

PDX People: Four Stories of Extraordinary Customer Service

portside.portofportland.online/2022/01/pdx-people-four-stories-of-extraordinary-customer-service-5

January 31, 2022



Being friendly is a big part of providing exceptional customer service and demonstrating our PDX People core values. It can mean offering a kind word or smile to a visitor or taking extra steps to ensure a lost or distressed passenger has what they need to get to their destination. Meeting people where they're at – by being empathetic and welcoming – is how PDX People make our airport one of America's best.

To recognize actions that truly stand out and show gratitude for these efforts, we host the PDX People customer service awards each quarter. Here are the extraordinary employees we recognized from October through December 2021.

Dena Neubaum
Delta Air Lines

Peter Brenner
Port of Portland Police Department

Tia Davies
Haley Verbrigghe
Noah Juarez
Jeffrey Yates
Port of Portland

When his adult son – struggling with substance dependency and mental health challenges – ended up at PDX with no phone, money or way to get home, Robert connected with Port of Portland police officer Pete Brenner (he/him), Delta Air Lines agent Dena Neubaum (she/her) and Port of Portland communications center staff Noah Juarez (he/him), Haley Verbrigghe (she/her), Jeffrey Yates (he/him) and Tia Davies (she/her).

Robert shared his appreciation for the team of PDX People that assisted him:

“On my first call to the airport, I spoke with Officer Brenner, who had my son paged overhead and asked his fellow officers to keep an eye out for him.

Unfortunately, the page remained unanswered, as my son had left the airport.

Two days later, my son returned to PDX. While there, he encountered amazing Delta Air Lines employee Dena Neubaum. Dena observed my son looking confused and approached him to see if he was alright. My son asked her for help making a phone call to me so that I could purchase his ticket. Dena graciously volunteered her phone and assisted him with getting his boarding pass.

But my worries were not over, since his flight didn’t depart until the next morning. Thankfully, Port of Portland Police kept an eye on him until the next morning. Before his flight, I spoke with the Port of Portland Communications Center, who called the Delta gate agents and confirmed his status as “boarded.”



Top row: Dena Neubaum, Pete Brenner, Tia Davies
Bottom row: Haley Verbrigghe, Noah Juarez, Jeffrey Yates

Had it not been for Dena’s assistance, the Delta ticket and gate agents and the Port of Portland employees, my son would likely never have been able to navigate the complexities of this unscheduled and unplanned trip in his confused state of mind.

I remain ever grateful for the assistance provided by these incredible people – their actions reflect the highest standards of professionalism and caring for the well-being of others. My heart is warmed knowing the sterling character of the people that work at the Portland Airport. In my opinion, they are the best ambassadors the City of Portland could ever hope to have.

My sincere appreciation to all of you who maintain the wonderful culture of customer service at PDX.”

Daniel Bravo **TSA**

TSA agent Daniel Bravo (he/him) practiced respectful, inclusive service while screening a passenger. The traveler sent in this recognition to commend Daniel’s exceptional service:

“After going through security, the TSA scanning machine indicated that I needed a pat down. I am gender non-conforming and, instead of assuming my gender, Daniel asked me very respectfully who I would like to perform the pat down – his female colleague or him.

I realized he wasn’t sure of my gender. Smiling under my mask, I said, ‘Nicely done. I appreciate you not assuming.’ He replied kindly, ‘We just need to use our words.’

Please give him my sincere appreciation in front of his colleagues. This experience really made me feel respected and seen. Excellent training and perfect delivery.”



Daniel Bravo

Sharif Chaudhri **Mo’s Seafood and Chowder**

Always offering friendly service, Sharif Chaudhri (he/him) takes every opportunity to engage with passengers, asking them about their destination, home or even the musician on their t-shirt. He’ll do everything he can to ensure guests feel special and acknowledged.

Sharif enjoys learning new languages and will often delight travelers by speaking to them in their native dialect. Sharif’s manager submitted his nomination and noted one stand-out example:

“I love hearing exclamations of surprise and delight when passengers hear their native tongue spoken at PDX. Recently, an elderly woman from Thailand and her daughter stopped by Mo’s on their way back home. Sharif noticed that she didn’t speak English, so he made some casual conversation with her in Thai. The woman was clearly touched by the gesture...if the counter weren’t so wide, she would’ve hugged him!”

Many Port employees, airline associates and fellow concessionaires will attest to the fact that Sharif is a treasure, a true ambassador for PDX and a person who embodies our PDX People core values.”



Sharif Chaudhri

Junior Granville ABM

Stationed by the B/C security checkpoint on a busy travel day, Junior Granville (he/him) with ABM noticed an elderly traveler who appeared very nervous. He asked how he could help, and she admitted she was scared to fly.

He engaged the woman in conversation to help establish a personal connection and offer comfort. The traveler explained that her husband passed away last year and this was her first flight without him. Junior asked if he could accompany her to the TSA checkpoint. “You would do that for me?” she responded.

As they walked, the woman showed Junior photos of her home decorated for Christmas in honor of her late husband. At the checkpoint entrance, Junior told her that he would try to check on her at her gate. She thanked him and went through the checkpoint.



Junior Granville

After returning to his post, Junior felt uneasy about leaving the passenger, so he returned to find her. He met her just past the checkpoint and she smiled when she saw him. “I told you I would check on you,” he said. “Can I walk you to your gate?”

As they walked, they talked about family and she showed him more pictures. As they reached her gate, she turned to Junior and said, “I’m starting to feel better. I’m going to tell my son about you. I can fly now.”

Junior assists dozens – if not hundreds – of people every day as a customer service agent. But, he said, so far this has been his most rewarding opportunity to help a traveler.

More PDX People Quarterly Award Winners: October – December 2021

[Watch the PDX People customer service awards ceremony:](#)



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/VALb9OfvTjI>

Kirsten Day (she/her)



Boutique Airlines

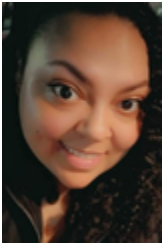
Kirsten’s kindness brightens everyone’s day. She treats her passengers with respect and shows them she genuinely cares.

Keishanna Jackson (she/her)

Alamo Car Rental

Keishanna went above and beyond to accommodate a customer in an emotional situation, providing speedy and thoughtful service.

Reggie Powell (he/him)



Hudson Group

Reggie goes the extra mile every day. He is a pleasure to work with and his demeanor makes it clear he loves his job.

Stepan Polyak (he/him)

Aleksandr Kurich (he/him)

SP Plus Corporation



Stepan and Aleksandr helped translate for a traveler, who was delighted to speak to someone in his native language.

John Truong (he/him)

Port of Portland Police Department

John helped an airline agent reunite with their left behind bag:
“He was very thorough and assisted me with kindness.”

