

Contact: Tara Hernandez, Marketing & Communications Director
(616) 233-6053 – office, or thernandez@grr.org

GFIA Honored for Achievements in Snow & Ice Control



Grand Rapids, Mich. – This winter season was unusually brutal with record low temperatures along with heavy snow and ice, and the Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is being recognized for outstanding efforts in battling the elements.

GFIA has been recognized as the 2018-2019 Balchen/Post Award Honorable Mention recipient for “Outstanding Achievement in Airport Snow & Ice Control.” The International Aviation Snow Symposium presents the annual award, which is given to three categories of commercial airports: Large, Medium and Small, for their dedicated efforts in maintaining airports in safe and operational status during the 2018-19 winter season.

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport was awarded in the “Small” category which is classified by less than 100,000 scheduled operations (take-offs and landings) annually.

GFIA saw 81.3 inches of snow this season, dating from Fall 2018 to the present. In an average winter, GFIA removes 83,700,000 cubic feet of snow from the airfield - enough to fill 20,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools!



“This winter was challenging and demanding for our staff, but our communications, operations, and field maintenance teams worked collectively with our airline and FAA partners to ensure safe operations of our airfield,” said GFIA Interim President & CEO Brian Picardat. “The Balchen/Post Award is a tremendous achievement for our staff, and I cannot say enough about our hard working crews who put in countless hours maintaining the snow and ice. We are very proud to be recognized as one of the best among our peers.”

Throughout the winter season, airport operations staff is responsible for monitoring and reporting airfield conditions as well as coordinating snow and ice control activities with airfield maintenance, air traffic control, communications, and aeronautical users of the airport. Airport field maintenance staff is responsible for physically clearing snow and ice from the airport’s 1.5 million square yards of pavement.

This is the 43rd consecutive year that the International Snow Symposium Awards have been presented. All categories of airports - commercial, general aviation, and military – compete for these awards.

For interviews or more information, please contact Tara Hernandez.

###

About GFIA

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is the second busiest airport in Michigan. The Airport served over 3.26 million passengers in 2018 and over 8,000 travelers pass through GFIA each day. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport offers nonstop service to 29 major market destinations with more than 120 daily nonstop flights. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is managed and operated by the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority. GFIA generates over \$3.1 billion in annual economic output throughout West Michigan, and employs over 2,000 people. For more information on GFIA visit: www.flyford.org or follow the airport on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter: @FlyGRFord