



TAMPA BAY CVB HONORS LOUIS MILLER WITH “GONZMART FAMILY AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR” AWARD

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Tampa, FL – At its Annual Tourism Luncheon today, the Tampa Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) honored Louis Miller with its “Gonzmart Family Ambassador of the Year” Award.

Miller has served as executive director of the Tampa International Airport (TIA) since July of 1996. As Executive Director he is the Chief Executive Officer for TIA, and three general aviation airports – Peter O. Knight, Plant City and Vandenberg Airports.

Miller is active in the community serving on the boards of the Tampa Bay CVB, Tampa Bay Partnership, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the Policy Committee of the Committee of One Hundred and past President of the Westshore Alliance. He also serves as Treasurer of Airports Council International, an international organization of airport operators.

With today’s honor, Miller adds to his list of accolades including the Clearwater Chamber of Commerce Tourism Person of the Year Award, American Society for Public Administration Outstanding Public Administrator Award, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council’s Herman W. Goldner Award for Regional Leadership, the Spirit Award from Hillsborough County Affirmative Action Council, the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners Ellsworth G. Simmons Good Government Award, the Southwest Airlines Good Neighbor Award and many others.

The Gonzmart Family “Ambassador of the Year” award was created in 1994 to honor those in the Tampa Bay area who have contributed greatly to the community at large, and to the success of the hospitality industry in Tampa and Hillsborough County. The award is named after the founding family of the Columbia Restaurant, an Ybor City landmark that has been operating since 1905. The luncheon was part of the 24th Annual National Tourism Week celebration, May 12-20.

“Louis is well-respected in the tourism industry across the nation and is considered one of the best in his field,” said Paul Catoe, president & CEO of the Tampa Bay CVB. “He takes on leadership roles throughout our community because he truly cares about Tampa Bay and its organizations and people. He’s the perfect ambassador for our industry and Hillsborough County.”

With this award, Miller joins a long list of well-known community leaders. Past recipients of the Ambassador of the Year Award are Lou Plasencia, president and CEO for the Plasencia Group, Inc., 2006; Charlie Cumpstone, executive vice president of the Shrine of North America, 2005; Monsignor Laurence Higgins, St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 2004; Dick Greco, mayor of Tampa, 2003; Adela Hernandez Gonzmart, Columbia Restaurant, 2002; Robert R. Sharp, AAA Auto Club South, 2001; Thom Stork, Busch Entertainment Corporation, 2000; Leonard Levy, Hillsboro Printing Company, 1999; Chuck Smith, Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla, 1998; George Steinbrenner, New York Yankees,

1997; George Bean, Tampa International Airport, 1996; Tom McEwen, *The Tampa Tribune* and Shirley Ryals, SunTrust Bank, 1995; Jim Howard, Tampa Electric Company, Paul Griffith, University of South Florida and John Richmond, University of South Florida, 1994.

For more information, log on to www.VisitTampaBay.com; or contact Travis Claytor, communications manager for the Tampa Bay CVB, at 813-342-4052 or tclaytor@VisitTampaBay.com.

**The Tampa Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau is an independent, non-profit membership organization created to attract and serve visitors to Tampa Bay. The Tampa Bay CVB is funded, in part, by the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners/Tourist Development Council.
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