



Happy Valley Sports & Entertainment Alliance announces Board of Directors

State College, PA, Sept. 11, 2023 -- The **Happy Valley Sports & Entertainment Alliance (HVSEA)** announced the Board of Directors and officers that will help guide the organization as it works to elevate sports and entertainment events in Centre County, what many know as Happy Valley, Pennsylvania.

HVSEA Executive Director Eric Engelbarts said the newly formed Board is a dynamic mix of Penn State University officials; sports and entertainment industry experts; and notable community leaders that bring broad perspective and influence to organization.

“Happy Valley is poised to capitalize in greater ways on its proud sports tradition to become a premier sports and entertainment destination,” Engelbarts said. “Careful consideration went into putting together a Board necessary to further move the needle and successfully compete for higher level sports and entertainment offerings.”

Engelbarts said the inaugural IRONMAN® 70.3® Pennsylvania Happy Valley triathlon, and the recent announcement that country superstar Luke Combs will play Beaver Stadium in spring 2024, are two examples of the types of high-profile, high-economic-impact events the HVSEA wants to attract to the county.

HVSEA Board Chair Bill Oldsey, Penn State University trustee emeritus and retired president of McGraw-Hill Education, expressed confidence that the right people are at the table to significantly enhance the economic impact of sports and entertainment in the county.

“We have excellent facilities. We have the infrastructure for and the experience in hosting very large crowd events. Most importantly, we have visionary men and women who understand the long-term value of thinking bigger,” Oldsey said. “I look forward to working with Eric and the HVSEA Board to attract and successfully manage events that will cement sports’ and entertainments’ economic contributions to the county for years to come.”

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HVSEA Board Officers and Directors:

- William Oldsey, Chair, Penn State University trustee emeritus and retired president, McGraw-Hill Education
- Adam Miller, Vice Chair, Deputy Athletic Director for External Affairs and Engagement, Penn State Intercollegiate Athletics
- Jennifer Brooks-Stahl, Treasurer, General Manager, Wyndham Garden State College
- Randy Houston, Secretary, Entertainment Attorney/former PSU Trustee
- Pat Kraft, Athletic Director/Vice President, Penn State Intercollegiate Athletics
- Char Morett-Curtiss, Penn State Intercollegiate Athletics/former Women's Field Hockey Coach
- Venkat Bendapudi, Ph.D., Professor/Business Administration, Penn State University
- Charlene Friedman, Chief Financial Officer, State College Downtown Properties
- Heidi Nicholas, Principal and Owner, Nicholas Enterprises
- Scott Walker, President & General Manager, State College Spikes
- Al Karosas, Executive Director, Bryce Jordan Center
- Jamie Bestwick, Owner, Rothrock Coffee, BMX freestyle professional and Olympic Gold Medal coach
- Stephen Carpenter, Dean of the College of Arts and Architecture, Penn State University
- Dan Wallace, Director of Development, Arrow Real Estate Services
- Chris Magent, Chief Operating Officer, Alexander Building Construction
- Stefan Cherinka, Area Manager, Shaner Hotels
- Mark Higgins, Chair, Centre County Commissioners
- Edward Tubbs, Chief Operating Officer, Hospitality Asset Management Company
- Fritz Smith, President & CEO, The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau

The HVSEA Board met for the first time on Thursday, Sept. 7.

Engelbarts said the inaugural meeting focused on introducing the organization, electing officers, outlining governance and regulation, presenting strategic initiatives, and creating a preliminary meeting schedule for the remainder of the 2023-24 fiscal year.

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About the HVSEA

The mission of the Happy Valley Sports & Entertainment Alliance is to drive Happy Valley's overall sports and entertainment strategy, enrich the quality of life, create economic impact, and raise the visibility of the region. For more information, visit www.HVSEA.com