

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 7, 2017

Contact: Tara Hernandez, Marketing and Communications Director
O: (616) 233-6053 | thernandez@grr.org

Over 1,200 Participate in Airport Runway 5K



GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Over 1,200 runners and walkers laced up their sneakers for a behind-the-scenes 5K on one of the runways at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA).

The Runway 5K is the first of its kind on airport grounds in over a decade. The last Runway 5K was for the Airport's 40th Anniversary in 2003. The race began near the cargo facilities, continuing under a runway tunnel, looping around by the airport fire station, and wrapped around on Runway 8L/26R – GFIA's general aviation runway. The Airport's two other commercial aviation runways were operational, giving participants a chance to soak in an up-close-and-personal sight.

"This was a tremendous opportunity for runners, walkers, and families who wanted to experience a fun event on one of our runways that is normally only being used for aircraft," said GFIA President & CEO Jim Gill. "It was exciting to see West Michigan come out and experience our facility like never before, plus support a wonderful charity at the same time."



GFIA selected Make-A-Wish Michigan as its charity of choice to donate the race proceeds.

"We're delighted that the Gerald R. Ford International Airport is hosting an event to benefit Make-A-Wish Michigan." said Karen Davis, president & CEO of Make-A-Wish Michigan. "It's through the generous support of our Michigan community, like our friends at GFIA, that we are able to grant life-changing wishes to Michigan children and bring hope, strength and joy at a time when they need it most."

"Make-A-Wish Michigan does tremendous work in our community, and we are thrilled to be able to donate proceeds from our Runway 5K to this organization," said Gill. "We see Make-A-Wish kids in our airport on a regular basis, and although we wish that was less frequent; we are happy to help grant more wishes in West Michigan through this donation."

For more information or interviews, please contact Tara Hernandez.



The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is the second busiest airport in Michigan. The airport served over 2.6 million passengers in 2016 and over 7,000 travelers pass through GFIA each day. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport offers nonstop service to 24 major market destinations with more than 120 daily nonstop flights, and the 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 1,500 people. For more information on GFIA visit: www.flyford.org or follow the airport on Twitter: @FlyGRFord



Make-A-Wish® Michigan grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. Since 1984, Make-A-Wish Michigan has granted more than 8,500 wishes. This year, the organization expects to grant wishes to more than 450 Michigan children. Based in Brighton, Mich., with an office in Grand Rapids, Make-A-Wish Michigan is funded through community support. 80 percent of each dollar spent benefits the Michigan wish-granting program. Visit www.michigan.wish.org to learn more.