

# CLT, UNC Charlotte Launch Unique Partnership

**Airport and Engineering College Join Forces for Innovation and Research**



*Chief Infrastructure Officer Jack Christine gathers with University of North Carolina at Charlotte students for a tour of the new terminal lobby.*

Charlotte Douglas International Airport has partnered with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's William States Lee College of Engineering to develop the first-of-its-kind Charlotte Aviation and Innovation Research Institute, or Charlotte AIR. Other key partners in the Institute are the Sullenberger Aviation Museum and Talbert, Bright and Ellington, a leading consulting firm for the aviation industry.

This one-of-a-kind partnership will give UNC Charlotte students real-world opportunities to research, innovate and develop cutting edge infrastructure at one of the world's busiest airports.

"As North Carolina's urban research university, UNC Charlotte is the ideal partnership for CLT as we continue to build an Airport for the future," said CLT Chief Infrastructure Officer Jack Christine. "The ability to provide both research and learning opportunities in a living laboratory environment like the Airport will help shape the future of aviation while benefitting students with hands on learning."

Rob Keynton, dean of the W.S. Lee College of Engineering, announced Charlotte AIR Institute on Oct. 24 at the 2023 Airport Engineering Seminar. "Charlotte AIR provides a unique nexus of aviation-focused research, technology transfer, community engagement and education," said Keynton. "It will help establish this city as the hub for aviation infrastructure and technology expertise through transformative research, while creating the next-generation workforce to meet the industry's needs."

Last summer, Airports Council International ranked Charlotte Douglas as the 7th busiest airport in the world for arrivals and departures. For passenger traffic, the Airport lands at 10th nationwide and 19th globally. CLT handled approximately 441,000 arrival and departure flights last year.

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