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Contact: Jeff Lea
314-793-4240
jeff.lea@mspmac.org

MSP Airport Opens the Travel Confidently MSP Education Center

A former Delta Air Lines mock aircraft cabin installed inside the terminal will give travelers and aviation professionals essential pre-flight experiences and training opportunities



MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL –The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) today unveiled the Travel Confidently MSP Education Center at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). This one-of-a-kind facility features a mock aircraft cabin installed inside Terminal 1 to support airport and public safety training and serve airport programs that help build travel confidence through pre-flight experiences.

“This unique facility will be a hallmark for MSP’s programs that support equitable and inclusive travel,” said Brian Ryks, executive director and CEO of the MAC. “Thanks to a generous donation from Delta Air Lines, we can provide a life-like training environment without the use

of an actual aircraft, which will build confidence in air travel for more people in our community.”

The Travel Confidently MSP Education Center will serve multiple purposes, most notably enhancing the Navigating MSP Program, which provides flyers with sensory, physical, or cognitive disabilities, or those with a fear of flying, a place to practice boarding and gives service dogs the ability to become familiar with the surroundings of an aircraft cabin. It will also allow airport public safety professionals and airline support crews to further train in a realistic setting.

“We are always looking for ways to build travel equity,” said MAC Chair Rick King. “It’s easy to take air travel for granted, but for many it presents unique challenges and requires different resources. The Travel Confidently MSP Education Center is one more way we can provide resources to the community and lower the barriers to flying for as many people as possible.”

The new space features a 33-foot-long mock aircraft cabin that was previously used to train Delta’s in-flight teams in Atlanta, GA. The components of the former training cabin, and 42 seats from a retired Boeing 737, were shipped to MSP and reassembled in its new space, near gate C16. Airport Foundation MSP was another key partner with the MAC on the project.

“We’re grateful for our ongoing partnership with the MAC and Airport Foundation MSP, who have furthered Delta’s efforts to create a world that is more inclusive and accessible for all,” said Mary Loeffelholz, Delta Air Lines’ vice president of operations at MSP Airport. “Giving back to our community is deeply rooted in Delta’s beliefs and values, and through the work of our people, we are very much looking forward to the ways that this facility will impact the MSP community.”

The Arts@MSP program, a joint program of the MAC and the Airport Foundation MSP, facilitated a community project to enhance the visual experience of the new center. Local youth artists from Minneapolis-based Juxtaposition Arts—Ethan Nevalainen, Athena Ali, Greta Kotz and Taylan De Johnette—created the artwork on the outside of the aircraft and additional art throughout the center. Collectively titled “Equanimity,” the artwork creates a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere for users of the space.

Reservations for pre-flight experiences are coordinated through the [Navigating MSP program](#).

Additional images available upon request: jeff.lea@mspmact.org.

About the Metropolitan Airports Commission

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owns and operates one of the nation’s largest airport systems, including Minneapolis-St Paul International (MSP) and six general aviation airports. The MAC’s airports connect the region to the world and showcase Minnesota’s extraordinary culture to millions of passengers from around the globe who arrive or depart through MAC airports each year. Though a public corporation of the state of Minnesota,

the organization is not funded by income or property taxes. Instead, the MAC's operations are funded by rents and fees generated by users of its airports. For more information, visit www.metroairports.org.

About the Airport Foundation MSP

The Airport Foundation MSP dedicates itself to enhancing the experience and exceeding the expectations of travelers at MSP International Airport, as well as supporting the broader aviation community. The mission of the Arts@MSP program is to enhance the image of MSP Airport, enrich the public's experience and promote a sense of place through arts and culture. For more information, visit www.airportfoundation.org.