Boise Convention & Visitors Bureau Shows Success in 2015

New staff, website and alignment with Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce build momentum for tourism agency

BOISE, March 24, 2016 – The last year showed encouraging overall growth and strong momentum for Boise’s tourism and convention business, according to data collected from the Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB).

“This has been an incredible year of growth and innovation at the Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau,” said Carrie Westergard, Boise CVB Executive Director. “The CVB Board of Directors entrusted me with a mission of reviving an atmosphere of trust, transparency and collaboration between staff, community partners and stakeholders.”

In 2015, the Boise CVB added two staff members: Westergard and Sports Sales Manager Alena Sheire.

Westergard’s first year as head of the BCVB included festivals and events like U.S. Youth Soccer’s Far West Tournament, Basque Friendly Soccer and Jaialdi, the largest Basque festival in the country, held only once every five years.

The year ended with 1.57 million overnight stays and nearly 1.4 million passengers into the Boise Airport—an eight percent increase from 2014. Due to the efforts of the Boise Convention & Visitors Sales Team there were already 60 confirmed meetings and events planned for 2016 – and 45 pending confirmation as of Dec. 2015—totaling approximately 18,000 room nights.

The tourism industry generates 40,600 jobs in Idaho and ranks third in the state’s Gross Domestic Products behind Agriculture and Computer/Electronics. The travel industry brought in $1.3 billion to Idaho in 2014. Data for 2015 are still forthcoming. This data comes from research conducted by Dean Runyan and Associates, published in Dec. 2015.

To market this important economic asset, Westergard executed a revitalized brand strategy and forceful public relations outreach. That effort included a revitalization of the Boise CVB website, marketing materials and logo. The website, which includes a new reservation feature for visitors, will promote ease of travel not only for meetings and convention goers as well as event planners. The site also tracks lodging data for improved research.

The Boise CVB closed out 2015 by completing its merger with the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce in November. This partnership will allow the two organizations to strategically align their missions moving forward. The partnership increases outreach possibilities for the Boise CVB and will add exposure given the Chamber’s strong presence as Idaho’s leading business advocate.

“Few major metro regions in the United States enjoy the efficiency and strategic advantage of having their Chamber of Commerce, CVB, and economic development agency under one roof,” said Bill Connors, CEO of the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce. “We believe the Boise Valley is one of America’s most dynamic destinations. Adding Carrie Westergard’s community leadership, and the convention and tourism experience of her and her team, will make our message about Boise even more compelling.”

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**About the Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau:** The Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau is a nonprofit organization that works to enhance the City of Boise's economy through the marketing, promotion and selling of the city and region as a site for conventions, corporate meetings, trade shows, pleasure travel, cultural, sports, and special events. Each year, Boise hosts hundreds of meetings and special events, which are significant contributors to the local economy. The Boise CVB was established in 1982.