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## **HVAB welcomes new Board officers; directors**

State College, PA, March 21, 2023 – Wyndham Garden State College General Manager Jennifer Brooks-Stahl will serve as the new Chair of The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB) Board of Directors for 2023-24, HVAB President and CEO Fritz Smith announced today.

“I am thrilled to be appointed Chair of The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau,” Brooks-Stahl said. “I have been a member of the Happy Valley hospitality community for more than two and a half decades. During that time, I have seen a great deal of change.

“There is no better time for tourism in Happy Valley as we continue to cultivate new events, such as the IRONMAN triathlon,” she continued.

Brooks-Stahl said industry partners continue to be the foundation of the HVAB’s success.

“We appreciate the collaboration of our local municipalities and Penn State University to make events like this possible, and for their support of the HVAB’s mission to grow our tourism economy,” she said.

Brooks-Stahl takes over for long-time Chair Edward Tubbs, Chief Operating Officer, Hospitality Asset Management Company, who remains on the Board as Immediate Past Chair.

“Jennifer is a knowledgeable and passionate ambassador for the tourism and hospitality industries, both in her position at the Wyndham Garden, and also through her active engagement with the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association and its Keystone Chapter,” Smith said. “We valued her insights as a member of the Board, and now look forward to her guidance as Chair as we continue building a strong foundation for the growth and success of our local visitation economy.”

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Fritz thanked Tubbs for his leadership as Chair, particularly during the very daunting time of the pandemic and its aftermath.

“The organization and our members persevered through some tough times,” Smith said. “We are grateful for Edward’s commitment to growth and recovery, and for helping to set the stage for some exciting things to come.”

Additional Board officers for 2023-24 are:

- Vice Chair: David Capperella, Owner, Capperella Furniture
- Treasurer: Vincent McDonald, Chief International Strategy Officer, AccuWeather

Smith also recognized new HVAB Board member appointments:

- Michael Croce, Partner, Hotel State College
- Eric Rusnak, attorney, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, President of the Philipsburg Revitalization Corp.
- Joseph Leahy, Vice President, McCrossin

In addition, Centre County Commissioner Amber Concepcion replaces new Commissioner Chair Mark Higgins as the county representative; and Charima Young, Assistant Vice President for Government and Community Relations, Penn State University, returns as a Board member after serving in a strategic advisory role.

Smith also thanked departing Board members for their service to the HVAB and its tourism economic development mission.

Leaving the Board are:

- Joe Battista, Coach, Author and Motivational speaker
- Kevin Lloyd, Proprietor, Big Spring Spirits

“The individuals who have served and are currently serving on the HVAB Board have brought and bring diverse perspectives to the forefront in shaping the organization’s evolving destination marketing, economic development and community place-making mission,” Smith said. “The HVAB and its members and partners are well served as a result.”

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