NEWS RELEASE

# Jim Evans Steps Down as Brand USA CEO; Industry Veteran Caroline Beteta to Lead as Interim CEO

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*Change Reflects Transition from Start-Up Venture to Fully Functioning Marketing Organization*

Brand USA Chief Executive Officer James Evans is stepping down and will be replaced in the interim by Brand USA Chairman-elect Caroline Beteta, it was announced today. The year-old organization's Board of Directors has begun a search for Evans' replacement. The agreement was reached in consultation with the Board, and comes as the organization pivots from a start-up endeavor to securing its place as the nation's destination marketing organization (DMO). Beteta is the highly regarded CEO of Visit California, and a longtime industry veteran.

"We thank Jim for the time, energy and passion he has brought to establishing this enterprise," said Beteta. "Brand USA has hit critical milestones in its development and now is at an important transition point. Our focus going forward is to build on the momentum the organization has established by increasing and deepening our partnerships with the travel industry, building out co-op marketing opportunities to attract increased private-sector funding, and enhancing our responsiveness and communications with our government partners."

"As I reflect on the accomplishments of the last year, I am gratified in how much progress we have made," said Evans. "I know I leave Brand USA with a great foundation and a strong team that will take the organization forward."

Brand USA is a national program with the mission of attracting billions of dollars in increased visitor spending to the U.S., which will create tens of thousands of new jobs. In its first year of operation, Brand USA has achieved numerous accomplishments against its vision including:

- Establishing a fully integrated marketing, sales, research, partnership and development strategy.
- Developing a strong brand identity.
- Creating a state-of-the-art website to promote the United States worldwide and provide travelers important information about U.S. entry policies and procedures.
- Creating the nation's tourism marketing campaign and launching the first wave in three top-tier markets – Japan, Canada and the U.K.
- Establishing partnerships with more than 250 industry organizations, which will raise more than $10 million in industry contributions and more than $30 million in in-kind contributions.

Beteta will assume responsibility as interim CEO effective immediately.

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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.