

American Celebrates 40 Years of Growth in the Queen City

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FORT WORTH, Texas — Doors to the new terminal at Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) opened April 25, 1982. In total, more than 50,000 guests showed up to tour the new terminal building and celebrate Piedmont's newly established hub. The airport expansion ushered in a new era of growth for the region and American Airlines legacy carrier, Piedmont Airlines. Since then, American's CLT hub has become the second largest across its global network and an economic engine for the Carolinas.

"From Piedmont Airlines to USAir, to US Airways and to American Airlines today, the collective commitment to the CLT hub has been unwavering," said Haley Gentry, Director of Aviation for Charlotte Douglas International Airport. "Over the past 40 years, our partnership has endured mergers, bankruptcies, expansions, renovations, recessions and a global pandemic — and, with each, we've come out stronger."

In celebration of the milestone anniversary today, U.S. Senator Thom Tillis, U.S. Representatives Alma Adams and Dan Bishop, City of Charlotte Mayor Pro Tem Julie Eiselt and other officials joined American leaders and team members to reflect on the hub's rich 40-year history and its continued economic impact on the region. Festivities included a team member parade of heritage Piedmont, US Airways and American uniforms and a proclamation from the City of Charlotte recognizing American's 40th anniversary at CLT.

As part of today's anniversary celebration, CLT-based team members Charles Kirk, Jr. and Patrick Wegmiller showcased Piedmont Airlines Ramp Service uniforms from 1986.

CLT team members Erica Baker, wearing a vintage 1982 Piedmont Airlines flight attendant uniform, and Andrea Lattuca,

wearing an American Airlines flight attendant uniform from the late 1980s, pose for photos following the event.

American Airlines Vice President of CLT Hub Operations Ralph Lopez Massas is joined on stage by Sen. Thom Tillis, Reps. Alma Adams and Dan Bishop, Mayor Pro Tem Julie Eiselt and CLT Aviation Director Haley Gentry, as well as members of Charlotte City Council and the North Carolina General Assembly.

FOUR DECADES OF GROWTH

American's legacy of service in Charlotte traces back to Piedmont Airlines, a regional airline founded in North Carolina that served markets across the Southeast. Piedmont launched commercial operations from Charlotte Regional Airport in 1948, but it wasn't until deregulation in the late-1970s that its rapid expansion truly began.

In 1979, to better service Piedmont Airlines and the region's growing aviation market, Charlotte city leaders broke ground on a new 325,000-square-foot terminal, located across the airfield from the airport's original facilities. When it opened in 1982, Piedmont's newly established hub — with 86 daily flights to 34 domestic destinations — provided a significant upgrade for the more than 100,000 customers that passed through the airport monthly and the airline's 410 local team members.

By 1984, monthly customer traffic had nearly tripled, with Piedmont accounting for 70% of all airport traffic. To accommodate the rapid influx of customers, officials embarked on numerous expansion projects that would shape CLT into the airline's largest and most consequential hub. In the decades since, CLT has continued to grow under the USAir, US Airways and American brands — climbing to become the sixth-busiest global airport by customer traffic in 2021.

AN ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR THE CAROLINAS

Today, the CLT hub plays a critical role in American's global network, connecting more than 40 million customers annually on more than 650 daily flights to nearly 170 destinations across the U.S., Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

"As Charlotte's hometown airline, American is thankful for the strong partnerships and steadfast support that have enabled four decades of continuous growth at our CLT hub," said Ralph Lopez Massas, Vice President of CLT Hub Operations for American Airlines. "We recognize our role as an economic catalyst for the region and are committed to build on our legacy of service to support the long-term vitality of the region."

Its strength, size and impact are felt across the Carolinas, producing a total annual impact of \$23 billion while

supporting nearly a quarter-million jobs. At CLT, American accounts for approximately 90% of total traffic. As the only airline to serve every commercial airport in the Carolinas, American offers customers throughout the region unrivaled convenience and connectivity to the people, places and moments that matter most.

Even through the pandemic, the CLT hub's 13,000 team members helped keep the regional economy moving — maintaining the highest load factor percentage of any airline hub in the United States while becoming the first American hub to return to growth.

POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE

As demand for air travel continues to grow, American and the City of Charlotte are working together to sustain the success of the last 40 years, positioning the airport for the future.

Construction is underway on a number of projects from expanded ticket counters, baggage claim areas and security checkpoints to added gates and taxiways that enhance overall capacity and improve operational efficiencies. Additionally, American continues to recruit and hire thousands of new pilots, flight attendants, mechanics and frontline team members to meet current and future operational needs.

Collectively, these strategic investments in people, product and infrastructure represent American's steadfast commitment to the Charlotte region and the continued growth of its CLT hub.

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