

## [This Miracle Brought to You by America's Unions](#)

By: [emptywheel](#) Friday January 16, 2009 5:34 am



They're [calling it a miracle](#)--the successful landing of a US Airways jet in the Hudson and subsequent rescue of all 155 passengers. They're detailing the heroism of all involved, starting with the pilot and including cabin crew, ferry crews, and first responders. What they're not telling you is that just about every single one of these heroes is a union member.

There's the pilot:

What might have been a catastrophe in New York — one that evoked the feel if not the scale of the Sept. 11 attack — was averted by a pilot's quick thinking and deft maneuvers,

[snip]

On board, the pilot, Chesley B. Sullenberger III, 57, unable to get back to La Guardia, had made a command decision to avoid densely populated areas and try for the Hudson,

[snip]

When all were out, the pilot walked up and down the aisle twice to make sure the plane was empty, officials said.

Sullenberger is a former [national committee member](#) and the former safety chairman for the [Airline Pilots Association](#) and now represented by [US Airline Pilots Association](#). He--and his union--have fought to ensure pilots get the kind of safety training to pull off what he did yesterday.

Then there are the flight attendants:

One passenger, Elizabeth McHugh, 64, of Charlotte, seated on the aisle near the rear, said flight attendants shouted more instructions: feet flat on the floor, heads down, cover your heads.

They are members of the [Association of Flight Attendants-CWA](#). Yesterday's accident should remind all of us that flight attendants are first and foremost safety professionals--they should not be treated like cocktail waitresses.

There are the air traffic controllers:

The pilot radioed air traffic controllers on Long Island that his plane had sustained a “double bird strike.”

They're represented by the [National Air Traffic Controllers Association](#). Someday, they'll rename National Airport for the work these men and women do to keep us safe in the air.

There are the ferry crews:

As the first ferry nudged up alongside, witnesses said, some passengers were able to leap onto the decks. Others were helped aboard by ferry crews.

They're represented by the [Seafarers International Union](#). They provide safety training to their members so they're prepared for events like yesterday's accident.

There are the cops and firemen:

Helicopters brought wet-suited police divers, who dropped into the water to help with the rescues.

They're represented by the [Patrolmen's Benevolent Association](#) and the [Uniformed Firefighters Association](#) and [Uniformed Fire Officers Association](#) (IAFF locals). They're the men and women who performed so heroically on 9/11--and they've been fighting to make sure first responders get the equipment to do this kind of thing.

Bob Corker and Richard Shelby like to claim that union labor is a failed business model.

But I haven't heard much about Bob Corker and Richard Shelby saving 155 people's lives.