



Contact:

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Wings for All® lands at Norfolk International Airport

Norfolk, VA - On April 6th, [VersAbility Resources](#) and [The Arc of the United States](#) will host a [Wings for All®](#) event at the Norfolk International Airport (ORF). This event is being held in partnership with American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines, HMS Host, Hudson Group and the [Transportation Security Administration](#) (TSA). Originated by the Charles River Center, a local chapter of The Arc in Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts Port Authority, Wings for All is an airport “rehearsal” program created to alleviate some of the stress that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families experience when traveling by air.

During the event, participants will check in to receive their boarding passes, pass through the TSA security checkpoint, wait in the boarding area and board the aircraft. The program will feature a presentation on the aircraft’s features, in-flight safety protocols and take-off procedures. Wings for All also gives airport, airline, TSA professionals and other personnel the opportunity to observe, interact and deliver their services in a structured, learning environment.

This event is open to all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the Norfolk area and beyond who seek a safe but realistic experience of travelling through a busy airport. More than 60 participants from the region are expected to attend the event.

The Norfolk Airport Authority and the staff here at Norfolk International Airport are excited to be a part of the Wings for All® program,” said Robert Bowen, Executive Director of Norfolk Airport Authority. “Inspired by the goal of being inclusive and helping our travelers overcome barriers, Airport Authority staff, the airlines and the TSA have volunteered their time to make this event a success.”

"We are excited to bring the Wings for All® program to Norfolk. For parents of children with autism spectrum disorders and other intellectual and developmental disabilities, everyday tasks can sometimes prove to be far more difficult for their child. Air travel can prove particularly challenging between clearing security, the overwhelming noises, and harsh lights. This program will not only continue to alleviate the stress children and their parents may feel, but further help educate airport and airline professionals about how best to serve children with autism or other intellectual and developmental disabilities in the future," said Peter Berns, CEO of The Arc.

MEDIA RSVP REQUIRED: Provide full name (as it appears on government-issued I.D.) and date of birth to Steven Sterling at ssterling@norfolkairport.com no later than 4:00PM April 5, 2019. Media is required to bring government issued I.D. and to follow [TSA guidelines](#) for other items, as participants will be clearing security to cover this event. The start time for the event is 8:00AM.

The Arc - The Arc advocates for and serves people with I/DD, including Down syndrome, autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy and other diagnoses. The Arc has a network of more than 650 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes and without regard to diagnosis.

Editor's Note: The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.

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