USAPA and the removal of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) as the bargaining representative for US Airways pilots. This controversy is fully focused around the process used to incorporate seniority lists from US Airways and America West Airlines after their union, and has caused a division in the positions between the previous US Airways pilots and the former America West pilots. The East and West pilots along with US Airways management sign up a Transition Agreement in 2005. This tri-party agreement identifies the approaches for merging the two pilot groups and the functioning rules during the transition. Until a joint contract is approved by the united pilot group, the East and West pilots stay separate. This represents that all aircraft brought to the merger by each particular pilot group can only be flown by the pre-merger pilots of each group. No cross

utilization or mixing of crews and/or equipment is allowed during the transition period. The Transition Agreement signed by the three parties specified that ALPA Merger Policy would be used to combine the seniority lists and US Airways management agreed to accept the list as long as certain cost requirements were met. Doug Parker officially accepted the seniority list from ALPA First Vice-President Paul Rice during December 2007. Since that time, the East pilots, first as represented by ALPA and later USAPA, have tried to circumvent the seniority provisions of the TA claiming that the new union is not bound by the former bargaining agent's agreements. This issue is under dispute and currently under the jurisdiction of Judge Roslyn Silver of the Arizona District Court. USAPA represented East pilots have also sought a compromise solution but this was rejected by Judge Silver as the West pilots do not have a legal entity to negotiate seniority. The former bargaining agent warned the new union that the elimination of separate ratification under ALPA merger policy with the election of USAPA would forever cement the unmodified Nicolau Award as the certified seniority list of the new US Airways. In 2005, America West merged with US Airways. Before and after the merger, ALPA was the bargaining representative for pilots from both airlines. During merger negotiations in late 2006, representatives from the two pilot groups were unable to reach an agreement with respect to integration of seniority. The US Airways pilots' proposal was to base seniority primarily on date-of-hire, with conditions and restrictions to protect the bases and positions of the former West pilots. This would place the US Airways pilots at the top of the ranks, while nearly 80% of the America West pilots would be at the bottom of the seniority list. The America West pilots'

proposal included a plan that defined a series of ratios that would maintain relative seniority for all pilots in the new organization. The proposal would have placed many US Airways pilots with more than 17 years longevity in a position below recently hired pilots of America West, which was not acceptable to the US Airways pilots. In early 2007, the independent East and West merger committees selected arbitrator George Nicolau to mediate and then arbitrate the seniority integration. Two pilot neutrals were selected in accordance with ALPA merger policy. Jim Brucia, a Continental Pilot for the East and Steve Gillen, a United pilot for the West. Steve Gillen and James Brucia are now leaders of their respective merger committees as their companies merged in 2010. Unable to mediate a solution, the case proceeded to arbitration with the Award published by the panel in May 2007. The 512 top seniority positions went to the most senior US Airways pilots to protect the 19 wide-body aircraft seats they brought to the merger. The remaining active pilots were blended to represent their pre-merger seniority bidding positions. All furloughed US Airways pilots were placed at the bottom of the list in accordance with established seniority list integration precedence.

Many US Airways pilots contended the Nicolau decision violated ALPA merger policies.. US Airways pilots also alleged other errors in the award, including the treatment of MDA (Mid-Atlantic Division) pilots as furloughed pilots. ALPA Merger Policy found in Section 45 of the Union Operating Manual required ALPA to remain neutral in the seniority integration process if the merger involved two ALPA represented airlines. As both the US Airways and America West pilots were represented by ALPA, no ALPA funds could be used in the process. The East and West pilot groups were required to independently hire

and fund their own merger counsel. The West hired Jeff Freund to represent their effort and the East Dan Katz. Both lawyers were and remain independent of ALPA and represented each respective pilot group with complete neutrality. No evidence of fraud or manipulation has ever been brought forward. A lawsuit was filed by the East MEC in D. C. District Court following the Award's publication alleging impropriety, but the lawsuit was later dropped by USAPA as having no merit. This was confirmed by newly hired USAPA attorney Syzmanski before Judge Silver in early December 2011 when responding to her questions as to why the lawsuit was not pursued. USAPA was organized following an emotionally charged rally at ALPA's Herndon headquarters in 2007. Before USAPA was voted in, they visited the former America West pilots in Phoenix to tell their side of the story and fulfill a legal requirement. A video of the meeting was produced by the former America West pilots. In April 2008, by a majority vote and almost exclusive East vote, USAPA replaced ALPA as the new pilots union for all the US Airways pilots. USAPA, as confirmed by numerous Federal Courts was formed for the sole purpose of circumventing the Nicolau Award. The former America West pilots vehemently objected to the formation of USAPA and overwhelmingly funded a legal effort operating under the name Leonidas LCC to preserve their legal rights. Leonidas, LLC. Recently, Federal Judge Roslyn Silver assigned class designation to the West pilots in the ongoing Declaratory Action case. Leonidas LCC remains the funded legal entity representing the West pilots before the court.

Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA)

Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) is the sole bargaining unit for the more than 6,300 pilots of Southwest Airlines. Southwest pilots are leaders in aviation industry productivity and are the world's leading experts on flying the Boeing-737. Southwest Airlines operates a growing fleet of the 737-300, 737-500, 737-700 and 737-800. SWAPA is in its 34th year of service to the pilots of Southwest Airlines. Prior to the union's beginnings in 1978, pilots worked cooperatively with the Company to compile work rules for safe, efficient operations. That cooperative spirit has continued through the negotiation of eight labor contracts.