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MEDIA ADVISORY
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MKE SCORES FIRST PLACE AWARD FOR “PROJECT SEARCH” PARTNERSHIP

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport (MKE) received national recognition for partnering with Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin on Project SEARCH, a jobs program for young adults with disabilities.

MKE received First Place in the “Partnering with Concessionaires/Service Providers” category at the 2018 Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA) Marketing and Communications Conference in Ottawa, Canada last month. In addition to Goodwill, the partnership included airport restaurateur HMSHost and airport retailer Paradies Lagardère.

Project SEARCH is a business-led, school to work transition program for young adults with disabilities. Six interns received employee training from both Paradies Lagardère and HMSHost and worked in all of their Airport concession locations.

"I thank HMSHost, Paradies Lagardère, and Goodwill Industries for offering this outstanding program and employing individuals that are sometimes overlooked in our community," Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele said. "Congratulations to MKE and our partners on receiving this award. Project SEARCH has been such a big success at the Airport and at the Milwaukee County Zoo. In fact, we're looking to expand it to other departments as Milwaukee County continues to empower people and strengthen our community."

"This marks the first time Project SEARCH has been successfully implemented at an airport in the United States, and we couldn't be more thrilled to receive this award from ACI," Airport Director Brian Dranzik said. "There's nothing better than being recognized by your peers, and once again MKE shows that it's on the leading edge of Airports nationwide."

The Airport facilitated additional enrichment opportunities by providing the interns with a tour of the Airfield, control tower, and an airplane. This was their first opportunity to ever board an airplane! Five of the six interns have already achieved permanent employment opportunities, and the sixth is very close to securing employment.

"HMSHost is thrilled to be a part of this inspiring program, helping adults with disabilities gain access to stable jobs, training, and a positive workplace environment," said HMSHost Director of Operations Robert Kiepert. "Working with Goodwill and Project SEARCH is an incredible opportunity to engage with the local community and the Airport. Furthermore, it has led to some great memories created with each new group of interns. Congratulations to MKE!"

"I'd like to congratulate MKE for this recognition," said Lori Becker, general manager, Paradies Lagardère. "Initiatives such as Project SEARCH are integral to not only the young adults with

disabilities it assists through its intern program, but the community at large. Paradies Lagardère participates in a wide variety of events in communities throughout the year. We are always looking for new ways to help and believe in making a positive difference in the lives of our employees, business partners and customers.”

A video documenting the program was included in the Airport’s award submission to ACI-NA and can be [viewed here](#):

MKE offers nonstop flights to 45 destinations coast-to-coast, and 160 international destinations are available from Milwaukee with just one connection. MKE is also served by Air Canada, Alaska, Allegiant, American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, United and Volaris. The complete list of nonstop cities can be found at www.flymke.com.

General Mitchell International Airport is owned by Milwaukee County and operated by the Department of Transportation, Airport Division, under the policy direction of the Milwaukee County Executive and the County Board of Supervisors. The airport is entirely funded by user fees; no property tax dollars are used for the airport’s capital improvements or for its day-to-day operation.

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Empowering People.
Strengthening Community.