

ATLANTA AIRPORT CELEBRATES 100 MILLIONTH PASSENGER IN ONE YEAR

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The Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, which serves more passengers than any other airport in the world, has reached 100 million passengers since Jan. 1, marking a milestone no other airport has ever reached, officials said.

When anointed passenger Larry Kendrick flew in from Gulfport, Mississippi, on Sunday - one of the busiest travel days of the year - he was greeted with several prizes: two round-trip tickets to anywhere, \$500, and a Nissan Altima, presumably to go to places the planes will not fly.

"I'm happy I could be part of it," said the 35-year-old Kendrick in a statement released by the airport on Monday.

Kendrick took his winning trip aboard Delta Airlines Flight 1256. Hartsfield-Jackson is Delta's hub. Kendrick was identified through a series of accounting estimates and algorithms, airport officials said.

Airport officials and city leaders, who were present at the fanfare and water cannon salute for Kendrick when he landed, said it was the first time an airport had recorded 100 million passengers in a single year.

Hartsfield-Jackson has held the title of the world's busiest airport in terms of passengers for more than 15 years and served more than 96 million passengers in 2014, according to Airports Council International.

Airports in Los Angeles, Chicago and Dallas-Fort Worth were the only other American airports to make the top-10 list last year on passenger count, according to the council.

"Today, we are making aviation history," Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed told the crowd, according to the statement.

Kendrick is an industrial construction worker who was traveling to Iowa on business.

Asked how he was going to use his free tickets, Kendrick said he would almost definitely travel abroad.

"I've seen a lot of the United States, so Australia is definitely in the mix," he said. "Dubai does sound pretty good, too. I don't know - it's up in the air."

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