



2755 Hartland Road
Suite 200
Falls Church, VA 22043
www.TheArcofNova.org

News Release

Contact: Larry Rockwell
Phone: (703) 208-1119 ext. 114
Cell: (843) 368-4844
LRockwell@thearcofnova.org

The Arc of Northern Virginia, The Arc of Loudoun, Dulles International, and United Airlines to Host Wings For All®

Simulated experience introduces air travel to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

February 12, 2020, Fairfax, VA – The Arc of Northern Virginia has teamed with Dulles International Airport, United Airlines, The Arc of Loudoun, and airport partners to simulate the air travel experience for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The immersive rehearsal is intended to make the process of traveling through an airport less overwhelming for people with special needs.

More than 150 participants and family members are registered to attend the Wings for All® event on March 7th at Dulles International Airport. At the event, participants will learn best practices and tips for navigating the airport and air travel process. Participants will:

- check in at United ticket counters and learn about advance steps families can take at check-in to inform airlines and make accommodation requests,
- practice using the TSA Cares program for security screening assistance,
- proceed to a United gate via mobile lounge and board a real aircraft,
- buckle-up for a simulated flight aboard a United Boeing 777, and
- return to the terminal, pick up luggage in baggage claim and meet with airport and airline employees.

Through the Wings for All® program, Dulles International and its partners hope participating families will gain the experience and confidence needed to travel through the airport on a future trip. The Wings for All® program also gives airport, airline, TSA professionals and other personnel the opportunity to observe, interact and deliver their services in a structured learning environment.

Media are invited to cover the Wings for All® event at **Dulles International Airport** on **March 7, 2020**, where they will be able to follow the entire journey and document the experience of participating families. Media are encouraged to RSVP no later than 12:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6.

Details for Media Coverage:

- **WHAT:** Wings for All® airport and flight simulation experience for individuals with disabilities
- **WHEN:** Saturday, March 7, 2020 – participants check-in begins at 8:00 a.m., boarding begins at 9:30 a.m. and airport journey is expected to conclude by 10:45 a.m. A reception follows near the baggage claim area.
- **WHERE:** Washington Dulles International Airport, ticketing (upper) level. Park in [Terminal Parking](#) lot in front of Main Terminal. Advance RSVP is required. Contact Micah Lillard with the Airports Authority in advance for instructions. For security purposes, all media are required to [bring a government-issued photo I.D.](#)

- **WHO:** Participants and families from the National Capital Region and Northern Virginia; volunteers from [The Arc of Northern Virginia](#), [The Arc of Loudoun](#), [Transportation Security Administration](#), [MarketPlace Development](#), [Washington Dulles International Airport](#) and [United Airlines](#)

MEDIA RSVP REQUIRED: A media escort is required to cover event. Please provide the full name (as it appears on government-issued I.D.) and date of birth to PublicAffairs@mwa.com for all attending media and crew **no later than 12:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6**. For questions, call Micah Lillard at 703-417-8370.

About The Arc of Northern Virginia

The Arc of Northern Virginia was founded in 1962 and today represents and serves over 39,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD)--such as autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and rare chromosomal disorders--and their families in the cities and counties of Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church. [The Arc of Northern Virginia](#) is an organization that builds community opportunities for citizens with disabilities so that they can live "A Life Like Yours."

About The Arc of Loudoun

Founded in 1967, The Arc of Loudoun advocates for, educates, serves, and supports people with disabilities and their families. Through its five primary programs – Ability Fitness Center, A Life Like Yours (ALLY) Advocacy Center, Aurora Behavior Clinic, The Aurora School, and Open Door Learning Center preschool – The Arc of Loudoun strives to bring about a just, equitable world for people with disabilities. To learn more, visit thearcofloudoun.org.

About the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority was established in 1987 by the governments of Virginia and the District of Columbia to manage and operate Washington's Ronald Reagan National and Dulles International airports, which together serve more than 46 million passengers a year. The Airports Authority also operates and maintains the Dulles Airport Access Road and the Dulles Toll Road and manages construction of the Silver Line project. The Airports Authority is led by a 17- member board of directors appointed by the governors of Virginia, Maryland, the Mayor of Washington, D.C., and the president of the United States.

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