



Heartland Flyer receives “Champion of the Rails” Award

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Oklahoma’s *Heartland Flyer* team won Amtrak’s highest honor, the “Champion of the Rails” award, at the President’s Service and Safety Awards presentation held in Los Angeles on November 13. The Oklahoma Transportation Commission congratulated the group at its monthly meeting Monday.

The *Heartland Flyer* team, consisting of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the *Heartland Flyer* Coalition and Amtrak’s Southwest Division, was nominated for the award based on contributions designed to enhance the safety and quality of passenger rail service. The national award recognizes Amtrak and /or partnering industry personnel who have made significant contributions to rail service and the Amtrak corporation. Award winners are also recognized for their leadership and creativity.

The “Champion of the Rails” award is Amtrak’s most prestigious recognition of quality, growth and innovation. “This award is to be shared with all *Heartland Flyer* passengers because it is the strong support for passenger rail service that makes it a success in Oklahoma,” David Streb, ODOT director of engineering said. “In addition to being one of the fastest growing lines, the *Heartland Flyer* enjoys high customer satisfaction ratings, and we expect to see continued growth of this popular service.”

Amtrak operates the *Heartland Flyer* under contracts with the Oklahoma and Texas Departments of Transportation. Oklahoma and Texas are two of 14 states for which Amtrak operates service which supplements the national network of Amtrak trains. Traveling its daily round trip from Oklahoma City to Ft. Worth, the *Heartland Flyer* has carried more than 590,000 passengers since service began in June 1999.

Along with Amtrak and the state DOTs, the *Heartland Flyer* Coalition works to promote and improve the service. The volunteer group represents communities and leaders along the 206-mile route, sponsors the www.heartlandflyer.com web site and organizes events that make the train experience even more special.

- www.okladot.state.ok.us -

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INFORMATION RELEASE

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