

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 4, 2018



**Eight Airport Employees Win
2018 BGR Excellence in Government Award**
For Successfully Recruiting and Launching New Flights

NEW ORLEANS –Today, the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY) announced that 8 employees received the Bureau of Governmental Research (BGR) Excellence in Government Award in the Merit category. BGR recognized the airport employees with a Merit Award for recruiting efforts that resulted in flights to 15 new destinations in the past two years, including service to London, England and Frankfurt, Germany—the airport’s first trans-Atlantic flights since the early 1980s.

In total, a team of Airport employees led by Deputy Director of Aviation for Commercial Development Kristi Bennett-Holmes were responsible for recruiting and launching 20 new flights, 15 new destinations and three new airlines in 2016 and 2017. This led to consecutive years of record-breaking numbers of passengers traveling through MSY, with 11.1 million in 2017 and over 12 million in 2018. The Airport’s BGR Excellence in Government Award recipients include:

- Kristi Bennett-Holmes, Deputy Director of Aviation-Commercial Development
- Keely Herrington, Media & Marketing Coordinator
- Franklin Ruiz, IT Manager
- Reed Barnes, Customer Service Manager
- Douglas McCrary, Terminal Maintenance Manager

- Kevin Spruell, Senior Airport Engineer
- R. Michael McMillan, Airfield Operations Manager
- Thomas Moore, Maintenance Manager

The process of recruiting the new flights and airlines was complex and, in many cases, took several years. The Airport analyzed the Greater New Orleans market's demand for travel on a frequent basis and met with airlines multiple times a year to recruit new flights for the region. Airport staff had to present a compelling business case to the airline that proved community demand and support for the service.

Once the airlines committed to starting service, each department within the Airport made necessary preparations to enable a smooth and successful launch. In the case of British Airways and Condor, tremendous effort was undertaken by the Airport team to accommodate the wide-body aircraft used for international flights.

The team coordinated public events to welcome new flights, worked with carriers and third-party operators to improve service levels, remodeled airport facilities and made necessary technology improvements to enable the successful launch and expansion of each airline in the current airport terminal. The success of these efforts would not have been possible without cross-departmental contributions from within the Airport, especially the operations; terminal maintenance; planning, development, and construction; and customer service departments.

Chairwoman for the New Orleans Aviation Board Cheryl Teamer said, "The New Orleans Aviation Board is so proud of the airport team for earning this award. The growth at Armstrong International has been tremendous over the last several years, and because of these people and so many others at the airport, New Orleans is now more connected to the rest of the world than ever before. This well-deserved recognition from BGR is a true testament to the progress we have seen at the Airport."

Director of Aviation for Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport Kevin Dolliole said "I am thrilled to see our dedicated employees being recognized by BGR for successfully meeting the demands of this growing region by actively recruiting and launching new flights. Their efforts allow the Airport to provide better service and more options to the travelling public."

This is the first time the Airport has won a BGR Excellence in Government Award since the awards began in 1994.

"BGR's Merit Award recognizes outstanding performance by public sector employees as part of our mission to promote government that is effective and efficient," said **Amy Glovinsky, BGR President & CEO**. "The airport team exemplified that with its hard-won success in attracting new flights and airlines. The team works just as hard after the fact to help ensure the new flights succeed. That's important for the airport's continued growth in support of the regional economy."

The award winners will be honored at BGR's annual Excellence in Government Awards luncheon on Wednesday, May 10 at noon at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans (601 Loyola Ave.) The awards are given to individuals or teams based on four categories: Lifetime Achievement, Merit, Innovation, and Citizenship. The Merit Award recognizes outstanding performance of public sector employees.

For a full list of MSY's nonstop destinations, visit <http://www.flymsy.com/nonstop>.

###

About Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport:

Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY) is the primary commercial airport in the State of Louisiana serving over 80% of all passengers flying into the state. Armstrong International Airport is owned by the City of New Orleans. The New Orleans Aviation Board (NOAB), an unattached board of the City of New Orleans, oversees the administration, operation, and maintenance of Armstrong International. The Airport has 16 airlines providing service to 56 nonstop destinations, including six international destinations. A new world-class terminal complex is currently being constructed. The new North Terminal will be complete by February 2019. For more information, please visit www.flymsy.com.