



The Ireland-U.S. Council

— *A Business Organization* —

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For Immediate Release

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Jeff Smisek, Chairman, President & CEO of Continental Airlines To Receive Council's Award for Outstanding Achievement At 48th Annual Dinner In New York

New York, NY: JUNE 10, 2010: The Ireland-U.S. Council will present its *Award for Outstanding Achievement* in 2010 to Jeff Smisek, the Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of *Continental Airlines, Inc.* to mark the notable work he and the company have done in building the business relationships between America and Ireland. The award will be the centerpiece of the Council's 48th Annual Dinner to be held at the *Metropolitan Club* in New York City on **Thursday, November 11, 2010**. Each year, the Council presents this award to an individual who has made a significant contribution to enhancing the economic relationships between America and Ireland.



Dennis Swanson, the President of the Council based in New York, said "Continental Airlines has been a crucial component in sustaining and building the connections between America and Ireland for many years. The island of Ireland requires an efficient, effective and completely reliable air bridge to America for trade, investment, tourism and business links to flourish, not to mention all the vital social, heritage, artistic and other bonds. *Continental Airlines* is the only carrier to offer direct non-stop air service between three points in Ireland and the United States, offering service linking Dublin, Belfast and Shannon with Newark Liberty International Airport."

President Swanson continued "We are extraordinarily pleased to recognize the substantial contributions made by Jeff Smisek and *Continental Airlines* in building connections between the Ireland and the United States. Through his leadership, the economic and business bonds between America and Ireland have been greatly facilitated and enhanced. The members and directors of the Council are delighted to honor such an outstanding and worthy recipient with this well-deserved award."

NEW YORK

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Continental Airlines is the world's fifth-largest airline. Mr. Smisek joined the airline in March 1995 as senior vice president and general counsel. In December 2004, he became president and was elected to the company's board of directors. He became president and chief operating officer in September 2008 and assumed the role of chairman, president and chief executive officer in January, 2010.

During his 15 years with Continental, the carrier has expanded its global presence, and now serves more international destinations than any other U.S. carrier. In 2009, *FORTUNE* magazine ranked Continental the No. 1 airline on their annual airline industry list of "Most Admired Global Companies" for the sixth consecutive year.

Over the course of his time at Continental, Mr. Smisek has overseen airline operations, including flight operations, inflight, airports, catering, cargo, maintenance and technical operations, and also human resources and labor relations, global real estate, security and environmental affairs, corporate communications, federal affairs, and international, state and local affairs, sales and marketing, technology and legal affairs.

He graduated from Princeton University, A.B. summa cum laude in economics, in 1976, and Harvard Law School, J.D. magna cum laude, in 1982. He also serves on the board of directors of National Oilwell Varco, Inc. He and his wife reside in Houston and are long-time supporters of numerous charitable and civic organizations.

The Ireland-U.S. Council was founded in 1963 by American and Irish business leaders. Its principal objective is to encourage closer business links between Ireland and the United States. The Council operates a variety of scholarship and internship programs, stages lectures, seminars and hosts frequent events in Ireland and in America aimed at building communications between business, political and opinion leaders on both sides of the Atlantic. As part of its platform, the Council also supports and sponsors many initiatives in the arts. The Council is a not-for-profit corporation with headquarters in New York City and a permanent office in Dublin.

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