

July 9, 2021

ACI North America
1615 L Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036

RE: Recommendation Letter for the 2021 Heroes Award (Concessions) - Crystal Channel

Dear ACI 2021 Awards Panel:

First class customer service is at the very core of what we strive for every day at Paradies Lagardère. It has been our mission, our purpose, and a defining symbol of our organization for 60 years. More than operating retail stores and restaurants, we're here to make the travel experience memorable, enjoyable, and as stress-free as possible for passengers. For some, the job goes beyond the cash wrap or the hostess stand – beyond the friendly hello. For some, like **Crystal Channel**, our retail Zone Manager at Portland International Airport (PDX), making sure our travelers have everything they need is more than a duty, it's just who she is.

Just before the Thanksgiving holiday last year, Crystal was working in our pre-security store, The Oregon Market, when she noticed a passenger standing just outside the store alone and crying. Concerned, Crystal approached her to see if she could assist. The woman explained that her daughter had just dropped her off to catch a flight and had realized she left her handbag in her daughter's car. Without her cell phone, wallet, plane ticket – everything – her panic was visible. Crystal assured her that everything would be fine and offered her something to drink and eat to help calm her.

Crystal offered to call the passenger's daughter, but the woman didn't know her daughter's new number by heart. Ever resourceful, Crystal asked her for her daughter's name to look her up on Facebook, but she couldn't find her. Crystal then remembered the passenger mentioned having a son as well and asked for his name. This time they were successful, and through the son they were able to get in touch with the daughter. Crystal continued to reassure the passenger she would make her flight, but also offered to personally drive her home in the event the customer was unable to reconnect with her family. Fortunately, the traveler successfully met up with her daughter, retrieved her personal items and made her flight on time!

When the passenger returned from her trip, she stopped by The Oregon Market to see Crystal and thank her for her kindness that day. Although a simple verbal appreciation would have been more than enough, this customer wanted to express her gratitude with a gesture equivalent to the level service she received from Crystal. As a result, she presented Crystal with The Red Plate, a tradition of early American families used to praise a job well done and simply say, "you are special today."

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We're so proud of the way Crystal saw a passenger in need and exceeded expectations for service, kindness, and care. Crystal lives and breathes customer service excellence, which goes well beyond the boundaries of our airport stores and restaurants and strives to positively impact the lives of passengers every day. We have shared this story and praised Crystal within our own organization but believe she has earned – and deserves - a moment in a bigger spotlight! Thank you.

Sincerely,



Nikki Harland
President, Retail Division

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Main Office: 2849 Paces Ferry Road • Overlook I, 4th Floor • Atlanta, Georgia 30339 • T 404-344-7905
Toronto Office: 370 King Street West, 6th Floor • □Toronto, Ontario M5V 1J9 • T 416-863-6400