BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

New members appointed to Brand USA board of directors

Washington, DC - March 06, 2018

Brand USA, the destination-marketing organization for the United States, has announced the appointment of two new board members and the reappointment of one existing member to the Brand USA board of directors. The appointments were made by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security as provided for in the Travel Promotion, Enhancement, and Modernization Act of 2014. The newly appointed and reappointed members include:

- John Edman, director, Explore Minnesota Tourism (reappointment, representing the state tourism office sector).
- Noel Irwin Hentschel, chairman and chief executive officer, AmericanTours International (new appointment, representing the travel distribution services sector)
- Mike Gallagher, co-founder and co-chairman CityPASS® (new appointment, representing the small business sector).

The new board appointees join a group of tourism industry leaders each with designated expertise in specific sectors of the travel industry including: hotel accommodations; restaurants; small business or retail or in associations representing that sector; travel distribution; attractions or recreations; state-level tourism office; city-level convention and visitors bureau; passenger air; land or sea transportation; and immigration law and policy.

“We are very fortunate to have talented industry leaders like Noel Hentschel and Mike Gallagher join us in the mission of promoting and attracting greater international tourism to generate jobs and export dollars for the USA,” said Barbara Richardson, chief of external relations for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro) and Brand USA board chair. “We are also pleased to continue to benefit from the experience and expertise of John Edman for another term. Finally, we thank Tom Klein and Daniel Halpern for their many years of service on the board. Their contributions to Brand USA since its founding built a strong foundation that ensures Brand USA’s long-term success and economic return to our country.”

The newly appointed and re-appointed board members will convene with the current board members at upcoming board committee meetings and the next quarterly board meeting on May 2. More information about Brand USA board meetings is available at http://www.thebrandusa.com/media-events/board-meetings. The current officers of the Brand USA board of directors are:

- Chair: Barbara Richardson, chief of external relations for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro)
- Vice Chair: Kyle Edmiston, deputy director/chief operations officer for Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Vice Chair: John Edman, director, Explore Minnesota Tourism
- Secretary: Andrew Greenfield, managing partner, Washington, DC office, Fragomen
- Treasurer: Arne Sorenson, president and CEO of Marriott International, Inc.

“We look forward to working with Noel and Mike as the newest members of Brand USA’s board of directors. Both are industry leaders from successful industry organizations,” said Christopher L. Thompson, president and CEO of Brand USA. “Each brings to the board a unique level of insight as we continue to fuel the nation’s economy by driving international tourism to the USA. Their perspectives, combined with John’s ongoing contributions, will be valuable assets to the board.”

Thompson also acknowledged the contributions of outgoing board members Tom Klein, former president and CEO of Sabre, and Daniel Halpern, CEO and co-founder, Jackmont Hospitality. He noted: “Tom and Daniel have provided invaluable leadership and guidance to Brand USA since our early days as the destination marketing organization for the United States. We are eternally grateful for their commitment and contributions from our formative years to today, which has left a lasting positive mark on the organization. As founding board members and past chairs of the board, they each helped build Brand USA into what it is, and I am confident the foundation they helped set will serve us well in our future growth.”

Brand USA deploys a number of marketing platforms and programs to increase inbound visitor travel to the United States and drive tourism dollars to communities in all 50 states, five territories, and the District of Columbia, as well as to promote tourism to, through, and beyond the gateways. To accomplish this, Brand USA utilizes a combination of brand marketing, public relations, travel trade outreach,

and cooperative marketing programs that provide opportunities for partners of all types and sizes to participate.

According to studies by Oxford Economics, over the past four years Brand USA's marketing initiatives have helped welcome 4.3 million incremental visitors to the USA, benefiting the U.S. economy with nearly $30 billion in total economic impact, and have supported, on average, 51,000 incremental jobs a year.

According to the U.S. Travel Association, international travel to the United States is the country's top services export and supports 1.8 million American jobs (directly and indirectly) and benefits virtually every sector of the U.S. economy.

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About the Newly Appointed and Reappointed Board Members

John Edman, director of Explore Minnesota Tourism, is responsible for the development and implementation of tourism plans, policies, and programs to promote Minnesota as a tourism and travel destination. He is the state's chief spokesperson for tourism-related issues and manages an agency with approximately 60 full-time staff and an annual budget of $13.9 million. First appointed to the Brand USA board of directors in Fiscal Year 2015, John's reappointment will run through Fiscal Year 2020.

John has more than 25 years of CEO-level experience in some of the world's most prominent private and public sector travel organizations. He has managed programs for government agencies, for-profit corporations and convention bureaus, and was directly appointed by three Minnesota governors. John has been elected to leadership positions by peers in numerous national and regional organizations and helped reposition Explore Minnesota as a separate state agency to maximize private sector involvement.

Previously, he served as the director of Carlson Companies' destination marketing services, representing agencies and bureaus responsible for tourism marketing programs for hundreds of state and national tourism destinations throughout the world.

John has been active in national and state leadership positions with numerous organizations and boards including:

- National Council of State Travel Directors
- U.S. Travel Association Board of Directors
- Great Lakes USA
- Mississippi River Country
- Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Foundation
- Minnesota Film and TV Board
- University of Minnesota Tourism Center

John holds an MBA from the University of St. Thomas and a BSc degree from the University of Minnesota. He also is a graduate of the Carlson Executive Leadership Program at the University of Minnesota. He is a life-long resident of Minnesota, is married with two children in college, and loves traveling, skiing, fishing, golfing, hiking, dogs, and the great outdoors.

Noel Irwin Hentschel is chairman, CEO, and co-founder of AmericanTours International (ATI), America's largest privately held, American-owned, visit USA tourism and marketing organization. Dually headquartered in Los Angeles, Calif. and Orlando, Fla. with regional offices in New York City, N.Y., and Hawaii, ATI was founded in 1977 and today serves nearly one million visitors and generates over $3 billion into the U.S. economy annually.

Hentschel and ATI revolutionized the inbound tour operator industry from the moment they opened their doors and continue to do so today, setting standards for quality of service, product innovation, and technological expertise. In its early years, ATI created and operated the first seat-in motorcoach tours and DriveAmerica fly-drive itineraries specifically marketed to international travelers. Today, ATI distributes wholesale hotel and attraction inventory from some 30,000 suppliers across all 50 states to clients in over 70 international markets.

Hentschel is a prominent voice for public policy issues that affect the tourism industry. She served six recurring terms on the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and in 2018 was appointed to the board of directors of Brand USA. In 2007, Hentschel worked with U.S. and Chinese government officials to implement Approved Destination Status (ADS) for the United States. In 2008, ATI opened a representative office in Beijing to promote tourism to all 50 U.S. states and territories.

Hentschel also works with business and government to respond to humanitarian needs, including those that can be enriched through travel. Inspired by working with mentor Mother Teresa, in 1989 she established The Noel Foundation, focusing on women as untapped resources in developing countries and in America's inner cities. Partnering with the Urban League and ATI, the Foundation established the "Education through Travel" program that takes inner city youth across the United States to witness the majesty of its national parks and to learn the history of their nation. The foundation also partners with the Hashemite Social Development Fund to help train young men and women in Jordan to work in tourism.

Hentschel and her husband Gordon live in Los Angeles, Calif. and Hawaii. They own and operate Stonepine Estate, a retreat in Carmel Valley, Calif., and are the parents of seven children.

Mike Gallagher is co-chairman and co-founder of City Pass, Inc., an innovative attractions marketing company that provides significant savings on ticket packages to the top attractions in 12 North American destinations. The idea sprang from the collaborative efforts of co-founders Mike Gallagher and Mike Morey. Beginning in 1996, the two combined their respective attraction marketing and industry research skills to launch a company whose products currently enjoy a 98 percent customer recommendation rating. From its initial 1997 debut in the cities of San Francisco, Calif. and Seattle, Wash. the CityPASS program has expanded to include New York City, N.Y; Southern Calif., Atlanta, Ga; Boston, Mass; Chicago, Ill.; Dallas, Texas; Houston, Texas; Philadelphia, Pa; Tampa Bay, Fla; Toronto; and Southern Calif. The Southern California CityPASS card includes prepaid admission to four family-friendly theme parks: Disneyland®, Disney California Adventure Park, SeaWorld San Diego, and LEGOLAND California.

Prior to launching City Pass, Gallagher accumulated a wealth of experience as both a theme park executive and a tourism leader. He started his career in various operations and marketing capacities at SeaWorld San Diego, Calif. and the San Diego Zoo. In 1974, Gallagher joined Marine World Africa USA (now Six Flags Discovery Kingdom). In 1980, at the age of 28, he was promoted to the position of executive vice president of marketing, where he played a key role in all aspects of the park's operation, including serving as one of the primary forces behind Marine World's successful move from Redwood City to Vallejo, Calif. in 1985.

Gallagher is a leading figure in the travel industry. He is a founding commissioner of Visit California (formerly the California Travel and Tourism Commission), established in 1998. He was the chairman of the California Travel Industry Association in 1985 and again in 1995. In 2016, he was appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to a second two-year term on the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board.

Gallagher was also actively involved in the passage of the Travel Promotion Act in 2010 and was a member of the task force that created the blueprint for the Corporation for Travel Promotion, now Brand USA. In 2018, he was appointed to Brand USA's board of directors, where he will help to guide the efforts of America's official destination marketing organization.

In 2005, Gallagher was honored as California's Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year. More recently, he was recognized by the Pacific Area Travel Writers Association International (PATWA) with a 2010 Hall of Fame Lifetime Contribution in Tourism Award. In 2013, he was inducted into the U.S. Travel Association's prestigious Hall of Leaders, which recognizes "sustained, noteworthy contributions that have positively impacted the travel industry, stimulated greater achievement, and raised industry-wide standards." And in January 2015, he was honored with the Hotel Excellence Awards' Lifetime Achievement Award for his efforts on behalf of New York City, N.Y's hospitality industry.

Gallagher and his wife, Connie, who have three children, split their time between their home in California's Napa Valley and their residence in Washington, DC.

About the Brand USA Board of Directors

Brand USA is governed by an 11-member board of directors appointed for a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security. To allow for staggered term expirations, of the members first appointed to the board, three were appointed for terms of one year, four were appointed for terms of two years, and four were appointed for terms of three years. All members of the board are United States citizens and are either current or former chief executive officers, chief financial offers, or chief marketing officers, or have held equivalent management positions.

Designated board members have leadership expertise in specific sectors of the travel industry including: hotel accommodations; restaurants; small business or retail or in associations representing that sector; travel distribution; attractions or recreations; state-level tourism office; city-level convention and visitors bureau; passenger air; land or sea transportation; and immigration law and policy. At least two members of the board are audit committee financial experts. In addition, at least five members of the board have expertise in international travel promotion or marketing broadly representing various regions of the United States. Brand USA board members receive no compensation for their service on the Brand USA board.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.

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