



Tampa International Airport officials, Gov. Rick Scott and other dignitaries celebrate the new SkyConnect system.

TPA cuts ribbon on successful Phase 1

Surrounded by hundreds of members of the team who made the day possible, Tampa International Airport officials joined Gov. Rick Scott and local dignitaries to dedicate the Airport's new SkyConnect people-mover system and Rental Car Center, which opens to the public on Feb. 14.

With these elements complete, Phase 1 is coming to a close.

"This project is worthy of our history and will be admired just as we admire the designs from the past," Airport CEO Joe Lopano told the crowd.

Lopano said the SkyConnect and state-of-the-art Rental Car Center carry forward the Airport's legacy of exceptional customer service and convenience while simultaneously creating an Airport capable of handling a greater number of passengers.

In 2017, TPA served a record 19.6 million passengers and expects to serve more than 20 million in 2018.

"These passenger numbers are significant and underscore the importance of Tampa International Airport's Master Plan projects and the need to build now and build smart," said Hillsborough County Aviation Authority Chairman Robert Watkins.

The 1.5-mile SkyConnect system links the Main Terminal to the Economy Garage and the 2.6-million square foot Rental Car Center. From one end to the other, the ride takes less than five minutes. Trains arrive at each station roughly every two minutes.

Since TPA broke ground in late 2014, more than 10,700 people have logged more than 5.7 million hours on the project. Approximately 600 companies have worked on the job. Of those, about 90 percent are based in Florida or have regional offices in the state and nearly 200 are women, minority or disadvantaged business enterprises.

The people-mover system and Rental Car Center help decongest the Airport's roadways and curbsides by removing 2.7-million vehicles from the roads each year. The center is designed to seamlessly connect to the region's transportation network.

It is home to 16 rental car brands and brings new efficiencies with fueling, car washing and vehicle maintenance services all located at the same location for the first time. This allows passengers to get in and out more rapidly, especially during peak passenger times.

All passengers will have access to kiosks for boarding passes and checking bags at the Rental Car Center.

continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE



Record passenger numbers

TPA shattered its all-time passenger record in 2017.



Employee Spotlight

Helda Durham is afraid of hurricanes - but little else.



Final construction aerials

The final aerials are in as TPA prepares to open the Rental Car Center to the public.

TPA BY THE NUMBERS



1,175 days

There were 1,175 days between the official Master Plan groundbreaking and the ribbon cutting on Feb. 7.



The 1.4 mile SkyConnect system connects the Main Terminal to the Economy Garage and new Rental Car Center. The entire trip takes less than five minutes.

Phase 1 nears completion

“We’re making it more convenient, not just for our rental car customers, but for economy parkers and the general public,” said Lopano.

In addition to the new people-mover system and Rental Car Center, the Airport has redone its Main Terminal transfer level, adding four outdoor terraces, and expanding the footprint by about the size of a football field. The transfer level is lighter, more open with more modern amenities.

TPA has also completed work on most of the 69 new shops and restaurants, including many of the local options such as Buddy Brew, Ulele, Goody Goody and RumFish Grill.

Mayor Bob Buckhorn said the changes are fitting for a region that is seeing tremendous changes.

“Today’s milestone reflects the upward trajectory of this city,” Buckhorn, a Hillsborough County Aviation Authority Board member said. “As this Airport has grown, so has the city of Tampa’s profile on the international stage. That’s reflected by the doubling of the number of international passengers in the past seven years. The Airport makes a phenomenal first and last impression on those visitors.”

With Phase 1 coming to a close, the Airport is ramping up on Phase 2, which includes the construction of new curbsides, a commercial development area and supporting projects. Phase 3 will include the construction of a new airside with additional gates.

Once all three phases are complete, the Airport will have the ability to serve 34 million annual passengers. ■



Gov. Rick Scott, Airport CEO Joe Lopano and Hillsborough County Aviation Authority Board members appear on the SkyConnect plaque.



More than a dozen members of the media attended the ribbon cutting ceremony. The story appeared in news outlets across the country.

TPA sees all-time record passenger numbers in 2017

The airline tallies are in: Tampa International Airport saw a record number of passengers in 2017.

Last year, 19,624,284 people flew through TPA, which beats the previous record of 19,154,957 passengers in 2007.

This record comes as no surprise, as TPA had a very busy 2017 seeing double-digit year-over-year growth during peak travel months. The Airport saw record numbers during its March and April spring break period and saw 11.1 percent more passengers in December 2017 vs. December 2016. In 2017, airlines at TPA launched nonstop service to Iceland, San Francisco, Salt Lake City and Colorado Springs. Frontier Airlines added 11 new routes from Tampa, and Copa Airlines announced it will be adding frequencies to its Panama City route this summer after a great 2017.

"This passenger milestone is a major indicator of growth and prosperity not only for TPA but for the entire Tampa Bay region," Tampa International Airport CEO Joe Lopano said. "Thanks to the Airport Board, the hard work of the airport team and our community partners, we've had a tremendous 2017 and we're well positioned for more growth in 2018."

The passenger record announcement comes as TPA finishes the largest expansion project in airport history, opens 69 new shops, restaurants and services and prepares to unveil this month a new 1.5-mile SkyConnect train connecting passengers to a state-of-the-art rental car center. The Airport is also planning a second phase of construction that will include expanded Main Terminal curbsides, offices, a hotel and other commercial development.



Tampa International Airport has been busier than ever, serving a record 19.6 million guests in 2017.

"These passenger numbers only reinforce the need for better infrastructure, better facilities and smart expansion to support this growth," Hillsborough County Aviation Authority Board Chairman Robert Watkins said. "Fortunately, TPA is ahead of the game as it completes its largest construction program in Airport history and prepares for a second phase of construction that will begin this year."

Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn, who also sits on the HCAA Board, praised TPA for its work in adding new air service.

"I said it before and I'll say it again: This is truly Tampa's time," Buckhorn said. "We now have more than double the international visitors coming to Tampa than we did when Joe Lopano arrived at TPA seven years ago and that translates to hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of jobs each year. This is a result of the hard work by a lot of folks at TPA, but also reflects Tampa's reputation as being a wonderful place to work, live and play." ■

2017 Fun Facts

TOTAL PASSENGERS: In 2017, Tampa International Airport served 19,624,284 passengers, which is roughly the number of residents living in the state of New York.

BUSIEST DAY: TPA saw 77,800 passengers on Dec. 30, 2017, making it the busiest day of the busiest year in TPA's history.

AIRPLANE OPERATIONS: TPA had 554 total commercial flights on Dec. 29 – the most for a single day in 2017.

BUSIEST CONCESSIONS DAY: The Airport's restaurants, bars and shops served 35,676 customers on Dec. 23, more than any other day in 2017.

BUSIEST PARKING DAY: TPA had 11,987 parking transactions – including many one-hour free stays – on Nov. 26 for the busiest day of parking of the year.

NEW FLIGHTS: TPA added 22 new flights in 2017, including four new destinations: San Francisco, Reykjavik, Colorado Springs and Salt Lake City.

Southwest launches nonstop service to San Diego



Members of the TPA team pose in front of an impressive cake on the morning of Jan. 8 to celebrate the launch of nonstop daily flights to San Diego.

Tampa International Airport and its largest carrier, Southwest Airlines, celebrated the launch of daily nonstop flights to San Diego the morning of Jan. 8, cutting cake, taking photos and throwing a fun party for the inaugural passengers at the gate.

The new service is a major win for the Airport and the Tampa Bay region, especially for the business community. TPA research shows that traffic between the two markets is heavily driven by business passengers, with strong links between our defense, aerospace and medical industries.

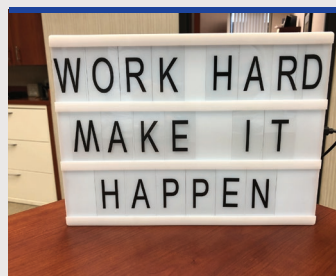
"This service is going to be a game-changer for us," TPA CEO Joe Lopano said. "Southwest is very committed to

this market and this new flight to San Diego furthers that commitment even more."

This is Southwest's 38th nonstop destination from Tampa International and its first on the West Coast.

San Diego was one of three domestic targets presented to the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority Board in November 2016 as part of TPA's five-year Air Service Development strategy. In less than eight months, TPA has secured service to two of the three on that list - San Diego and Salt Lake City - and service to Salt Lake began last month. Portland is the remaining domestic target market. ■

LEAF LESSONS



'Be Well' messages light up offices around TPA

Employees may notice lighted sign boards with wellness tips that have been displayed throughout Authority offices.

Office suites are encouraged to rotate ideas, inspirational phrases and sayings from different employees throughout the month as a way to promote creativity, friendly competition and healthy practices among coworkers.

As you're passing through other departments' office suites, take the time to read the signs and engage with your fellow employees. ■

Tampa Electric linemen depart TPA for Puerto Rico



On Jan. 17, Tampa International Airport said farewell to this fine group of TECO Energy linemen heading to Puerto Rico to help restore power. The men will be there for six to eight weeks working to help provide relief to the more than 1 million living without electricity after Hurricane Maria.



TPA's new Rental Car Center is 2.6 million square feet and houses 16 different rental car brands.

Final aerial photo shows complete Phase 1

The final aerial photos of the Rental Car Center and SkyConnect system are in. The new facilities were officially dedicated on Feb. 7 and will open to the public on Feb. 14.

Tampa International Airport's SkyConnect system links the Main Terminal, Economy Garage and Rental Car Center. From one end to the other, the ride takes about five minutes.

TPA's new Rental Car Center holds 2.6 million square feet and houses 16 different rental car brands - up from eight. The center helps decongest the Main Terminal's roadways and curbsides. ■

Airside E is the second airside to finish line

The redevelopment of Airside E concessions is complete!

All of the new offerings coming to the airside occupied by Air Canada, Delta and WestJet are now open for business. Restaurants at the airside include: Columbia Cafe, Four Green Fields, Illy Espresso, Panda Express, Potbelly and Starbucks. Shops include: Air Essentials, BookLink, Corsa, InTune Electronics and Tampa Bay Times.

The airside also features a new Terminal Getaway Spa (pictured) that offers chair massages, manicures and pedicures. ■



All of the concessions on Airside E, home of Air Canada, Delta and WestJet, are now complete.

CONCESSIONS CORNER



Employee Spotlight: Helda Durham

When Helda Durham moved from her longtime home of Detroit to become Delta's new station manager in Tampa last June, she had one fear about Florida: Hurricanes.



Helda Durham came from Detroit to serve as Delta's new station manager in Tampa.

Don't worry, someone told her. The Tampa Bay area hasn't been hit since 1921.

A few months later, she found herself bracing for the approaching Hurricane Irma. But like everything else she's handled since she arrived at TPA, Helda took the Irma preparations and its impact on flight operations in stride. She's very much enjoying her new life in Florida and the Delta team.

"My goal since coming here has been to reiterate the importance of a safe work environment, taking exceptional care of our customers and to feel like we are family," said Helda, who began holding staff town halls with her 200-plus employees shortly after arriving. Helda's strong work ethic and adventurous spirit have made her a popular new fixture at TPA. And she comes by those traits honestly, crediting her father and mother as her biggest mentors.

When Helda was 10, the oldest of five children, her family left their Baghdad home amid political strife and moved to the United States where they settled among Detroit's Iraqi Chaldean community. Many families owned liquor or party stores but Helda's father, a former general manager for Iraqi Airways, wanted something different for his family. He approached a man regarding a job.

"Sir, you look like a very important man," said Helda's father, according to Helda. "I just moved here with my five children and I need a job. I'll

work for you for a few months. If you don't like what I'm doing, you can let me go. But if you like my work, I'd like you to hire me permanently."

The man took a chance on Helda's father. Next month, he will be recognized for reaching his 40th anniversary with the company, New York Life Insurance.

Helda studied child psychology and child development at Eastern Michigan University but, while working on her master's degree in the field, she realized the work wasn't for her. She began working in customer service for Radisson Hotels and, while there, she learned about a job with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines as an Arabic interpreter.

She worked for five years as Customer Service Interpreter, served as a liaison helping travelers with Customs and Border Protection before moving into a position as a customer service supervisor, working various areas of the operation inclusive of the ramp tower and International Operations. She then worked her way up in various positions with Northwest Airlines and eventually Delta.

Last year, Helda came to Florida to help out for a couple of months as an interim Delta station manager for Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport. She learned of the station manager opening in Tampa and went for it.

Helda said she loves the culture at TPA and its keen attention to customer service. She is fiercely devoted to Delta, a company she has found to be very "people-focused" and that rubs off on its employees.

"It is a terrific company to work for," Helda said. "There's a strong emphasis on employee relations and employee engagement and that translates into more thoughtful and meaningful interactions with the customers. Taking care of our people is the key to our success."

Helda currently lives in Clearwater while she awaits the permanent arrival of her husband, Greg, who is retiring as an 8th grade science teacher in Novi, Michigan at the end of this year. She has three children – Bailey, who graduated from Central Michigan University in May and is working for National Geographic; Christian, a senior at Michigan State University studying pre-med; and Noel, a junior at Novi High School who loves theatre and acting.

While she's not working, Helda loves traveling and has been all over Europe, Asia and the Middle East. She likes to walk on the beach and go on bike rides, and she also enjoys cooking Middle Eastern dishes.

Helda still has the one item she took from her Baghdad home 41 years ago – a feather pillow that her parents allowed her to bring. ■

 TPA in the World



Members of the Tampa International Airport team channel their inner pirate at the annual Gasparilla Children's Parade in January.



General Counsel and Executive Vice President of IT Michael Stephens (third from right) attends the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce Minority Business Accelerator.



Vice President of Communications Janet Scherberger, Gavin, and Director of Ethics, Diversity and Administration Elita McMillion hang out at this year's MLK Day Parade.



Director of Commercial Real Estate Randy Forster gives a presentation to CREW Tampa Bay.



Tampa International Airport was out in force for this year's MLK Day Parade.

Tampa International unveils new SkyConnect trains and rental car center

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TPA is looking to add new destinations following a year of major air service wins.

From the Tampa Bay Business Journal, Feb. 7:

All the talk of Tampa Bay was about SkyConnect on Feb. 7. The excitement was shared by guest speakers at the event including Florida Governor Rick Scott and Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn. ■

Tampa International Airport train and car rental center open Feb. 14, with big office project in the pipeline



HCAA Board members recently short-listed potential developers for the new office building.

From the Tampa Bay Times, Feb. 1:

HCAA Board of Directors voted to move forward on Phase 2 of the Master Plan projects including an office building encompassing 270,000 square feet of space. They short-listed the potential developers at their February meeting. ■

E-NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

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WHAT THEY'RE SAYING...

ON TWITTER 

Shoutout to @FlyTPA. Best airport background music I've ever heard. Great mix of classic hits, one after another
- Dave Stubbs @Dave_Stubbs, Jan. 29

Orlando Intl, is always so busy & chaos, deff going thru @FlyTPA Home next time on @British_Airways.
- Alex Vezey @vezgolf, Jan. 26

I love reading the @FlyTPA twitter feed. You do a great job... Makes me proud to be a Tampa resident!
- Trish Wild @TrishAWild, Jan. 24

ON FACEBOOK 

We had the most amazing experience with Kenny Garcia AKA Kenny G!!! Fantastic effort and excellent employee! My aunt landed and somehow someone told her to go to the economy shuttle area for pickup. Meanwhile I'm driving up in my car to pick her up at baggage claim. I stopped and asked him "how do I get to the economy shuttle area to pick her up?" He kindly explained that cars aren't allowed there, but showed me where to idle while he RAN TO GET HER! He retrieved her from that area and brought her to me. Amazing service.
- Janci Despain, Feb. 2

The Tampa airport is clean, easy to maneuver and the staff is friendly and efficient. An awesome airport.
- Jose Cruz, Feb. 2

VIA EMAIL 

I wanted to share what an excellent job Officer Hinz did during my pat down screening. She was extremely professional, balancing customer service friendliness with security firmness. ... I feel the security here is competent and thorough. Thank you for a job well done!
- Crystal Spessard, Jan. 19



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