



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

March 1, 2022

2021- 2022 Board Members

President Carol Hardison
Pres Elect William Bradley
Past Pres Jerry Coughter
Secretary Colleen Brannan
Treasurer Edwin Peacock
Exec Sec Christine Cipriano

Directors 2021-2022

Patrick Baker
Bill Bartee
Suzanne Bledsoe
Kim McMillan
Rex Reynolds
Ranjay Sarda
John zumBrunnen

Directors 2021-2023

Ann Clark
Ellison Clary
Jesse Hite
Warren Kean
Vanessa Stolen

Membership Laura Little

Foundation Joe Morris

Programs Elly Clary



Haley Gentry, Aviation Director, Charlotte-Douglas International Airport (CDIA)

By Bill Bartee

After being introduced to Charlotte Rotary, Haley Gentry thanked and recognized **Stuart Hair, Ed Driggs** and representatives in attendance from American and Lufthansa Airlines. Their work, support and partnership with Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CDIA) has helped the airport exceed other airports in our nation.

Gentry recalled being an intern for the airport and preparing then CDIA director, Jerry Orr, for one of his presentations to Charlotte Rotary and sitting at "The Table" with many of our club's notable members.

She then shared a brief update regarding CDIA as the 6th busiest airport in the country and it has continued to maintain a large volume of traffic with 43-million travelers in 2021 compared to 50 million during pre-pandemic years.

What has helped maintain the airport has been the strength of its hub status and focus on its priorities: 1) Sustain airport operations; 2) Protect employees; 3) Commitment to investors; and 4) Support CLT business partners. Plus, building confidence in the travel experience, especially by keeping it clean.

The airport went from 50% leisure travel, 50% business travel to 80% leisure, 20% business when the pandemic hit. This is slowly returning to a more normal percentage while the airport institutes ongoing initiatives including Pre-Pay parking which helps maximize efficiencies and planning for parking and the CLT Airport app that helps with online bookings, flight status and available airport amenities.

Construction includes The Plaza to improve food concessions and public circulation at a cost of \$36 million and the expansion of the busiest concourse on the property, Concourse E, at \$30.6 million.

Airfield improvements in Charlotte means more pavement and \$1 billion in improving and adding taxiways and a 4th parallel runway, respectively, as well focusing on usable areas that complement the mission and cause of the Charlotte airport have continued to grow in importance. This includes a runway able to handle direct-to-Asia flights, although those remain a lower priority due to current demand.

Gentry spoke to the multimodal ground improvements for passengers, community involvement and increasing the financial independence of the airport as areas of importance for CDIA. The organization operates long-term leases with eight carriers that help with substantial revenue and profit and have 689 full-time CDIA employees and 60 part-time that help manage the airport.

In summation, Gentry's presentation to Charlotte Rotary gave great insight into how a strong strategic plan, good partnerships and diversity in investments can lead to success in the good times and in the challenging times.

*A recording of the program is available here: <https://vimeo.com/683575022>

Ms. Gentry's introduction begins at 19:15 minutes.