



# News Release

## **Detroit Metropolitan Airport launches SOAR, program for small business operators**

**DETROIT (Feb. 6, 2024)** – Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW), Michigan's gateway to the world, is committed to helping small businesses reach a global audience. Starting February 13, DTW will launch “**S**mall Business **O**perators **A**rriving **R**eady” (SOAR). This program will create access and opportunity for business owners to operate their specialty retail concept in the Warren Cleage Evans Terminal. Through SOAR, small business operators can showcase their products to thousands of domestic and international travelers every day.

“Small businesses are at the heart of Michigan's economy,” said Wayne County Airport Authority CEO Chad Newton. “Considering DTW’s multi-billion-dollar economic impact each year, we are in a prime position to empower entrepreneurs as they take their small businesses to even higher heights. SOAR will also expand our concessions program by giving DTW customers more specialty retail options in the Evans Terminal.”

The First Lady of Wayne County, Renata C. Evans, conceived the idea of a small business program at DTW several years ago. A former small business owner herself, Mrs. Evans understood the importance of investing in training for entrepreneurs and creating opportunities for them to grow. The Airport Authority is committed to helping small business owners learn how to operate in an airport environment, ensuring they will be ready to thrive on their own in an airport concessions program.

“WCAA is grateful to Mrs. Evans for bringing us the concept and for her input developing the program,” Newton said. “SOAR is one more way DTW is investing in our local communities and our state.”

To learn more about SOAR, interested business owners are invited to attend the SOAR Outreach Event on **Tuesday, February 13**. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. During the event, Airport Authority staff will provide an overview of SOAR and discuss the minimum qualifications for the program. Attendees are asked to RSVP at <https://SOAROutreach.rsvpify.com> by February 9.

After the outreach event, the Airport Authority will host an informational workshop on **Monday, February 19**. Participants will learn about the Request for Proposals (RFP) process and how to be a successful business operator at DTW. Workshop registration information will be available on DTW’s website, [metroairport.com](http://metroairport.com), following the outreach.

Both the outreach event and the informational workshop will be held at the WCCCD Ted Scott Campus, 9555 Haggerty Road, Belleville, MI 48111.

***Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW)** welcomed more than 28 million passengers in 2022. As one of the world's leading air transportation hubs, DTW offers service from 17 scheduled passenger airlines. Michigan's largest airport offers approximately 800 flights per day to and from more than 125 nonstop destinations on three continents. With two award-winning passenger terminals, six jet runways, and an onsite AAA Four-Diamond Westin Hotel, DTW is among the world's most efficient, customer friendly and operationally capable airports in North America. Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport earned Airports Council International's 2020 and 2022 Airport Service Quality Award for Best Airport by Size and Region (25 to 40 million passengers per year in North America). [DTW also ranked #1 in Customer Satisfaction among Mega Airports](#) in the J.D. Power 2023 North America Airport Satisfaction Study and scored highest among the following study factors: Security Check, Food/Beverage and Retail Services, and Terminal Facilities. DTW is operated by the **Wayne County Airport Authority**, which also operates nearby **Willow Run Airport** – an important corporate, cargo and general aviation facility. **The Airport Authority is entirely self-sustaining and does not receive tax dollars to support airport operations.** Visit [www.metroairport.com](http://www.metroairport.com) for more information.*

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