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Young Imaginations Take Flight Inside New Children's Playspace at Reagan National Airport

WASHINGTON – For families setting off for adventures from the D.C. region, the fun starts at Reagan National Airport, where a new children's playspace will pique pre-flight imagination. National Children's Museum—a learn-through-play institution in downtown Washington, D.C., that sparks curiosity through science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) exhibits and programs—has partnered with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and The Boeing Company to open Curiosity Runway, a children's playspace inside of Reagan National Airport.



Photo: Crystal Bowyer, president and CEO of National Children's Museum; her son Preston; Jack Potter, president and CEO of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority; and Ziad "Z" Ojakli, executive vice president of Government Operations at The Boeing Company, cut the inaugural ribbon Wednesday at Reagan National Airport.

Located just after the airport's North Security Checkpoint between the C and D Gates, Curiosity Runway will provide families with a dedicated, comfortable area where young children can safely play, learn, and explore. Caregivers will have access to seating and charging stations along the exterior of the playspace.

"As more families visit our airports, we need to make sure we're making their experience a good one. That's why we're delighted to have a new playspace dedicated just for them at Reagan National Airport. Curiosity Runway gives children a place to play, which could also lead to more comfortable travel experiences for all passengers," said Jack Potter, president and CEO of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

As an institution dedicated to playful STEAM experiences, National Children's Museum designed Curiosity Runway to encourage open-ended, imaginative play based on STEAM principles like flight and movement. Experiences include:

- **Paper Airplane Climber:** Children will use multi-level platforms to climb to new heights in a whimsical structure modeled after a paper airplane. Along the way, imaginative play elements—like a pint-sized cockpit—help young travelers tap into their creative potential.
- **Jetsetter Slide:** After reaching the top of the Paper Airplane Climber, explorers will start their descent via the twisty Jetsetter Slide for a thrilling ride back to Earth.
- **Cruising Altitude Cloud Crawler:** Curiosity Runway's youngest visitors will crawl and toddle through an active, cloud-inspired play structure that encourages gross motor skill building. Multicolored windows add an additional layer of sensory exploration.
- **"I Spy" Observation Deck:** Future STEAM innovators will develop a deeper understanding of planes at the Observation Deck, where signage will prompt them to search the tarmac for airport equipment and planes, including the Boeing 737 MAX.

"Curiosity Runway is an extension of the wonder found inside National Children's Museum, and we're thrilled to share the joy of play-based, STEAM learning with families traveling to and from our D.C. home," said Crystal R. Bowyer, president and CEO of National Children's Museum. "We are honored to partner with MWA and Boeing to present this space designed specifically for young children."

Curiosity Runway is sponsored by Boeing, a leading global aerospace company dedicated to inspiring the next generation of STEAM leaders. To help spark young visitors' interest in STEAM careers, Boeing and National Children's Museum partnered to incorporate signage throughout the playspace that highlights career opportunities in the aerospace industry and prompts play activities that build vocabulary and early skill building—like an "I Spy" Observation Deck.

"All of us at Boeing are committed to preparing and inspiring the next generation to become innovators and explorers of the future," said Ziad Ojakli, executive vice president of Government Operations at The Boeing Company. "Through our unique partnership with National Children's Museum and Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, we are bringing impactful and engaging STEAM education experiences to children across the DMV. STEAM investments that support hands-on-learning engagements like Curiosity Runway are key to sparking an early interest in STEAM and inspiring students to pursue their future in aerospace."

Curiosity Runway is open during airport operating hours. Visitors must go through airport security to access the playspace. This space is unsupervised, and adults must accompany children at all times.

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About Boeing

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About Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority operates the U.S. Capital Region’s gateways to the nation and the world, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and Washington Dulles International Airport, as well as the Dulles Airport Access Highway, the Dulles Toll Road and construction of the Silver Line project, a 23-mile extension of the Metrorail public transit system through northern Virginia.

About National Children’s Museum

STEAM adventure awaits at National Children’s Museum, located in the heart of downtown Washington, D.C.! With a mission to inspire children to care about and change the world, the Museum sparks curiosity and ignites creativity for children under the age of twelve and their families. Through playful science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) based exhibits, programs, and virtual offerings, the Museum reaches millions of people each year. Learn more and plan your visit at nationalchildrensmuseum.org.