

October 7, 2008



Southwest Airlines' Gary Kelly Named Texas Public Schools 'Friend of the Year'

A reception honoring Mr. Kelly is scheduled for November 13th at the Frontiers of Flight Museum, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

DALLAS, Oct. 7 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Gary Kelly, Chairman of the Board, President, & Chief Executive Officer, exemplifies a corporate leader who personally and professionally supports public education in Texas. For this, the Friends of Texas Public Schools is honoring him as its 4th Annual Texas Public Schools Friend of the Year.

"We are proud to recognize Mr. Kelly's legacy of commitment to, and support of, public education in Texas. His efforts represent the positive energy we believe is so desperately needed in our public schools," said Scott Milder, President and CEO of Friends of Texas Public Schools.

Mr. Kelly enthusiastically accepted the honor and invitation to attend a reception that will celebrate his contributions to public education, as well as the collective achievements of Texas public school educators and students. The reception is scheduled for Thursday, November 13th, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Frontiers of Flight Museum in Dallas. For more details, table sponsorship information or ticket sales please contact Brandie Cleaver at brandie@fotps.org.

"As a product of Texas public schools, I am honored to be recognized by an organization devoted to celebrating the good things that are happening in public education," Mr. Kelly said. "This is also a tribute to the People of Southwest Airlines who volunteer their time and energy to making a positive difference in children's lives."

The Friend of the Year Award was established to honor those rare individuals in the private sector who clearly see beyond the sensational headlines, and often negative politics, and understand that the success of Texas public education is everyone's business. "Like past honorees Tom Frost of Frost Bank, Charles Butt of H-E-B, and Michael Boone of Haynes & Boone, Mr. Kelly recognizes that true motivation for students and educators lies not with heavy handed and harsh criticism, but rather in hope, optimism and encouragement," says Mr. Milder.

Throughout his life Mr. Kelly has exhibited a strong commitment to public education. In addition to supporting employee volunteer efforts and numerous educational organizations, he is an advocate for the Adopt-A-Pilot program, sponsored by Southwest Airlines. Each spring, more than 20,000 fifth grade students participate in this mentoring program that teaches them to set and reach goals. His wife, Carol, is a former public school teacher, and his daughter, Elizabeth, is a fourth grade teacher in Plano.

The mission of Friends of Texas Public Schools is to educate Texans about the strengths and achievements of Texas public schools. To make a donation or for more information, visit <http://www.fotps.org>.

After 37 years of service, Southwest Airlines, the nation's leading low-fare carrier, continues to stand above other airlines -- offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines is the most productive airline in the sky and offers Customers a comfortable traveling experience with all premium leather seats and plenty of legroom. Southwest recently updated its gate areas and improved its boarding procedure to make flying Southwest Airlines even more convenient and simple. Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 64 cities in 32 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,400 flights a day and has more than 34,000 Employees systemwide.

SOURCE Southwest Airlines