



Media Contact: Jay Sorensen
Telephone: 414-961-1939
Web site: www.KidsFirstFund.org

News Release

Topbonus, Southwest and Etihad Guest Receive Kids First Teddy Bear Awards

The Kids First Fund thanks supporters of the 2016 International Online Travel Auction for Kids

Shorewood, Wisconsin (November 2, 2016) – The Kids First Fund is proud to announce the top performers of the 2016 International Online Travel Auction for Kids. Many airlines, hotel brands, and travel companies generously donate to the Fund; the awards are given to the three highest performers in the auction each year. The 2016 awards were presented on the evening of October 25, 2016 and recognized:

- **Southwest Airlines** provided unrestricted tickets and elite status upgrades that generated the highest bid activity, which was in excess of \$6,600 – more than any other single corporate donor.
- **Topbonus**, the frequent flyer program of airberlin, donated packages totaling 400,000 frequent flyer miles, to redeem on airberlin and program partners such as Etihad Airways, which generated more than \$5,100 in total bids.
- **Delta SkyMiles** provided packages totaling 180,000 miles, which were auctioned at FlyerTalk.com. These generated the third highest bid activity for any single donor company, bringing in \$2,500.

Topbonus, Southwest, and Delta SkyMiles each received a **Kids First Teddy Bear Award** in recognition of their support for this year's auction. Each bear has been custom crafted by the Vermont Teddy Bear Company with the logo of the Kids First Fund and a sash recognizing the recipient company.

The recognition event occurred during the MEGA Awards Gala on October 25, 2016 in Toronto and was associated with a global airline industry conference hosted by Airline Information. Accepting Teddy Bear Awards that evening were Tony Roach from Southwest Airlines (for Southwest Rapid Rewards), Sascha List from airberlin (for the topbonus program) and Elmar Trust with Delta Air Lines (for the SkyMiles program).



Kids First Teddy Bear Award recipients in Toronto on October 25 (left to right): Jay Sorensen, (Kids First Fund), Elmar Trust (Delta), Tony Roach (Southwest), and Sascha List (airberlin).

“The Kids First Auction for 2016 was a tremendous success with an array of airline tickets, frequent flyer miles, car rental vouchers, and hotel certificates. This year we even had a first-ever online auction of elite status upgrades from JetBlue, Icelandair, and Southwest,” said Jay Sorensen, president of the Kids First Fund. “The Teddy Bear Awards have become a regular feature for the evening ceremony at the MEGA Event conference held each fall. It’s fun – and great for the charity – to see donor companies eager to add to their bear collection by increasing their generosity each year.”

Donor enterprises for the 2016 auction included: Avis Rent a Car, Choice Hotels, Delta SkyMiles, Icelandair, JetBlue TrueBlue, Priority Pass, Rocketmiles, Southwest Airlines, Southwest Rapid Rewards, SPG Rewards, Spirit Airlines, topbonus, Tune Hotels, United Airlines, and Wyndham Rewards; plus these individual hotel locations: Best Western Plus Austrian Chalet Hotel, Chicago Marriott Suites O’Hare Hotel, Comfort Hotel Downtown Toronto, Delta Toronto Hotel, Embassy Suites Norman Oklahoma, Miracle Springs Resort & Spa Hotel, Palm Island Resort All-Inclusive Beachfront Hotel, Staybridge Suites London Ontario, Stoney Nakoda Resort & Casino Hotel, and Virginia Beach Resort Hotel & Conference Center.

About the Kids First Fund: The Kids First Fund helps abused and abandoned children. We protect children from abuse. We empower young adults to seek a positive future. We strengthen families. We build awareness of child abuse. We operate in countries where resources are limited. The Kids First Fund does not incur any expenses, since all staffing and services are donated. The organization has been granted special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Learn more at KidsFirstFund.org and KidsFirstAuction.com.

About the MEGA Awards: The Mega Awards were created to honor genuine innovation in the airline and travel industry. The October 25 event represented the seventh annual award recognition of innovative campaigns, products, and people in the areas of ancillary revenue, loyalty marketing, and social media. The Mega Awards Gala is held in conjunction with the Mega Event, an annual loyalty marketing and ancillary revenue conference attended by 450+ airline and travel industry executives from all over the world. Learn more at Airlinelnformation.org

About the Vermont Teddy Bear Company: The Vermont Teddy Bear Company has been making the best Bears in the Universe for more than 20 years - and every bear is lovingly designed, cut, sewn, stuffed, and stitched in Vermont. We are proud to be one of the top-rated stores on the Internet. As a BizRate.com Circle of Excellence Platinum Award-Winner, we have been recognized by online shoppers, year after year, as one of the "best of the best" online stores. Learn more at VermontTeddyBear.com.

- - end - -