



Efficient, cost-effective air transportation is often cited among key factors companies consider when evaluating new locations. Air service to the Emerald Coast got a major boost in 2018 when Allegiant Airlines announced that the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS) would become the airline's 14th year-round aircraft base. In addition to the obvious benefits for visitors and business travelers alike, the aircraft base will create 65 new jobs and bring an anticipated \$418 million in tourism revenue to the area over the next five

years to Okaloosa County. Allegiant is investing more than \$49 million to establish the year-round base, which will house two Airbus aircraft. The new VPS base allows Allegiant to offer new routes to five cities. Allegiant began hiring pilots, flight attendants, maintenance technicians and ground personnel to support operations in 2018.

The EDC was a key player in convening local and state partners for the project dubbed "Project True Blue". Organizations including Enterprise Florida, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Visit Florida, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners, Okaloosa County Airports and the Okaloosa County Tourism Development Department all came together to facilitate the opportunity.

Maurice J. Gallagher, Jr., Allegiant's chairman and CEO, said, "We are excited to continue our growth in Florida's Emerald Coast by establishing a full-time base at Destin-Fort Walton Beach. We have a terrific partnership across many state and local agencies. We can't thank them enough for their support."