

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT:**

Missy Hurley  
The HLA Group  
(813) 248-6500  
mhurley@thehlagroup.com



**JOE LEONARD NAMED 2006 TONY JANNUS AWARD WINNER**

*AirTran Airways Chairman and CEO to be Honored for  
Contributions to Commercial Aviation*

**TAMPA (October 12, 2006)** - The Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society is proud to award Mr. Joe Leonard, chairman and CEO of AirTran Airways, the 2006 Tony Jannus Award. By receiving the award, Mr. Leonard is recognized for more than 30-years of outstanding achievements, perseverance and excellence in commercial aviation. The Tony Jannus Award luncheon will take place at the Tampa Airport Marriott at Tampa International Airport with a keynote speech by Colonel Frank Borman, Pioneer Astronaut and 1986 Tony Jannus Award recipient. Leonard is being recognized at the luncheon and will be presented the award at a presentation and dinner banquet at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort in St. Petersburg.

For more than four decades the Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society has recognized individuals who have made a major contribution to the growth and improvement of the commercial aviation industry. This year's honoree, Mr. Leonard, is admired for his leadership and positive attitude during challenging times.

The luncheon event, a precursor to the Award Dinner, is being held at the Tampa Airport Marriott at Tampa International Airport. The keynote speaker for the luncheon is Colonel (Retired) Frank Borman, the leader of the first team of American astronauts to circle the moon and Commander of the 1968 Apollo 8 Mission. Michael Bastian, the Tony Jannus Student Essay Contest winner, will be recognized at the luncheon as well.

**-more-**

Mr. Leonard will be officially recognized in front of an audience of approximately 500 people as the 2006 Tony Jannus Award winner at the Tony Jannus Award Dinner Banquet held at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort & Golf Club in St. Petersburg. The black tie event will begin with a cocktail reception at 6:30pm. At 7:30 p.m. the dinner program starts, during which Mr. Leonard will be officially presented with the award and give his acceptance speech. During the dinner, two college students studying aviation or issues directly tied to the aviation field will be presented with scholarships for \$1,000.

Mr. Leonard proved his expertise in the aviation industry while it suffered slumps in profitability since 2001. After taking over the reins of AirTran Airways in 1999, Mr. Leonard established an impressive seven-year streak of successful revenue earnings despite the pessimistic trend. Currently, AirTran Airways is one of America's largest low-fare airlines, and is the seventh largest carrier at Tampa International Airport.

The Tony Jannus Award is named for the pilot recognized by the Smithsonian as the founder of the world's first scheduled airline. The airline, which began flights on New Year's Day, 1914, had only one plane, a single-engine Benoist flying boat that flew round trips daily between Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida.

# # #