

# BUSINESS PARTNER BRIEF

## OCTOBER 2023



### Director's Message

Greetings! The busy summer season flew by, and as we head into the even busier holiday season, there's a lot to be excited about here at LGB, including our upcoming Festival of Flight! Enjoy this edition of our Business Partner Brief as we share exciting news, updates and photos with you. —Cynthia Guidry

### Business Partner Spotlight: Ben Villalobos, Maverick Helicopters

We're pleased to shine this month's Business Partner Spotlight on Ben Villalobos, Vice President of Business Development for Maverick Helicopters at Long Beach Airport. A worldly traveler with diverse career experiences to draw upon, Ben leverages his background in business and hospitality to his work in the private aviation sector.



**Q: Please tell us about your professional background.**

A: I grew up in England and studied business and hotel management at the University of Strathclyde Glasgow, Scotland. After graduation, I relocated to Dubai, then the Caribbean, and then the United States, working for resorts to develop and implement new concepts specifically within the dining and entertainment sector. I transitioned into the private aviation sector about seven years ago.

**Q: Please tell us about the Maverick Helicopters operation at LGB.**

A: Maverick Helicopters is one of the largest aviation-based tourism companies in the world, started modestly in 1995 by an entrepreneurial couple with one helicopter and a vision to create a company that would provide a true VIP-level experience not previously offered in the helicopter industry. Nearly three decades later, we employ more than 250 dedicated team members whose mission is to provide bucket list-worthy aerial experiences. We operate seven locations in Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii and California.

Maverick Helicopters expanded into Southern California earlier this year by acquiring IEX Helicopters, which has operated in Long Beach for over four decades. The transition has been well received as it has enabled the company to reach a much larger customer base and market all the great experiences available in SoCal to the rest of the world. LGB is our hub for all California operations and houses our maintenance department to support our SoCal based EC130 and Sikorsky helicopters. We have 25 people who work from this newly renovated facility, including guest relations and charter associates. Apart from servicing luxury charters and unique experiences, we are excited to grow the daily helicopter flights to Catalina Island along with tours of the region.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about working at LGB?**

A: Our LGB hub is strategically positioned in between Orange County and Los Angeles, so it helps us offer the greatest coverage with minimal repositioning times. It's such an easy airport to get to, due to its proximity to major freeways. Mostly though, I love working at LGB primarily due to the friendly and helpful staff who work here! And, I feel spoiled by the food in Long Beach, which has so many great restaurants, especially at the nearby Long Beach Exchange (LBX).

**Q: What do you like to do outside of work?**

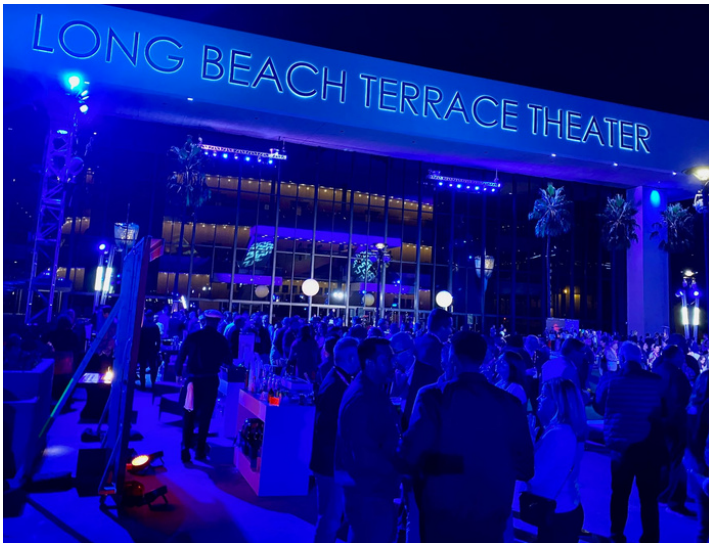
A: When I am not at LGB, I enjoy playing squash and tennis along with being out on the water on the weekends. I also love to travel and experience new cultures and cuisines when I get the chance.

## LGB Among Top Ten Airports!

For the second consecutive year, LGB is among the Best Airports in the United States, based on votes by readers of Condé Nast Traveler magazine. Ranking eighth nationwide, LGB continues to be a favorite among travelers who recognize its convenient Southern California location, exemplary amenities and first-class customer experience. Especially as we celebrate our centennial year, we're so proud to again be recognized and appreciated by the readers of Condé Nast Traveler magazine for our recent modernizations—including the completion of our consolidated Baggage Claim earlier this year—and the Airport's always calm, cool and convenient service. LGB is the coolest airport in the country, and this recognition from Condé Nast is a testament to that and how all of our business partners and staff help ensure Long Beach flies high.

## ACI-NA Conference Success

Long Beach took center stage in the aviation world September 30 through October 3 as more than 2,000 industry professionals gathered here for the Airports Council International - North America (ACI-NA) 2023 Annual Conference & Exhibition. We were honored to host this professional event at the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center. What an incredible opportunity to showcase our City and our Airport, just in time for LGB to mark its 100th anniversary!



## Festival of Flight This Month!

LGB's biggest event of the year—and bigger than ever before in celebration of our centennial year—is coming in for a landing! Mark your calendar to attend the Festival of Flight on Saturday, October 21. The free community event from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the airfield features more than 50 static aircraft displays and aviation-themed exhibitors. And back by popular demand - the Satin Dollz, DJ Dennis and the California Feetwarmers! Our centennial celebration's lineup is expected to include a C-17, a KC-10, a B-17 built right here in Long Beach, and a P-51 flown by Tuskegee Airmen (aircraft displays subject to change). With a nod to the future, Wisk Aero also plans to display its self-flying, all-electric air taxi at the event. Long Beach Airport is grateful to Boeing for sponsoring the Future of Flight exhibit and to the Port of Long Beach for sponsoring the Kid Zone.



### October 21, 2023 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Join us for the Festival of Flight, a **FREE** celebration featuring food & beer trucks, static aircraft and live entertainment.

**Onsite Event Parking**

Event Site  
**LGB Airfield**  
Taxiway E  
3590 E. Wardlow Road  
Long Beach, CA 90807

**Shuttle Parking**  
3840 Kilroy Airport Way  
Long Beach, CA 90806





We encourage you to rideshare, use public transportation or park in the free overflow parking lot.

**Shuttle service available to and from the Festival of Flight between 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

No pets, coolers or large bags allowed. All bags subject to search.

562-570-2678 | [lgbarpt@longbeach.gov](mailto:lgbarpt@longbeach.gov)  
[lgb.org/lbfof](http://lgb.org/lbfof)



Sponsored by:



## Mayor's Grow Long Beach Presentation

We were pleased to be included in the Mayor's inaugural Grow Long Beach presentation, formerly known as "Building a Better Long Beach." The presentation encapsulated priorities of a multi-pronged economic development strategy focused on bolstering the success of emerging business sectors and industries in Long Beach. The Mayor highlighted the aerospace and aviation contributions to our City and called out our Phase II modernization program and our upcoming 100th anniversary. Read more about this and additional priorities in the City's [press release](#).

## Council Requests General Aviation Report

At the Long Beach City Council meeting on September 12, councilmembers voted to request that the City Manager work with the Airport to prepare a comprehensive report detailing the operations of general aviation at LGB, its ties with the City, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and privately-owned flight schools, within the next 45 days. As part of the report, City staff are being directed to help summarize public input and orient the report to best address the stakeholder concerns and questions. For more information, read the [City Council agenda item](#).

## Triennial Team Kudos

Long Beach Airport conducted a Triennial Exercise on September 20 to test our team's emergency preparedness. The safety and efficiency of our operations are of the utmost importance, and the Triennial emergency drill is a valuable opportunity for LGB to be as prepared as possible. More than 400 participants and a C-130 military aircraft took part in the simulated mass casualty incident. Lessons learned will be incorporated into future versions of the Airport's response plan. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to everyone, including other agencies and first responders, who took part in the exercise, including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Long Beach Fire Department, Long Beach Police Department, Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications Department, Long Beach Search and Rescue, American Red Cross, Dignity Health St. Mary's Medical Center, Long Beach VA Hospital, U.S. Air Force Reserves and ambulance services. Thank you to each of you for taking the time to ensure LGB is always ready to act!



## Airport Seeks New Concessions

The City of Long Beach has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the operation and management of pre-security concession opportunities available at Long Beach Airport, including in the former restaurant space on the second floor of the Historic Terminal and the new Meeter Greeter Plaza area. The concessions are expected to open in 2024, but the operation start dates are negotiable and may depend on proposed or required facility improvements. The deadline for proposal submissions has been extended and is now 11 a.m. on October 25, 2023, via the City's [Long Beach Buys](#) portal.



## Farmer's Fridge Added

Have you noticed our new Farmer's Fridge vending machine in the Baggage Claim area? This nutritious addition at LGB offers fresh, healthy foods on the go for travelers and employees. You can download the company's free mobile app to reserve items and earn rewards. Plus, the jars used in the machine are recyclable! Farmer's Fridge, established in 2013, has more than 500 vending machines stocked with fresh fruits and veggies nationwide. Details at [www.farmersfridge.com](http://www.farmersfridge.com).



## Phase II Construction Update

Construction of the new concessions space and baggage service offices continues to progress. The exterior sheathing for the building is near completion. After sheathing is installed, plaster will be applied to the exterior walls. And inside the space, interior doors and frames installation, overhead mechanical work and fireproofing are underway. Meanwhile, structural enhancement of the Historic Terminal remains ongoing. In September, steel installation, overhead electrical work, cable removal and demolition of the first floor shear wall continued. Adjacent to the Ticketing Lobby, installation of the new skycap station is finished. Once staff are trained, it will be open for business!



Exterior sheathing installation



Demolition work in the Historic Terminal

## Seen at the Scene

Professional musicians from the Long Beach Symphony played in a final concert—generously donated—for our LGB Live! summer series in late September, wrapping up another year of toe-tapping musical entertainment that delighted travelers. There were 20 unique performances over the summer months.



Southwest's inaugural daily flights to Albuquerque (ABQ) launched in September, and we offered some fun giveaways for the first passengers on board. And, starting October 7, Southwest will add daily service to Boise (BOI) and Portland (PDX).



The ultimate man-versus-machine Plane Pull fundraiser for Special Olympics Southern California (SOSC) raised more than \$238,000 last month here at LGB! We are so honored to host this annual charity competition, which pit teams of 25 against a 124,000-pound jet as part of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® benefit for SOSC athletes. Roughly 70 teams competed to see who could pull the jet the fastest across a 12-foot stretch on the airfield, and the fastest pull was performed in five seconds flat by Team Legends LASD Custody to take home all the bragging rights.



Long Beach Airport proudly sponsored and participated in the Belmont Shore Car Show last month. In its 32nd year, the beloved community event featured about 500 classic and custom rides. Our LGB booth at the event was visited by more than 800 attendees!



## Marathon Sponsorship

Long Beach Marathon runners can pace themselves to travel with ease at Long Beach Airport—the official airport of the Long Beach Marathon! We're proud to again sponsor this community event and offer the fastest, most convenient options for marathoners so that they don't need to run from curb to gate, unless they want to. The Long Beach Marathon takes place October 14-15, and we can't wait to meet the thousands of walkers and runners who participate!

## Connecting with Clements

Our Airport's Historic Terminal wouldn't be the same without its iconic 1941 mosaic floor masterwork by artist Grace Clements. Part of the ongoing \$17.8 million renovation of the Historic Terminal, which is expected to be complete in early 2024, includes expert-led restoration efforts to locate and protect the entire mosaic—made up of nine vignettes comprised of an estimated 1.6 million hand-cut tiles in about two dozen different colors. Since the last vignettes were uncovered over the past few months, our Airport staff—with help from former Airport Advisory Commission member Jeffrey Rowe—reached out to Clements's family to let them know that some of the previously hidden artwork has been revealed and is in great condition. It was so nice to connect with the artist's niece and nephew, who were very excited and generously shared these very cool photos of their aunt!



## Celebrating Hispanic Heritage

During Hispanic Heritage Month—which spans from September 15 to October 15 each year—we'd like to highlight John Montijo, an experienced flight instructor for the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War I. Montijo moved to Long Beach and became one of the earliest licensed Hispanic pilots in the United States! He even provided flight instruction to Amelia Earhart!



## History Highlight

As we mark our 100th anniversary, we're looking back at Long Beach's rich aviation history. Early aviators attracted onlookers to our unpaved runways in this photo from an unknown event at the Airport in the 1920s. These days, we know we'll see a modern version of this at the 2023 Festival of Flight celebrating our 100th anniversary coming in for a landing on Saturday, October 21.



## August Passenger Traffic

We served 309,838 passengers in August, representing a 5.5% increase in airline passenger traffic compared with the same month in 2022. However, those numbers were not as high due to the impact of wildfires in Hawaii that reduced load factors from an average of 97% to 77% for Hawaiian Airlines and an average of 76% to 72% for Southwest Airlines. Tropical Storm Hilary is also expected to have had an impact.

	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	% Change	Aug 2021	% Change	Aug 2020	% Change	Aug 2019	% Change	YTD 2023	YTD 2022	% Change	YTD 2021	% Change	YTD 2020	% Change	YTD 2019	% Change
<b>Passenger Traffic</b>																		
Enplanements	156,023	147,873	5.5%	101,255	54.1%	21,424	628.3%	163,085	-4.3%	1,200,490	1,070,888	12.1%	596,515	101.3%	412,712	190.9%	1,181,455	1.6%
Deplanements	153,815	145,899	5.4%	102,685	49.8%	22,261	591.0%	162,019	-5.1%	1,196,152	1,060,068	12.8%	594,729	101.1%	415,191	188.1%	1,177,899	1.5%
<b>Total Passenger</b>	<b>309,838</b>	<b>293,772</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>203,940</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>43,685</b>	<b>609.3%</b>	<b>325,104</b>	<b>-4.7%</b>	<b>2,396,642</b>	<b>2,130,956</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>1,191,244</b>	<b>101.2%</b>	<b>827,903</b>	<b>189.5%</b>	<b>2,359,354</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Total Air Cargo (Tons)</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>-9.1%</b>	<b>1,109</b>	<b>-10.9%</b>	<b>1,019</b>	<b>-3.0%</b>	<b>1,671</b>	<b>-40.9%</b>	<b>7,942</b>	<b>9,017</b>	<b>-11.9%</b>	<b>8,666</b>	<b>-8.3%</b>	<b>10,394</b>	<b>-23.6%</b>	<b>13,871</b>	<b>-42.7%</b>



Cynthia Guidry  
Airport Director