14700 Terminal Blvd. Suite 221, Clearwater, Florida 33762 727-453-7800 * Fax: 727-453-7846

www.Fly2PIE.com Follow us on



For Immediate Release November 30, 2011

Contact: Michele Routh Airport Public Relations Director 727-453-7879 cell: 727-430-6947

mrouth@pinellascounty.org

ALLEGIANT COMPLETES 5 YEARS OF SERVICE AT ST. PETERSBURG-CLEARWATER INT'L AIRPORT (PIE); RENOVATIONS POSITION ALLEGIANT FOR CONTINUED GROWTH

Allegiant began operations on November 16th, 2006 at St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport, introducing service to 12 destinations. After five years at PIE, Allegiant has almost doubled the number of cities served to 23, including Niagara Falls/Buffalo, NY (which begins twice weekly service on December 15th). PIE has experienced a 122% increase in Allegiant passengers from its first full year of operation (November 2006-October 2007 - 329,704 passengers) to its most recent (November 2010-October 2011- 732,874 passengers).

As a result of Allegiant's rapid growth at PIE, the airport has expanded its facilities to better serve the airline and the traveling public. In April 2011, a new airside operations facility opened to support aircraft maintenance and ground service operations. Additionally, Allegiant requested more space for its employee training, management offices, storage, and other airline related activities and leased from the airport a 5000 square foot free standing commercial building.

Prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, Allegiant relocated their ticketing and check-in operations to the newly renovated airport Ticketing B area. Their new ticketing area was coordinated with the completion of a new in-line checked baggage handling system operated by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The new system significantly improves the efficiency of screened checked passenger baggage from 125 to 450 bags an hour, accommodating Allegiant's future growth potential at PIE by expediting flight departure operations. The total project cost was \$1.2 million with 95% of the costs covered by a \$1.1 million in airport improvement federal stimulus funding from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 and an additional 5% was funded from a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Security grant.

Thayne Klingler, Manager of Airports at Allegiant, states, "Allegiant is pleased to celebrate the fifth anniversary of our partnership with St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport. We appreciate efforts by airport management to make fiscally responsible improvements to passenger facilities. This helps make it possible for Allegiant to continue offering affordable travel deals. Our relocation to the newly renovated ticketing area will provide a pleasant experience for our travelers and room for our service to continue expanding."

Customer service improvements also include the opening of First Class Concession's new Sam Adams Grille and Bar located on the 2nd floor of the terminal. The Sam Adams Grille and Bar is a full service sit down restaurant featuring specialty sandwiches, steaks, seafood, and Angus beef ½ lb. burgers.

Airport Director Noah Lagos adds, "It has been a wonderful partnership with Allegiant over the last 5 years. Their growth at PIE has been phenomenal especially at a time when other airlines are shrinking capacity with reductions in flights at airports across the nation. It is evident that Allegiant has made a major commitment to serve and grow our market in the years to come. We are fortunate to have great airlines and businesses to work with and most importantly an ever increasing number of loyal passengers who appreciate the ease and convenience of using our airport."