

# ON THE RADAR



Tampa Bay General Aviation airports have a combined \$87 million impact per year.

## Tampa Bay GA airports grow and thrive

As Tampa International Airport has celebrated several developments and milestones over the past couple of years, its general aviation airports have been quietly making some success stories of their own.

In addition to providing traffic relief to TPA and convenient landing and takeoff options for private and small jets coming in and out of Hillsborough County, the three GA airports along with TPA's fixed base operators have added amenities, flight schools and community events that have raised both the airports' reputations and economic impact in the Tampa Bay area.

"Everyone knows the exciting things that have been happening at Tampa International as far as new nonstop flights and passenger growth," TPA Director of General Aviation Brett Fay said.

Tampa Executive Airport, which is near the I-4 and I-275 interchange, has doubled its operations in the last two years. TPA's FBO Sheltair recently invested \$6.5 million in its 7.5-acre, 170,000-square-foot complex, adding a fifth hangar and office space as part of a 32,000-square-foot expansion. Peter O. Knight Airport at Davis Islands welcomed the exciting ICON Aircraft and its flight training programs for its unique and innovative amphibious light sport planes. And Plant City Airport has become a much larger presence in the small, rural community for its successful

Planes, Trains and Automobiles event. Among the three GA airports, there are now five different flight schools filling their rosters with enthusiastic pilots in training.

"They're actually having a difficult time keeping up with demand," Fay said, adding that "activity breeds activity" at all of the airports and FBOs.

More flight operations at the GA airports means more jobs, and many of these are "high-skilled, high-paying jobs," he said. In addition to that, the three airports and TPA's GA facilities are instrumental in attracting new businesses to the area, as well as major events.

According to the latest economic impact study completed in 2014, Tampa Executive Airport has a \$44 million impact on its community, Peter O. Knight Airport has a \$33 million impact and Plant City Airport has a \$10 million impact. Those numbers are expected to be greater when another study is conducted later this year. ■

### AT A GLANCE

Estimated operations from April 2017-April 2018\*

- Tampa Executive (VDF) – 96,000+ flights
- Peter O. Knight (TPF) – 66,000+ flights
- Plant City (PCM) – 50,000+ flights
- TPA fixed base operators – 22,653 flights

\*The three general aviation airports are non-towered so the flight counts are based on a consultant's estimates of activities

### IN THIS ISSUE



#### Plum's the word

Delta got a major wardrobe change and the results are plum amazing. Lookin' good, team!



#### Infrastructure Week

TPA, last month, highlighted the need for investment in airports.



#### Restaurant Week 2018

Five of TPA's new restaurants are starring in this year's Tampa Bay Restaurant Week.

### TPA BY THE NUMBERS



## 5,000,000

The number of guests TPA projects will travel through the Airport between June 1 and Aug. 31- a four percent jump over the same period last year.

## Spirit adds 4 times weekly service to Philadelphia



Spirit Airlines on June 7 announced new nonstop service to Philadelphia beginning in December. The four-times-a-week service will give TPA guests another ultra-low fare option to get to the City of Brotherly Love. The new service comes as Spirit announces seven new routes to its network. ■



Lufthansa's Tampa team was named Station of the Month in March 2018.

## Lufthansa wins top honor

Lufthansa's Tampa team ranked second worldwide in ground product quality among Lufthansa International Routes – a close second behind Singapore Changi Airport, according to the company's passenger surveys.

Tampa was also named Station of the Month in March 2018 due to the strong improvement to its mishandled bag index during the time. ■



Delta's team takes a second to pose in their new uniforms.

## Plum crazy for the new look

Delta Air Lines frontline workers just got a makeover and folks are going "plum crazy" over the fresh new look. This new color is the first major color addition aside from their signature red and blue since 1988. ■

# Infrastructure Week highlights need for investment



Airport CEO Joe Lopano discusses Phase 2 and 3 of TPA's Master Plan expansion with U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor and ACI-NA CEO Kevin Burke. The tour was one of more than 100 events scheduled nationwide to mark Infrastructure Week.

Airports across the nation are handling more passengers than ever and the time to build is now.

This was the resounding message from members of Congress and other state and national leaders at a May 15 meeting hosted by Tampa International Airport titled "Investment that Matters: Keeping America's Airports Competitive." The event was one of more than a hundred such forums scheduled nationwide to mark Infrastructure Week, which highlights everything from bike lanes to railways and water lines. TPA hosted Airports Council International-North America and Building America's Future along with members of the Tampa Congressional delegation for a press conference and tour of recent TPA improvements as well as the location of a future new 16-gate Airside D.

The lawmakers and industry leaders called for robust infrastructure investment that includes significant funding for airports. Standing in Airside F, where an expansion was completed in 2012, airport CEO Joe Lopano highlighted the need to invest in facilities.

"By improving this facility, we were able to accommodate new flights to Switzerland, Panama and Germany. Those

flights have had an economic impact on our region that totals hundreds of millions of dollars, a huge return on a \$26 million investment," Lopano said.

The project was partly paid for with revenues from Passenger Facility Charges (PFC), a fee attached to each airline ticket that is used to make airport upgrades that increase capacity or improve safety. Congress has not adjusted the fee since 2001.

"We have got to have a major investment in this country that will help create jobs and lift people in communities across the country," said U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor, who introduced an amendment to a Federal Aviation Authority reauthorization bill last month that would cap baggage fees by the same amount of the PFC and tie any increase to increases in the PFC. "Part of that has got to be allowing airports – which have been very good stewards of local, state and federal money – to have a little bit of extra room to make those investments in our communities."

Former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell, a co-founder of Building America's Future, called for infrastructure support across the board.

"Without long-term investments in the nation's infrastructure and airports, America risks losing its competitive edge with the rest of the world," Rendell said.

Airports nationwide are trying to align current funding resources with growing infrastructure needs to close a \$10 billion-a-year funding gap for airport infrastructure improvements.

"Despite their essential role in our national transportation infrastructure, America's airports face unprecedented challenges when it comes to meeting their growing infrastructure needs," said ACI-NA President and CEO Kevin M. Burke. "U.S. airports have nearly \$100 billion in infrastructure needs through 2021, many without a determined revenue source." ■

## Safety Spot: Hurricane season is here. Are you ready?



June is National Safety Month and to celebrate we are introducing a new section to your Airport Newsletter — The Safety Spot. The Safety Spot will announce safety initiatives and helpful tips, recognize safety-conscious employees and be an avenue to enhance TPA's safety culture.

Are you prepared? Hurricane Season began on June 1 and all Floridians need to be ready by reviewing their hurricane

emergency preparedness plan now. At TPA, the annual Airport Hurricane Preparedness Meeting was held May 24. Led by AOM David Nicewinter, the Aviation Authority and TPA stakeholders reviewed Tampa International Airport's Hurricane Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan.

It is critical to the Airport's plan that employees are prepared so that they can safely, quickly and efficiently secure their family and property to avoid storm-related dangers. If you need to review your hurricane preparedness plan, check out the toolkit at Ready.gov, the official website of the Department of Homeland Security. ■

## Former Ethiopian refugee finds opportunity at TPA



Brook Negusei pictured recently in front of one of his Cab Plus sedans. Negusei owns and operates four transportation companies.

**W**hen Brook Negusei left his home country of Ethiopia at age 17, he didn't have much choice of where he landed in the United States. As a refugee fleeing a country under what he felt was a repressive political climate, he felt fortunate to be sponsored by Lutheran Ministries of Florida and placed in Tampa.

There, he immediately found friendly people, a warm climate like the one he had at home and a whole new world of opportunity. Negusei never dreamed, however, that he'd be running a successful taxi service that most recently was awarded a subcontract to serve Tampa International Airport customers along with Yellow Cab and United Cab.

"I've wanted to do this for a long time," Negusei said. "It's a wonderful reward to be able to show off my skill and my passion for this industry."

Shortly after coming to the U.S. as a teen, Negusei studied at Hillsborough Community College and at home,

earning an electronics degree and eventually opening an electronics shop that managed 26 employees and millions in revenue each year.

But in traveling to seminars and trying out different taxi and town car services, as well as in talking to some cab-driving friends, Negusei became fascinated with the transportation industry. He saw potential in creating a more upscale car service.

"I wanted to create a town car service that charged like a cab but used a nicer black-on-black car and a dressed-up driver with a tie," Negusei said. "I asked my taxi friends, 'Why not focus on serving people, opening the door for them, and getting better tips?'"

In the late 1990s, Negusei took a chance and started a cab company with a few sedans and some well-dressed drivers. Now, nearly 25 years later, he owns and operates Cab Plus, Tampa Town Car, FLEXSedans and Transafe Transportation, a non-medical ride service for those in wheelchairs or with other special needs. Two years ago, Transafe became certified as an Airport Concessions Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE) company.

In February, the Aviation Authority awarded a new contract to Yellow Cab and United Cab with Transafe Transportation as a 10 percent partner to operate taxi rides dispatched from the Airport.

"Mr. Negusei is an astute and experienced business owner and we are pleased to have him as an ACDBE partner involved with Airport operations," TPA Business Diversity Manager Cheryl Hawkins said. "He has been in the business a long time and understands both the taxi cab industry and the fundamentals of operating a business, which are essential components for success at the Airport. ■"

## Atlas Air pilot's dreams take her up, up and away



Taylor Montgomery said her dreams of becoming a pilot started in elementary school.

Meet Taylor Montgomery - First Officer Atlas Air. Aviation runs in her blood.

Since she first hopped in her Grandfather's Cessna 150 as a girl, she's known her future was in the sky.

"In elementary school while my friends were writing down what they wanted to be - a fire fighter, doctor, or even the president - I always wrote that I wanted to be a pilot," she said. "I have been in an airplane since I can remember."

She got her pilot's license before her 17th birthday and today she helps pilot an Atlas Air 767, taking the wide body freighter both domestically and internationally, helping make the world a smaller, more connected place, while always keeping one eye on the horizon. ■

## Major taxiway W work now under way

Driving up and down the George J. Bean Parkway, it's hard to miss the steady stream of dump trucks caravanning around the length of Runway 1L-19R.

The trucks – sometimes as many as 40 per day – are part of a massive year-long airfield pavement reconstruction and replacement that wraps up in December.

The project calls for replacing 5,000 feet of asphalt and concrete on the existing Taxiway W with concrete, as well as assorted other concrete repair and replacement projects. When all done, the multimillion dollar project will improve the Airport's airfield with better, longer-lasting materials and repair any deficient areas.

It's no easy job.

Crews must remove more than 14 football fields' worth of pavement, concrete and dirt. The concrete is hauled to the north end of the airfield, where it is pulverized and repurposed as a base for the new taxiway.

The new taxiway is robust: Six inches of crushed concrete, another six of "econcrete" and 17 inches of airfield-grade concrete.

How much concrete is that? Well, it's enough that the builder, Ajax, recently assembled a concrete batch plant to produce the concrete on site. ■



Crews are upgrading Taxiway W, pictured in this recent aerial photo by Aerial Innovations. In total, they'll redo 5,000 feet of taxiway.

FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS

## TPA plays starring role in Restaurant Week

Tampa Bay Restaurant Week 2018 is almost here and Tampa International Airport's restaurants, for the first time, will play a starring role in the culinary adventure with special three-course prix fixe menus.

Running from June 14 to June 24, the 10-day event is a chance for foodies to get a taste of some of Tampa Bay's favorite restaurants. This year, that includes five of TPA's new options, including: the Café by Mise en Place on Airside F, RumFish Grill on Airside C, Four Green Fields on Airside E and the Main Terminal's P.F. Chang's and Hard Rock Cafe.

"This is really an exciting time to show off what the Airport's new restaurants are all about," said Nina Mahoney, Senior Manager of Airport Concessions. The prix fixe menu gets you a three course meal for \$30 or \$45 per couple or person.

To view the menus, check out [TampaAirport.com](http://TampaAirport.com) and search "Restaurant Week." ■



Four Green Fields is one of the five restaurants participating in this year's Tampa Bay Restaurant Week.



Hard Rock Cafe is in the mix with a three-course prix fixe menu.

CONCESSIONS CORNER



## Employee Spotlight: Elio Avila

**A**s the Senior Branch Manager of Sixt, one of the newest rental car companies to join Tampa International Airport, Elio Avila remembers the excitement of watching the new Rental Car Center being constructed last year. Now he feels like he's in one of the best facilities in the country with one of the best staffs he's ever worked with since joining the rental car business at age 18.



*Elio Avila is the Senior Branch Manager at Sixt, one of the newest rental car companies to join TPA at the new Rental Car Center.*

"This is a beautiful rental car center and just a great place to work every day," Avila said. "I've worked at other airports and this is such a friendly environment and well-run facility."

Avila was born in Cuba, where he lived with his parents and three siblings until they moved to Venezuela when he was 7 years old. Several years later, political strife began prompting many families to flee Venezuela, and Avila's family did the same. They moved to the U.S., settling in Orlando, just before Avila's junior year of high school.

"I struggled those next two years since I barely spoke any English," Avila said. "But I learned quickly and passed my FCAT [Florida's standardized test] and was able to graduate and move on to the next step."

While in college, Avila began working as a rental sales agent at a couple of Orlando car rental companies, working from 9 to 5 while going to classes in the evening. He liked the pace of the work and helping customers, so the career stuck with him even after he finished his degree.

His friendly nature and ability to adapt to change are what propelled his career after a former general manager convinced him to join Sixt in 2012. He began as a rental sales agent in Orlando and, after only three months, he was promoted to fleet assistant, then became a branch supervisor, where he learned "more than I could even imagine," he said.

*"My favorite thing here is my staff. We're like family."*

After two years in that role, he got moved up to Branch Manager at a dealership branch in Atlanta, then became the branch manager at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport – the busiest airport in the world.

"That was an intense place to work," Avila said. "It was great experience for me."

Missing his family, who all still live in Orlando and Miami, Avila moved back to Florida, taking a senior branch manager role at Sixt's Cypress Street location in Tampa. When Sixt became one of a half-dozen new brands to join TPA's new rental car center in February, Avila was thrilled to move into the new space.

"My favorite thing here is my staff," Avila said. "We're like family."

While new at TPA, family-owned Sixt Rent A Car has been around since 1912, starting in Munich, Germany, with a fleet of three cars. It now has more than 2,200 branches in more than 100 countries. Avila loves the travel opportunities he's had with Sixt, flying to meetings around the world and even meeting members of the Sixt family that own the business.

When Avila isn't working, he spends time with his family – wife Nari, 3-year-old Sophia and the newest addition, 5-week-old son Thiago. He's a soccer fanatic and plays recreationally when he can, and he also loves outdoors and fishing.

Avila said he's excited about his future with Sixt and feels at home at Tampa International Airport.

"It's a wonderful place to grow," he said. ■

 TPA in the World



Bruce Sather, Senior Manager, Building and Grounds Maintenance, Audra Cona, Talent Acquisition Manager and Shari Kopp, HR/Talent Management Coordinator attended the 3rd annual Build Tampa Bay event.



Elita McMillon, Director of Ethics, Diversity and Administration, speaks to a group of elementary students at Potter Elementary School on May 10 about aerospace pioneers and the importance of relying on one's potential.



Visit Tampa Bay recognized EVP of Marketing Chris Minner as a champion of tourism in Tampa Bay at the 2018 National Tourism Luncheon on May 16. Airport CEO Joe Lopano and HCAA Board member Victor Crist attended.



Airport CEO Joe Lopano is joined by members of his executive and leadership teams on May 30 for the 2018 Face the Chamber: Mayor's Breakfast at the Westin Tampa Waterside.



CEO Joe Lopano, EVP of IT and General Counsel Michael Stephens and Police Chief Charlie Vazquez join Teri Uno, Cheryl Porter, Bob Porter, Monique Barry and Wendy Shughart at the Law and Liberty Dinner on May 17.



Airport CEO Joe Lopano spoke to the Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce on May 10.

## In the News



From ABC Action News, May 22:

The new Remote Bag Check at Tampa International Airport isn't just making fans of airport guests, it's turning heads at other airports who are taking a serious look at the popular program. Read more online and watch the video report on the ABC Action News website. ■

*The Airport's new remote bag check is turning heads of visitors - and even other airports across the country.*



From the Tampa Bay Business Journal, June 7:

The planes have been filling up at Tampa International Airport lately, with Southwest's Havana flights doing extremely well. Passenger traffic was up 4.3 percent in April, Chris Minner, TIA's executive vice president of marketing and communications, said at the monthly meeting of the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority on Thursday.

"All the airlines were a little bit more full," he said, citing an average load factor of 86.4 percent. ■

### E-NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

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## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING...

### ON TWITTER



*@First time taking new train for economy parking @FlyTPA so much better than waiting for a bus!*

- @MagentaMelissa, June 4

*Parked in long term, through security in under 15 minutes and sipping a cool drink @RumFishGrill. I love @FlyTPA*

- @VickiPgator, June 1

*There's just something about @FlyTPA that I enjoy. I don't mind traveling out of here. Easy, clean and quick security. #NYbound*

- @TJean03, June 1

### ON FACEBOOK



*Airports are never fun, but TPA is very clean, just the right size, with great restaurants and free WIFI.*

- Mary V. Casey, May 29

*Very nice airport with a lot of stores and restaurants.*

- Candy Mount, May 19

*Yes. I'm biased. I'm from Tampa. But I love, love, love my airport in Tampa. Literally just suffered through Miami airport and was so happy to be landing in Tampa where it's clean, and easy to navigate.*

- Sarah Davis, May 9

### VIA EMAIL



*I've been flying this airport my whole life, and today was just a reminder of why I love it so much. In addition to being beautiful, it's the country's most convenient airport. I left my condo on Bayshore at 5:15am, utilized economy parking and TSA precheck and was at my gate by 5:50am. Truly wonderful.*

- Savan Shah, May 25



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