

For Immediate Release: October 2, 2015

Contact: Diane Gerace  
215.937.5402  
[diane.gerace@phl.org](mailto:diane.gerace@phl.org)

## Nearly 500 Turn Out for PHL Business Opportunity Forum

*Workshops on doing business at the Airport, networking and more highlight day-long event*

**PHILADELPHIA** – Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Secretary Leslie Richards was among the speakers who addressed nearly 500 attendees at the Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) annual Business Opportunity Forum today. The participants included representatives of large firms and small businesses, certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and non-certified DBEs interested in learning about opportunities available at the Airport. The event at the Airport Marriott Hotel, planned to kick off the City's Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week, was a day-long program of informative workshops and networking opportunities.

Attendees to the Forum learned how to identify and compete for consulting and professional services contracts; create effective strategies for construction projects; compete for concessions and commodities opportunities; and became knowledgeable about diversity certification requirements and responsibilities. A Business Exchange session connecting prime contractors and minority firms concluded the Forum in mid-afternoon.

The participants heard from Airport professionals with expertise in DBE compliance and certification, finance, professional services contracts, and engineering and construction; prime contractors and DBE sub-contractors, and representatives from various business sectors including the airlines, concessionaries, construction, as well as labor.

"Philadelphia International Airport is one of the region's largest employers and one of the most vital economic engines in Pennsylvania," said Mayor Michael A. Nutter. "This Forum plays an integral role in the Airport's approach to supporting the region's diverse business community. It's one-stop shopping where entrepreneurs of all types can tap into the many opportunities at PHL and become part of the Airport's vibrant business community."

In addition to Secretary Richards, the speakers included Airport CEO Mark Gale, Airport Chief Operating Officer Chellie Cameron, American Airlines Vice President of Philadelphia Hub Operations Cedric Rockamore, and Philadelphia Office of Economic Opportunity Executive Director Angela Dowd-Burton. Dawnaa St Louis, CEO of Next Up Now, an innovative consultancy, delivered an inspiring keynote address at the luncheon.

**More**

## 2/Forum

In addition, attendees had the opportunity to become familiar with the Airport's Job Portal website, [phljobportal.org](http://phljobportal.org). The site is a resource for both individuals seeking employment with the Division of Aviation, Airport concessions, airlines, car rental companies, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and other federal agencies at the Airport as well as employers needing to fill positions.

"The opportunities for businesses of all sizes at a major airport like ours are substantial and diverse," Gale said. "This Forum is ideal for businesses and individuals to realize the scope of these opportunities, learn how to participate and network. This event is an annual highlight on our calendars and we are pleased that it was scheduled to kick off the City's Minority Enterprise Development Week this year."



*Attendees to Philadelphia International Airport's Business Opportunity Forum had the opportunity to network and learn about opportunities at PHL.*

Philadelphia International Airport is owned and operated by the City of Philadelphia. The Airport is a self-sustaining entity that operates without the use of local tax dollars. It is one of the largest economic engines in Pennsylvania, generating an estimated \$14.4 billion in spending to the regional economy and accounting for more than 141,000 jobs.