

Make-A-Wish grants magical wishes for two Illinois children, MidAmerica hosts sendoff celebration

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Families Receive Red Carpet Treatment Before Boarding Flight to Walt Disney World

ST. LOUIS - January 11 was a magical day for 12--year-old Gabby of Dahlgren, Ill., and 6-year-old Matthew of Belleville, Ill. As the recipients of the latest wish trips to be granted by Make-A-Wish, Matthew, Gabby and their families were the VIP guests at a special sendoff celebration hosted by MidAmerica St. Louis Airport as they prepared to depart on an Allegiant Airlines flight to Orlando for a magical wish experience at Walt Disney World.



The trip was designed to bring smiles to the faces of the children, who are currently struggling with serious medical issues. Matthew suffers from a neurological condition, while Gabby recently endured a kidney transplant after battling ESRD from an early age. Accompanying Matthew on his Walt Disney World journey were his parents and younger sister. Gabby was joined also by her immediate family. In total, 13 people were beneficiaries of this special wish trip from the Make-A-Wish Illinois.

Working to ensure that Gabby and Matthew's sendoff was as magical as their trip, MidAmerica provided them with the full "red carpet" treatment at the airport. Upon arrival, the families were greeted by a long, red carpet lined with balloons, and a personal assistant was on hand to escort them through check-in to their gate in order to

guarantee that all of their needs were met. The families also received a variety of snacks and Disney-themed gifts designed to further enhance the VIP experience.

“We were thrilled to have this opportunity to support Make-A-Wish, and Matthew and Gabby and their family members,” stated St. Clair County Board Chairman Mark Kern. “MidAmerica Airport’s goal in hosting this send-off celebration was to make the families feel special, and we hope the red carpet touches served as a memorable kick-off to Matthew and Gabby’s exciting journeys to Walt Disney World.”

Since the 1980s, Make-A-Wish has been granting the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich their lives with hope, strength and joy.

“Allegiant and MidAmerica’s generous and enthusiastic support is a wonderful way for the community to come together in supporting our wish children with hope, strength and joy at a time they need it most,” said Stephanie Springs, CEO of Make-A-Wish Illinois...

Make-A-Wish Illinois grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich their lives with hope, strength and joy. Since 1985, Make-A-Wish has worked with volunteers and generous supporters to share the power of a wish[®] with more than 12,000 children and their families across Illinois. For more information or to find out how you can help, call 800-978-9474 or visit www.illinois.wish.org

MidAmerica St. Louis Airport is located in Mascoutah, Illinois, in the eastern portion of the St. Louis metropolitan area. Major multimodal rail and inland port centers are located within 22 miles of the airport, which also enjoys easy access to five interstate highways via I-64. With parallel runways of 8,000 and 10,000 feet, the airport can handle simultaneous take-offs and landings in all conditions, minimizing delays. It has an annual capacity of 200,000 operations. Current tenants include North Bay Produce, Inc., Boeing, and AVMATS, which has been providing alternatives for the support and [maintenance of corporate aircraft](#) at MidAmerica for almost a decade. MidAmerica is a Joint Use Airport partnering with Scott AFB, the home to US Transportation Command, a multi service organization, and Air Mobility Command, the USAF’s component command for airlift. MidAmerica and the 375th Air Mobility Wing operate Scott AFB /MidAmerica St. Louis Airport. For more information, visit www.flymidamerica.com.