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DCVB ADDS BIG INDUSTRY NAMES TO LEAD RECOVERY

New board leadership at DCVB represents magnitude of response needed for COVID-19 business conditions.

OAK BROOK— The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) will induct six new members to its Board of Directors, as it seeks to give DuPage the strongest footing from local, county and state levels to steer its hospitality industry during these unprecedented and fluid times due to the novel pandemic. New members include Steven Ellingsen, General Manager at the Hilton Chicago Oak Brook Hills Resort & Conference Center; Eric Ertmoed, Village Manager for the Village of Lisle; Karla Flannery, Deputy Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Office of Tourism (IOT); Brett Hintz, Vice President of Operations for Puttshack; Michael Jacobson, President & CEO of the Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA); and Grant Paplauskas, Marketing & Special Events Manager for City of Wood Dale. This will be the first time in DCVB's history to welcome leadership from IHLA and DCEO — indicating the weight being placed on strategy and collaboration to address the significant challenges faced here and throughout the state. Each new member will serve a two-year term.

"With such a large county that typically welcomes almost 4 million visitors in our hotel rooms every year, short and long-term impact to our businesses and economy is a critical issue right now," said Larry Forssberg, chairman of the DCVB board and Executive Director for the Westmont Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Partnership. "DCVB and the Board of Directors want DuPage residents, businesses and the 23,000 people employed in our communities to know that every expertise is being tapped into as we gauge and respond to the changes in consumer behavior and travel outlook. We are grateful for our six new and 20 returning Board members for their critical perspectives, leadership and commitment to the success of the entire DuPage region."

While the recent rise of coronavirus infections in other states has resulted in a significant loss of consumer confidence, Illinois and its communities are well-positioned to capitalize on a hyper-local recovery — with leisure the strongest segment of Illinois' hospitality market. DuPage specifically has a large pool of potential visitors given geographic location, socio-economic-status indicators and target groups, in addition to its wealth of outdoor recreation and attractions, and appeal of its sophisticated yet small-town charm. Suburban hotels have been projected to fair better than those in cities, especially hotels communicating their cleaning and safety procedures to highlight how they are keeping guests, and staff, safe.

"We are not naïve to the challenges ahead, but we are confident in what DuPage offers — warmth in the comfortingly familiar, and delight in the completely unexpected as people reconnect with the world in a new way," said DCVB Executive Director Beth Marchetti. "The DCVB and Board of Directors will continue to ask the hard questions and respond with a tailored recovery plan. This is where the experience and support of our Board will play a pivotal role in activating opportunities for DuPage in 2021 and beyond."

The Village of Lisle is one of the most recent communities to partner with DCVB, joining in August 2019. "I am confident DCVB and the Board can merge our collective talents and experience to keep DuPage County and its communities in the forefront of as a leading hospitality and business destination," said Lisle Village Manager Eric Ertmoed. "This dynamic group is undoubtedly ready to assist making DuPage, its hotels, and other businesses more competitive as we continue efforts to safely reopen for travel and welcome back visitors."

In the coming weeks, Choose DuPage, the county's economic development organization, will partner with DCVB and the DuPage Health Department to launch a campaign to elevate local consumer confidence, highlighting DuPage's safety protocols and readiness to safely welcome guests. The campaign comes at a time when the consumer is searching for transparency and alignment among local leaders, businesses and government. Allocated by Choose DuPage, the funds came from the \$161 million DuPage County received from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Recovery and Economic Stimulus (CARES) Act. This money must be used in accordance with CARES act regulations.

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ABOUT THE DUPAGE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) is the official destination marketing organization for DuPage County, Illinois' second largest County comprised of 38 communities. The DCVB works in partnership with community business and civic leaders to maximize travel and tourism opportunities which ultimately contribute to the economic vitality of the County and its residents. For more information, visit www.DiscoverDuPage.com.