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Nearly 500 Turn Out for PHL Business Opportunity Forum

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

PHILADELPHIA – Nearly 500 representatives of large firms and small businesses, certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and non-certified DBEs interested in learning about opportunities available at Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) attended the Airport’s annual Business Opportunity Forum on October 3. The event at the Airport Marriott Hotel, planned in conjunction with the City’s Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week, was a day-long program of informative workshops and valuable networking opportunities.

Attendees to the Forum learned how to identify and compete for professional services contracts and subcontracts at PHL as well as how to build successful teams to complete the work; received instructions on how to respond to Request for Proposals and Invitation for Bid requests; gained an understanding about the various types of opportunities available at PHL; 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.

Participants also received information about upcoming PHL contracting opportunities associated with the Capacity Enhancement Program as well as other construction, services, concessions and supply contracting opportunities at the Airport.

“Philadelphia International Airport is one of the region’s largest employers and one of the most robust economic engines in Pennsylvania,” said Mayor Michael A. Nutter. “This Forum enabled businesses big and small, especially historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs, to tap into the many business and contracting opportunities at the Airport; and clarified the process of doing business at PHL by participating in contracts whether as a prime or subcontractor.”

In addition, attendees had the opportunity to become familiar with the Airport’s recently launched Job Portal website, 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.

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Airport CEO Mark Gale was among several scheduled speakers, which also included Deputy Mayor Rina Cutler, City Council President Darrell L. Clarke, Airport CFO Chellie Cameron, and American Airlines Managing Director Rhett Workman. Vernice “Flygirl” Armour, the United States Marine Corps’ first African-American female combat pilot, delivered an inspiring keynote address at the luncheon.

“This was a one-of-kind opportunity for anyone interested in doing business at the Airport,” Gale said. “The Airport has many exciting opportunities for businesses of all sizes, and this forum provided not only information on upcoming projects and opportunities but valuable insight into what you need to know in order to participate in contracts as well as network connections.”

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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.