

## United

### United Pilots Are Poised and Determined to Move Forward

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PHOTO BY WILLIAM A. BORD

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**—Capt. Wendy Morse, UAL MEC chairman**

### UAL at a Glance

**Pilots Joined ALPA:** 1932

**Number of Pilots:** 7,800 (1,437 on furlough)

**Headquarters:** Chicago, Ill.

**Pilot Domiciles:** Washington Dulles, Chicago, Seattle, Denver, San Francisco, New York (JFK), Los Angeles

**Fleet:** A319s, A320s, B-757s, B-767s, B-777s, B-747s

The pilots of United Airlines stand at the threshold of a new beginning. On Dec. 31, 2009, the collective bargaining agreement between the pilots and United Airlines became amendable. It was a date that represented a psychological turning point; a date that, finally, enabled United pilots to focus their attention toward a better tomorrow.

“The United pilots stand poised and determined to move forward as the pendulum now swings in our favor,” says Capt. Wendy Morse, the pilots’ Master Executive Council chairman. “This pilot group is solidified and ready for improvements to wages and working conditions as we proceed down the Section 6 airway.

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The pilots began Section 6 negotiations 270 days before the amendable date. They requested mediation early and long before impasse and are now negotiating under the supervision of the National Mediation Board. During the time leading up to Section 6 negotiations, the United pilots spun up fully charged Strike Preparedness and Family Awareness Committees, which are at the ready to further the charge of an industry-leading contract.

As former chairman of the MEC Negotiating Committee, Morse recognizes that as Section 6 negotiations move forward beyond the amendable date, gains must be made that improve pilots’ quality of life and working conditions even before reaching a final agreement.

“Any improvement in the pilots’ quality of life is a step in the right direction and a change from the environment that we have endured for entirely too long,” she declares.

While working to secure an industry-leading contract, the United MEC also must focus on the potential for industry consolidation. If the potential for a merger involving United exists, the United MEC stands ready to defend its pilots’ best interests.

“Consolidation is a business solution

that the United pilots are neither afraid of nor opposed to in principle,” explains Morse. For decades the United MEC has had a Merger Committee for the purpose of protecting United pilots’ interests in the event of a merger. “We are willing to embrace a consolidation remedy if it is viable and appropriately recognizes the intrinsic values that pilots contribute to our airline,” she adds. “The United MEC believes that for consolidation to work, United must find the right partner that will produce the correct synergies allowing it to compete effectively in an ever changing airline industry. United must avoid settling for just any dance partner with which to merge.”

While unable to predict the future,

**“It is only through labor and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage, that we move on to better things.”**

**—Theodore Roosevelt**

Morse is certain of one fact. The United pilots, including the 1,437 on furlough, have more than paid their dues throughout United’s economic struggles. She, along with the pilots of United, believe the time has come for United’s management to, at long last, recognize the contributions this pilot group has made and continues to make toward the success of United Airlines.

“The United pilot group, in its entirety, is completely unified in the belief that improvements to our wages and working conditions are long overdue,” says Morse. “The history of United pilots is one of bold and decisive leadership, of visionary command that has enhanced every facet of aviation. Ours is a legacy to be proud of, an epic story of leadership in the industry and in the profession.

“Our legacy alone, however, will not ensure our future. Our collective strength, defined strategies, measurable progress, and coalescing of unity will be the true measures of our stature as we move forward. We are righteous in our quest, and we must hold ourselves to the highest ideals of professionalism and unionism.”