

## **BEST FREQUENT FLYER AND FREQUENT GUEST PROGRAMS CHOSEN IN THE 15TH ANNUAL FREDDIE AWARDS - ALASKA AIRLINES AND STARWOOD HOTELS ARE BIG WINNERS**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO (April 25, 2003)** - Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan was selected as the frequent flyer Program of the Year among American-based programs and Starwood Preferred Guest took top honors in the frequent guest program category at the 15th Annual Freddie Awards. Diners Club Club Rewards was named top Americas credit card for the sixth consecutive year, and the America West FlightFund program was voted as having the best elite-level program in the Americas. The awards were announced yesterday by Inside Flyer Editor and Publisher Randy Petersen during a ceremony in Colorado Springs at the Wyndham Colorado Springs. Over 200 airline, hotel and credit card representatives attended the ceremony, along with several members of the voting public.

Mr. Petersen also presented two special awards during the ceremony. William Sanders, aka the Starwood Lurker, and the Starwood Preferred Guest program were presented with an "Industry Impact Award" to honor Mr. Sanders' ongoing commitment to outstanding Internet customer support and service. And a "Distinguished Achievement Award" was given to Lynn Roach-Hildebrand, vice president, CRM Database, Marriott Vacation Club International, in recognition of 20 years of outstanding service and dedication to members of Marriott's loyalty programs.

For the third consecutive year, Starwood Preferred Guest swept the top awards for Americas and International frequent guest programs. Among Internationally based airlines, Emirates Skywards came away the big winner, taking home six awards including frequent flyer Program of the Year, Best Customer Service and Best Elite Level.

A total of 232,480 ballots were cast this year by frequent travelers from around the world. The awards represent excellence in frequent travel programs and rate the best frequent flyer and frequent guest programs in eight different categories: Program of the Year, Best Award, Best Bonus Promotion, Best Web Site, Best Elite-Level Program, Best Newsletter, Best Award Redemption and Best Customer Service. The Best Affinity Credit Card was also chosen.

The Freddie Awards honor quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the overall merits of each program as reflected in "Value Voting." Value Voting asks the voter to assign a number between one and 10 to the program for which he or she votes. To be eligible to win a Freddie Award, however, a program must receive at least one percent of the popular vote.

This year, Inside Flyer magazine partnered with AT&T Consumer, SkyGuide from American Express, MilePoint.com and USATODAY.com to bring travelers the 15th Annual Freddie Awards. The event was webcast live and a recap of the event may be viewed online at [www.freddieawards.com](http://www.freddieawards.com).