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For more information:

Kathy Kenne, Executive Director, Mississippi Airports Association, kathy@telloscreative.com, 877.397.3929

Mel Pomfrey, Director of Operations, Tupelo Regional Airport, m.pomfrey@flytupelo.com, 662-841-6570

Pomfrey Named Airports Association Professional of the Year

Jackson, Miss.—At its recent annual conference, the Mississippi Airports Association (MAA) named Mel Pomfrey its Professional of the Year. Pomfrey joined Tupelo Regional Airport in 2017 as Director of Operations.

Nominations for the award come from the membership at large. The candidates are evaluated based on their leadership and contribution to the betterment of aviation in Mississippi and their communities.

“I was pleased to present this award to Mel,” states MAA President Sam Washington. “In an impressively short time, he has made tremendous advancements in security and compliance at Tupelo, and that has had a real impact on air service in northeast Mississippi.”

As Director of Operations, Pomfrey is responsible for the safety and security of the airport. He oversees daily inspections, airfield and facility maintenance and various other aspects of public safety. During his tenure he has coordinated staff training and implemented procedures such as the App 139 Daily Inspection program, resulting not only in accurate and timely inspections and maintenance but also in the ability to track trends and itemize costs and labor.

“I’m proud to have nominated Mel as MAA Professional of the Year and proud to be associated with him,” says Cliff Nash, Executive Director at Tupelo Regional Airport. “His background in aviation safety, law enforcement and fire protection, combined with his aptitude for leadership and team building, have made him the right man for the job. What he has accomplished here benefits travelers and commercial interests in our part of the state. Furthermore, his ‘can-do, get-it-done’ attitude inspires me and our entire staff.”



Mel Pomfrey (third from left) receives the 2019 MAA Professional of the Year award. With him are (from left) Tupelo Regional Airport Director Cliff Nash, MAA Vice President Carol Snapp of Pascagoula's Trent Lott International Airport and MAA President Sam Washington of Greenville Mid-Delta Airport.

Pomfrey came to Tupelo from the University of Mississippi, where he served as a police officer. Previously, he was a fire captain, EMT and paramedic in the greater Cincinnati area. His educational background includes the study of crisis/emergency/disaster management at the University of Cincinnati and criminal justice/law enforcement administration at the University of Mississippi.

Nash requested the input of Taiya Carter, Airport Certification Safety Inspector for the Federal Aviation Administration, to help substantiate his nomination of Pomfrey.

In her recommendation, she wrote, “In each passing inspection season, I could see the changes in the airport in their training programs, the airport security programs, and most importantly, in the overall safety posture of the airport. In every area of the inspection checklist I completed, I could clearly see Mel’s role in the processes and programs. Mel is an action man and does not accept the bare minimum as his standards.”

The Mississippi Airports Association is a consortium of individuals and organizations interested in enhancing aviation in Mississippi. Its purpose is to promote aviation and airport interests, to provide a medium for discussion by its members, to promote proper legislation for aviation and airports and to advise and give consultation to its members when requested. Members include those involved in airport management as well as consultants, business people and representatives from government aviation agencies. For more information, visit www.msairportsassociation.com.

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