

**Robert Deluce Award Presentation**

**Wednesday May 17 – 3:30 P.M. – Bushplane Museum**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good afternoon everyone, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to participate in today's ceremony.

We are here of course honouring Mr. Robert Deluce, CEO of Porter Airlines, for the positive contributions they have made to our community.

This month marks the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary since Porter service began in Sault Ste. Marie. In that time, our city's business sector, tourism sector, and our residents at large have all benefited from having more choice and a greater availability of scheduled air service.

The Economic Developers Council of Ontario is holding their spring symposium in Sault Ste. Marie this week and the theme is "Connecting the North to the South." When you live and work here in the North, there are times when you feel removed from much of the rest of the province. It's a separation born from geography, but it can be psychological as well.

Having Porter service in the Sault has helped to bridge some of this physical and mental divide. Since 2011, it has been easier for many Sault residents to travel for health appointments, to school and for vacations.

Business travellers have benefitted from convenient service right to downtown Toronto, or on to other major destinations such as Montreal, Chicago and New York.

And likewise, being a Porter destination has certainly made Sault Ste. Marie a more reachable place for people in other cities who are considering travelling here—whether for business or pleasure.

The Sault Ste. Marie airport has certainly seen a positive impact from Porter's presence. In 2011, the airport recorded approximately 120,000 person trips for the year. Last year in 2015, that number had grown to just over 200,000. That's a two-thirds increase, and much of it is undoubtedly attributable to Porter joining the roster of airlines that fly to and from Sault Ste. Marie.

Other businesses too have benefited from the increased activity at the Sault Airport. Local aircraft maintenance firm J.D. Aero has grown steadily over the last several years and recently announced another major expansion—one that the City is supporting through its Economic Development Fund.

For all these of reasons, we're most grateful to Porter Airlines for the company's on-going commitment to our community. The relationship between Porter and Sault Ste. Marie has been mutually beneficial and we look forward to continuing to grow and develop it in the future.

So thank you again for allowing me the chance to speak and congratulations once more to Mr. Robert Deluce and Porter Airlines for this well-deserved honour. With that, I believe we will now break for a quick photo opportunity, and following that I will be glad to turn the microphone over to Mr. Deluce.