

June 22, 2023



Southwest Airlines Announces Leadership Updates

DALLAS, June 22, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- [Southwest Airlines Co.](#) (NYSE: LUV) today announced recent Leadership updates across the Company. Several of these changes are a continuation of the organizational structure work that began in [September 2022](#) and has continued into [2023](#).

Finance Organization

- With nearly 30 years of unwavering service, **Leah Koontz** has decided to move from **Senior Vice President Controller** to an **Executive Advisor** role, effective Aug. 16.

Throughout Koontz's Southwest® career, she has been an integral contributor to the success of many projects and strategic initiatives, including the development of Southwest's first in-house revenue accounting system, its first ticketless system, SAP implementation, several iterations of reservation system upgrades and replacements, and the integration of AirTran. She has held numerous Leadership roles within the Finance Department leading up to her current role as Senior Vice President Controller.

Koontz's transition paves the way for several other Leadership changes:

- [Ryan Martinez](#) has been promoted from **Vice President Investor Relations** to **Senior Vice President Controller**, overseeing Accounting and Financial Reporting, SOX, Tax, and Controller Operations.

Martinez began his Southwest career 17 years ago in the Investor Relations Department before joining the Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) Department in 2013, where he led the Corporate Team responsible for overseeing consolidated financial forecasts. He assumed his current role as Vice President of Investor Relations six years ago and has become a well-respected and reliable voice for the Company with the investment community. Prior to joining Southwest, Martinez worked in Financial Reporting at The Neiman Marcus Group, and began his career in public accounting at BDO Seidman, LLP. Martinez graduated from Louisiana State University in Shreveport with a bachelor's degree in accounting and finance and is a Certified Public Accountant in the State of Texas.

- [Julia Landrum](#) will move from **Vice President Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A)** to **Vice President Investor Relations**.

Landrum joined Southwest in 2016 as a Senior Director in FP&A. Prior to that, Julia served as Vice President, Revenue for Studio Movie Grill as well as in leadership roles at Ernst & Young LLP, The Home Depot on their Capital Planning and Merchandising and Operations teams, and United Airlines on the Network Planning and FP&A teams. Landrum received a bachelor's degree in economics and international studies from Southern Methodist University (SMU) and an MBA from The Fuqua School of Business at Duke University. Landrum serves on the Leadership Advisory Council for SMU Continuing & Professional Education. Martinez's and Landrum's moves are effective Aug. 16.

- [Michael Cole](#) is promoted from **Managing Director Capacity Planning** to **Vice President Financial Planning & Analysis**, effective June 1.

An 18-year Southwest veteran, Cole served as an analyst in Revenue Management prior to his roles in Network Planning and FP&A. Cole holds a bachelor's degree in aviation science from Baylor University and an associate degree in aeronautical science from Texas State Technical College.

Marketing & Customer Experience Organization

- Effective March 1, Southwest's Marketing and Customer Experience & Engagement organization transitioned to five departments under **Senior Vice President Marketing & Customer Experience [Tony Roach](#)**. The functions under Roach's Leadership include Marketing; Customer Experience & Digital (CXD); Customer Engagement; Travel Products; and Department Planning, Operations, & Delivery. His oversight includes digital experience, go to market efforts, and the airline's loyalty program, Rapid Rewards[®], as well as ancillary products.
- [Bill Tierney's](#) role changed from **Vice President Marketing & Digital Experience** to **Vice President Customer Experience & Digital (CXD)**, effective March 1.

The Digital Experience function will transition out of Marketing and join the Customer Experience organization. As an Enterprise-wide support function, the CXD Department will be responsible for meeting the growing needs of the airline's Customers across the entire travel journey, while supporting revenue, operational, and cost-saving goals of the business.

- [Jonathan Clarkson's](#) role changed from **Vice President Marketing & Loyalty Products** to **Vice President Marketing**, effective March 1.

Marketing's core purpose of winning more Customers and growing revenue remains unchanged.

- [Jennifer Bridie](#) is promoted from **Managing Director Marketing Strategy** to **Vice President, Marketing Communications and Strategy**, reporting to Jonathan Clarkson, effective May 16.

In this role, Bridie is responsible for leading Marketing Strategy, Marketing Communications Go To Market, and Brand Teams. The role is accountable for leading Company efforts to advance capabilities in these areas; drive Company growth and performance; and foster Brand to create an even greater loyalty and engagement among Southwest Customers. Bridie joined Southwest in 2013 as a Brand Communications Sr. Manager, and in 2019, she was promoted to Managing Director of Marketing Strategy. Bridie has been instrumental in launching innovative campaigns such as "Transfarency" and bringing back Southwest's iconic "Wanna Get Away" messaging. Prior to joining Southwest Airlines in 2013, she worked within the advertising industry, giving her a keen understanding of both the science and the art that informs her perspective today. Bridie graduated from Texas A&M University with a bachelor's degree in journalism.

Inflight Operations

- **Sonya Lacore, Vice President Inflight Operations**, has made the decision to move to an **Executive Advisor** role effective June 16.

From her first day of Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant Initial Training in 2001, through all of the Leadership roles she's held in between, Lacore has led by example with kindness and gratefulness above all else, with her most recent focus as a Leader on providing more than 19,000 Southwest Flight Attendants with the tools and support they need to successfully provide Southwest Customers with Legendary Service. Among Lacore's major accomplishments during her career was introducing an exclusive uniform collection to almost 42,000 Southwest Employees in 2017. This is the same uniform collection that Southwest Airlines Employees wear today.

- Lacore's move paves the way for [Steve Murtoff](#), who is promoted from **Managing Director Inflight Safety Service & Base Ops** to **Vice President Inflight Operations**, effective June 16.

Murtoff began his Southwest career nearly 17 years ago in the Inflight Operations Department. For the past 13 years he has served on the Inflight Director Team, leading across nearly all business areas within the Department. In addition to his work at Southwest, Murtoff has been an active leader within the greater airline industry, serving as a Board member and President of the International Flight Services Association (IFSA). Prior to Southwest, he worked at America West Airlines for nearly five years where he started his aviation career as an Operations Agent before joining their Inflight Team. Murtoff attended Pennsylvania State University prior to moving to Phoenix to start his career in aviation.

Technology Organization

- [Carrie Mills](#) is promoted from **Managing Director, Cybersecurity** to **Vice President of Cybersecurity**, effective March 16.

Mills is responsible for all aspects of Cybersecurity across Southwest's facilities, airports, and aircraft. She focuses on the daily operation of the Cybersecurity function and leads the airline's top Cybersecurity initiatives, including Privileged Access Management, Technology Data Privacy, expansion of Multi-Factor Authentication, Vulnerability Management, and Incident Response and Recovery. Mills joined Southwest in 2017 as the Senior Manager of Cybersecurity Threat Intelligence and Response. Her Leadership and guidance have driven Team wins across numerous efforts to improve Southwest's Cybersecurity posture. Key initiatives include the buildout of an around-the-clock Security Operations Center (SOC) and Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) capabilities; enhancing the Cybersecurity incident response processes and procedures; the original implementation of Shape Security to combat Customer account takeover attacks; the rollout of improved technologies to aid in vulnerability management and reporting; the deployment of an enterprise-wide Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) platform; and the development of a Cybersecurity Aviation Team to help meet the requirements of many Federal Agencies, and leading a project to implement an Integrated Risk Management platform. Mills' Cybersecurity domain expertise and Leadership talents have been invaluable in growing Southwest's Cybersecurity capabilities. Mills earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in management information systems from the University of Oklahoma, and she's a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) with a long-standing passion for Cybersecurity.

"Leadership is a calling to serve, and Southwest has a long-standing history of talented and dedicated Leaders who put Employees and Customers before themselves, which brings me immense pride," said [Bob Jordan](#), President & CEO at Southwest Airlines. "I would like to thank Leah and Sonya for their combined nearly five decades of service at Southwest

Airlines, and the legacy they leave at our airline. And I'm grateful for our promoted Leaders who are stepping up to oversee these important functions that contribute to the success our People work so hard to achieve."

ABOUT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

Southwest Airlines Co. operates one of the world's most admired and awarded airlines, offering its one-of-a-kind value and Hospitality at 121 airports across 11 countries. Southwest took flight in 1971 to democratize the sky through friendly, reliable, and low-cost air travel and now carries more air travelers flying nonstop within the United States than any other airline¹. Based in Dallas and famous for an Employee-first corporate Culture, Southwest maintains an unprecedented record of no involuntary furloughs or layoffs in its history. By empowering its nearly 70,000² People to deliver unparalleled Hospitality, the maverick airline cherishes a passionate loyalty among more than 126 million Customers carried in 2022. That formula for success brought industry-leading prosperity and 47 consecutive years³ of profitability for Southwest Shareholders (NYSE: LUV). Southwest leverages a unique legacy and mission to serve communities around the world including harnessing the power of its People and Purpose to put communities at the Heart of its success. Learn more by visiting [Southwest.com/citizenship](https://www.southwest.com/citizenship). As the airline with Heart, Southwest has set a goal to work toward achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Southwest has also set near-term targets and a four-pillar strategy to achieve its environmental goals. Learn more by visiting [Southwest.com/planet](https://www.southwest.com/planet).

¹*U.S. Dept. of Transportation most recent reporting of domestic originating passengers boarded*

²*Fulltime-equivalent active Employees*

³*1973-2019 annual profitability*

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