

## *Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport June 2021 Travelers Aid Activity Report*

<b>Desk</b>	<b>Terminal A</b>	<b>Info B</b>	<b>Info C</b>	<b>Bag N</b>	<b>Bag S</b>	<b>Mobile Guides</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>Customer Assists</b>	4,374	9,798	6,944	3,254	2,014	534	<b>26,918</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	244.5	347	336	156	100	37.5	<b>1,221</b>

*Please see a very special thank you as well as the biannual state-of-the-airport recap from Airport Manager **Mr. Paul Malandrino** at the end of this report.*

### **Program Updates**

Travelers Aid DCA currently has **88 active volunteers**; this is an 87% increase since February 2021. Thank you, Volunteers, for your commitment and loyalty.

### **Volunteer Spotlight**

**Larry Lee**, who has served fourteen years with our program, added a new assignment to his busy schedule. Larry is a full-time employee of the Patent and Trademark office. He recently volunteered for a detail with the Health and Human Services Department to help support their mission to care for young immigrants in our country. This work includes identifying and vetting the children's sponsors. After a week of training in Dallas Larry was deployed to Pomona, CA. He has recently returned from his tour of duty to resume his regular Fridays at the Information Desks.

We applaud him and thank Larry for his service.



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## Assistance Stories



Since Father's Day was this month, we want to highlight how volunteer **Hayden Bryan** (pictured left) celebrated and honored the day. He signed up for an extra shift since his late father absolutely loved "National" Airport ever since its opening in 1941. Hayden's presence here on Sunday was a tribute to his dad and a huge help for the 300 passengers he assisted that day!

An arriving passenger with a cart load of luggage came to the Bag South desk for help finding his rental car. He was exhausted from his travels that began in his home country of Africa and he still had a three-hour drive to his military assignment in Norfolk, VA. Volunteer **Chas Carron** provided detailed instructions, but the man seemed perplexed due to his fatigue. **Staff** was nearby and offered to ride with

him in the elevator and point out the walkway to garage A.

Volunteer **Charles Daris** took a call at the Info C desk from a man whose wife had left her cell phone, along with a credit and debit card, at a charging station in Terminal C. The man called Lost and Found and since they did not have the phone, he called Travelers Aid. The "find my phone" i-Phone app showed it was in Terminal C so **Staff** went out to the gate area. After a thorough search in both the North and Center piers, the phone was found.....and both credit cards were still there! Staff brought the items to Lost & Found so arrangements could be for their safe return.

A father and his 16-year-old daughter approached volunteer **Robin Richard** and stated that they were unable to get a gate pass from the airline his daughter was flying. The daughter has a lot of anxiety going through security checkpoints and waiting for flights. She said she is fine once she is onboard. Robin told the father that she would go with the daughter to the gate and get her an earlier boarding group. Robin even walked with her down the jet bridge. The father was grateful for the spur of the moment care and declared he would be contacting Travelers Aid in the future.

**Rich Mobley** headed out to the South pier to recover a purple backpack containing valuable documents for a passenger.

A woman left her ID at the American Airlines ticket counter which the police took to Lost & Found. **Sharyn Hennessy** took her to the office to retrieve it but in doing so the woman missed her flight. The volunteer helped her rebook her flight and the woman was very thankful for all the help.

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**Phyllis Talbert** helped a man at the desk who had lost his cell phone in the airport the previous evening. Since Lost & Found was closed she called the non-emergency number for the police. Dispatch agreed to send an officer to the Lost & Found office to meet the guest and to check on his lost item. The man circled back to the desk and gave Phyllis a double thumbs up to indicate he now happily had his phone back.

A woman stopped by the Info B desk on Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup> and spoke to volunteer **Tom Ortiz**. She asked that he please thank **Carol Nagel**, the morning volunteer at this desk, for the help she provided. Carol assisted the woman in retrieving her lost computer and this traveler was understandably very relieved and quite grateful.

**Staff** received a call in the Travelers Aid office from a local school who needed help for one of their special needs students who was released from the program and headed home. Staff said she was happy to help but asked that one of the school personnel be on hand as an additional aide. The twenty-four-year-old man has cerebral palsy and was traveling with a lot of medical equipment and a cooler filled with medications. Staff informed the TSO (Transportation Security Officer) about the medications which were very carefully screened. The student arrived safely home thanks to some helping hands along the way.

Volunteer **Lisa Goodfriend** returned to DCA after the pandemic absence and quickly adapted to her old stomping grounds. A young woman, whose mother works in the airport post-security in Terminal C, was frantic that her mother had reported to work with the car keys and had stranded her! Lisa went through security, found her mother, and brought back the keys to save the day.

*“If the GEM awards still exist, please nominate **Zulma Sejas** from United,”* states **Chas Carron**. She immediately responded when Chas paged for a Spanish-English translator. The guest who needed help had difficulty activating a SIM card for his cell phone. Ms. Sejas worked patiently with the man for about half an hour. Chas continues, *“This was definitely **Going the Extra Mile.**”*

**Kate Madrick** served a vital part in a recent meet & greet when JetBlue passenger, Louise, was met on a Saturday morning at the bag claim. She was in a wheelchair and had just received an epidural for pain. Kate helped her collect her baggage and get to the curb for her Uber ride. Louise writes, *“Kate was lovely and so very helpful.”*

Ben Crump, the lawyer who represented George Floyd, came to the Info B desk where volunteer **Greg Snyder** directed him to an airport concession where he could buy a phone charger. Several passengers recognized him and stopped to talk with him and asked to take selfies.

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**Sandy Hershey** (pictured right) and **Debra Wiley** received a phone call at Terminal C on June 24<sup>th</sup> from a woman needing assistance locating a relative. Marian Powell was looking for her uncle, Edward Kissane, a 90-year-old gentleman traveling alone without a phone. Mr. Kissane was booked on a delayed American Airlines flight that originated in Syracuse with a transfer here for his continued travel to Pittsburgh. Mr. Kissane's wife had contacted Ms. Powell and asked her to check on her husband's status. She was frantic with worry and wanted him to call home. Sandy and Debra went to Gate 41 and found Mr. Kissane both safe and sound. Debra used her cell phone to call his wife so he could personally reassure her that all was well. Sandy then contacted Ms. Powell to tell her that both Mr. and Mrs. Kissane had been in communication. The volunteers stated that, "Ms. Powell was *singing our praises* and was very grateful."



### In Memoriam



Volunteer **Robert Jordan** died on May 30, 2021. Bob was born in Syracuse, NY in 1943. He was graduated from Niagara University and later attended Cornell Law school. Bob was the Director of Automated Services and Development Staff at the Office of the Federal Register for 20 years. After his retirement he worked as a tax preparer for the past 25 years. Bob also served for 25 years as a regular Friday afternoon volunteer. He always went the extra mile in helping our passengers, often walking alongside people to the ticket counter and to the Metro station. Bob continued his gracious and caring assistance even as his own ability to walk became increasingly difficult. He was a loyal and dedicated team member who will be very much missed.

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June 2021

Dear Friends,

I hope you and your families are in good health and are coping well with the Pandemic.

Without a doubt, this has been the most challenging year for our airport in many, many years. I want to sincerely thank each one of you for the outstanding service you continue to provide to our customers.

The significantly increasing challenges resulting from Project Journey and the Pandemic have impacted every operational aspect of this airport.

Despite the above challenges, your dedication and willingness to help others continue to be recognized and appreciated. As I have said many times before, it is people who make a difference in any organization, and you and your colleagues are certainly making a difference here at our airport. USA Today ranked our airport number 9 in the top 10 of the best large airports in the country and monthly Customer Satisfaction ratings have steadily increased to a year-to-date rating of 4.0 (out of a maximum of 5.)

As you know, more people are returning to the skies again and we continue to see our passenger numbers increase here at our airport. Although we have not reached pre-pandemic levels yet, we're closing the gap as each month passes by. Looking back at 2019 levels, our passenger screenings were down by 73% in March of this year. By May we were down by 54% and we are down by 46% so far this month. We now reach 20,000 plus daily screenings each week and are projecting to be in the 25,000+ daily range when the July 4th holiday comes.

Construction of Project Journey is fast approaching the end. As you know, we opened the new concourse in April and are on track to open the new screening checkpoints this fall. More concessions are opening each week for those of us who like sea food, Legal Sea Food is now open! That's about it for now. I want to thank each one of you for all you have done for us and for our customers and I hope you and your families stay safe and enjoy a great summer. We all look forward to the day we can all be together again.

Sincerely,

Paul

