



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

## DR. ZHIHANG CHI

As Vice President and General Manager for North America, Dr. Zhihang Chi manages all aspects of Air China's business in the region from the company's headquarters in Los Angeles. He manages more than 175 US-based Air China employees and oversees the marketing and operations for the rapidly growing passenger flights between North America and China.

Dr. Chi's extensive airline industry experience and his visionary leadership and passion in promoting a closer, mutually beneficial Sino-American relationship are credited for Air China's expansion and steady growth in North America, even during the severe economic downturn that adversely affected the travel industry.

He is a much-sought after speaker on topics ranging from US-China relations to trade, tourism and aviation. His incisive analysis and understanding of issues affecting the United States/China and the travel industry, coupled with his exceptional ability to articulate scholarly ideas into easily comprehensible language, makes him a top choice for TV and print journalists seeking an informed opinion on these matters.

His keynote speech on US-China bilateral relations delivered at a Town Hall Los Angeles event in Nov. 2014 is featured in the March 2015 issue of *Vital Speeches of the Day*. Also featured in the same issue are speeches delivered on various high-profile world forums by President Barack Obama, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, US Senator Joni Ernst, President Joachim Gauck of Germany and United Kingdom's Minister of Parliament, the Hon. Jon Cruddas.

Dr. Chi is a recipient of the prestigious **China Business Leadership Award** from the US-China Policy Foundation. Each year the non-profit, non-partisan, non-advocacy Washington, D.C.-based organization honors individuals who have made valuable contributions for the promotion of greater understanding between American and Chinese policymakers and government officials.

As a result of Dr. Chi's determined efforts and commitment to maximize and utilize every available resource in enhancing the local economy while at the same time increasing Air China's marketing competitiveness and penetration—international travelers—especially business passengers between Los Angeles and Beijing, have more options with Air China's double daily service between Los Angeles and Beijing. A third service for this route will be added at four times weekly on May 2, 2015. This will increase to daily service on July 1, 2015.

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Air China continues its historic expansion in North America under the leadership of Dr. Chi. The Houston (IAH)-Beijing service that was launched on July 11, 2013 made Houston the first destination Air China added in North America in more than three decades. Less than a year after its launch, Air China made an unprecedented move of expanding this nonstop service from four times a week to daily on March 30, 2014.

Only a day later, the frequency of Air China's nonstop New York (JFK)-Beijing service was increased to double daily.

Air China's *Capital-to-Capital* service, linking Washington, DC and Beijing, China's capital, was launched on June 10, 2014. The U.S. capital is Air China's seventh gateway in North America.

In January 2014, Air China inaugurated its nonstop service between Honolulu and Beijing.

Air China is the only airline with nonstop services between Los Angeles, New York, Houston and Beijing.

Dr. Chi's experience, training and educational background have prepared him well for the challenges of his position as the head of Air China in North America. He had worked in a number of increasingly responsible positions for Northwest Airlines from 1994-2003. During his years at Northwest, he developed and managed a number of strategic alliances with other international airlines, especially with the Chinese carriers.

He joined Air China in 2004 and has led the company's unprecedented growth and significant investments in and contribution to the local and state economies of the cities serviced by Air China.

Prior to his promotion to Vice President for North America, Dr. Chi was General Manager for Western USA for two years until November 2006. He was responsible for Air China's Los Angeles operations before this.

Dr. Chi's zealous advocacy of U.S. visa liberalization for Chinese visitors has made him a familiar figure to senior leaders of the US Congress, State Department and the US Homeland Security—all of whom he has personally met. He is an impassioned proponent of a closer US-China relations and a bilateral exchange based on mutual trust.

Fluent in English and Chinese, Dr. Chi's background makes him uniquely qualified to speak on China and US-China exchange in the fields of diplomacy, trade and culture. He is adept at and has a proven record of narrowing and bridging together the cultural divide between China and the USA

A naturalized US citizen, Dr. Chi was born in China. He earned his doctorate and master's degrees from the Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). As well, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees from one of the world's leading institutions of learning, the Peking University in Beijing.

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