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Discover Newport Announces New Board of Directors Appointments

New leadership brings additional talent, vision and expertise to the tourism organization.

Newport (R.I.) December 11, 2017 – Discover Newport has appointed four new members to its Board of Directors in accordance to the organization’s governing bylaws. “Our new board members are committed to advancing our mission of stimulating economic growth throughout our destination by continuing to attract both leisure and business travelers in an increasingly competitive travel marketplace,” said Evan Smith, president and CEO of Discover Newport. “I look forward to working with these four exceptional businesswomen as we move into the new year.”

The appointees are as follows:

Karen Binder

Karen Binder will represent the town of Bristol on the Discover Newport Board of Directors. Binder is the Executive Director of Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum in Bristol, a post she has held since July 2004. Prior to Blithewold, Binder worked for various YMCA associations throughout Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Binder holds a dual Bachelor of Arts degree in economics and in political science from St. Mary’s College, Maryland, and a Master of Arts in education with a focus on management and training from the University of Rhode Island.

Christine Klase

Christine Klase will represent the town of Tiverton on the Discover Newport Board of Directors. Klase serves as Director of Sales at the Residence Inn by Marriott Newport Middletown, a post she has held since 2010. Prior to the Residence Inn, Klase was the general manager at Springhill Suites West Warwick. Klase earned a Bachelor of Science degree from New Hampshire College (now Southern New Hampshire University) with a focus on hotel restaurant management.

Katie Dickson O'Donnell

Katie Dickson O'Donnell will represent the town of Warren on the Discover Newport Board of Directors. In 2010, O'Donnell opened The Wooden Midshipman, a gift and book shop, in Warren and later relaunched Discover Warren, the local merchants group dedicated to posturing the town as a destination for food, art, and culture. In 2015, she and her husband, Chef Brian O'Donnell, opened Bywater, a local land-and-sea to table restaurant focusing on oysters and coastal American cuisine.

O'Donnell has previous economic development experience serving the town of Warren, Fusionworks Dance Company, Art Night Bristol Warren and others.

Ryan Yalanis

Ryan Yalanis will represent hotels with more than 100 guest rooms on the Discover Newport Board of Directors. A Rhode Island native and Newport resident, Yalanis has served as Director of Sales at the Newport Marriott since 2014. Her work at this newly-rated AAA Four Diamond property has included repositioning the hotel following a \$40M renovation. Yalanis primarily focuses on booking corporate, association and government groups as well as social event business. Yalanis holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of San Diego with a focus in communication studies.

ABOUT DISCOVER NEWPORT

Discover Newport is the official destination management organization (DMO) dedicated to promoting the City of Newport and the eight surrounding coastal townships in Newport and Bristol counties, Rhode Island. These include Barrington, Bristol, Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton and Warren. As a non-profit organization, Discover Newport partners with stakeholders throughout our tourism and hospitality industry to market the region as a premier destination for business and leisure travel.

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