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Tourism Diversity Matters Celebrates 1st Anniversary and Welcomes New Board Members

TRAVEL AGENT | MARCH 10, 2022



Artistic representation of the value of social and ethnic diversity. (photo via iStock/Getty Images Plus/vector_s)

WHY IT RATES: Launched only last year, *Tourism Diversity Matters* is already making an impact across the tourism and events industry, working in cooperation with notable companies and organizations to advocate for increased diversity, equity and inclusion practices throughout the sector. — Laurie Baratti, *TravelPulse* Associate Writer

Tourism Diversity Matters (TDM) launched in February 2021 and has spent the past year introducing its collective impact model, and working to inspire authenticity and inclusive leadership throughout the tourism and events industry.

TDM’s mission is to be a resource to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion

“Our team has worked to provide decision-makers in the tourism and events industry access, resources, and tactics to develop more effective Diversity & Inclusion strategies that will engage and retain a diverse workforce. Our goal is to create solutions that can implement, change, and contribute to organizational success,” said DeShields.

TDM has accomplished many milestones in the first year, including more than 25 DEI-focused presentations with notable organizations, successful apprenticeship programs, workforce development strategies, and the establishment of strategic industry partnerships.

“It has been a tremendous year for Tourism Diversity Matters since its inception in February 2021. From successfully launching the organization as a call to action in response to the civil unrest around the death of George Floyd in the Summer of 2020 and the Black Leaders CVB Letter to the Industry, which shook the entire industry, that followed soon after—to ending 2021 with the establishment of a strategic partnership with the U.S. Travel Association,” said Elliott Ferguson, TDM’s Chairman of the Board and President and CEO, Destination DC.

As TDM continues to make great strides in advancing DEI in the tourism and events industry, the organization is pleased to welcome new members to the Board of Directors with the addition of:

- Adam Burke, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board
- Don Welsh, President and CEO of Destinations International
- Fred Dixon, President and CEO of NYC & Company
- Greg O’Dell, CEO of Events DC
- John Page, CTA, General Manager of ASM Global’s Greater Columbus

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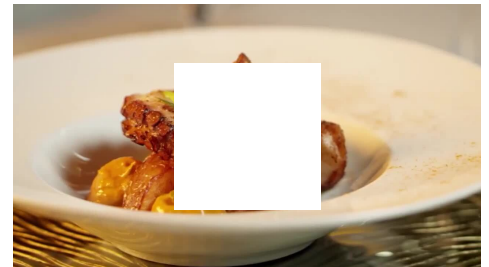


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The new board members will join under the leadership of Elliott Ferguson, TDM’s Chairman of the Board and President and CEO, Destination DC, and Mike Gamble, TDM’s Founder and President and CEO of SearchWide Global. These leaders will serve alongside TDM’s inaugural Board of Directors to play a key role in advocacy and the advancement of TDM’s four guiding pillars, including Apprenticeship Programs; Workforce Development; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and Research and Data.

The goal is to sustain and continue expanding the platform by collaborating with associated organizations and industries and notable research institutions to develop impactful solutions for all involved. TDM has been fortunate to have the support of many partners that continue to help sustain the longevity of the organization.

“While it is rewarding to celebrate our first anniversary and see what Tourism Diversity Matters has accomplished in one year, we remain dedicated to creating long-term solutions through complete industry engagement and participation,” said Gamble. “We will continue highlighting the good work happening in our industry, as well as serving as a resource to provide value and insight.”

For more information, visit tourismdiversitymatters.org.

SOURCE: Tourism Diversity Matters press release.

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