



IAM Air Transport District 142

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Date: January 28, 2025
File: GEN – 2025

2025 – 15

**EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF UNION LEADERS:
DISTRICT 142 YOUNG WORKERS SUMMIT A RESOUNDING SUCCESS**

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

On January 14th and 15th, over 25 members from all over District 142 convened at District headquarters in Phoenix for our first-ever Young Workers Summit. All of these members were age 35 or younger, representing the next generation of leaders who will step into more prominent leadership roles as they progress in their union careers.

District 142 Director of Organizing Zachary Coker conceived the idea for the Young Workers Summit last year after realizing the need to get young people interested in and excited about unionism.

“Creating space for youth is so important for securing the future of our union. These young people are hungry for knowledge, full of energy, and have so much to offer our organization,” said Coker. “Seeing their fresh faces come together, build solidarity and leave the district ready to take the next steps in their IAM journey was so exciting. The Air Transport Territory and D142’s commitment to creating youth structures within the IAM is another testament to why the IAM Union is the most powerful airline union in the country.”

District 142 Officers and Staff, including President/Directing General Chair John Coveny, Secretary-Treasurer Joe Shultz, Education Director Al Melendez, Legislative Director Sean Holland, EAP Director Paul Shultz, Safety Director Brian Szolodko, Director of Communications Todd Day, and General Chairs Ken Coley, Carrie Lessley, and Jeff James, joined Brother Coker in speaking and giving presentations to the summit participants.

“This is very important to not only myself, but to the union movement as a whole. If we don’t start educating the people behind us to continue to grow the union, the union will disappear,” said Coveny. “We need the strength of all our members, and we especially need the strength of the youth to make this movement continue to grow the way it has over the past thirty-five years that I’ve been involved in it and the years before that. Without our youth, we wither away.”

Also on hand to meet and talk to the young workers were IAM International representatives, including Air Transport Territory General Vice President Richie Johnsen and Chief of Staff Edison Fraser, Women’s and Young Workers Director Julie Freitchen, and instructor Dee Colbert from the IAM’s William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center.

Plans are in place to make the Young Workers Summit an annual event, focusing on preparing these bright and enthusiastic young Sisters and Brothers to replace senior leaders when they retire.

We would like to thank all of our amazing participants who demonstrated their leadership skills by taking the initiative to come to Phoenix and learn more about our union and its many opportunities for advancement and education. We also thank IAM International and the Air Transport Territory for fully supporting this endeavor and providing our participants with educational materials and the tools and resources they will need to further their union careers. We can’t wait to do this again!

Sincerely and fraternally,

John M. Coveny, Jr.
President/Directing General Chair

Zachary Coker
Director of Organizing

JMC/ZC/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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