

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau's Barry Draper Named One of 30 Future Leaders of Destination Marketing

**OAK BROOK, IL** — Destinations International Foundation Chair Stephanie Pace Brown and President and CEO of Explore Asheville and Destinations International President and CEO Don Welsh today announced the 2018 30 Under 30 class, which will convene for the first time at the association's 2018 Annual Convention in Anaheim, CA July 10-13. Barry Draper, Partnership & Client Services Manager with the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DuPage CVB) is among the 2018 class.

The 30 individuals, 30 years of age and under, will have the opportunity to engage in professional development opportunities throughout 2018 and beyond. The honorees originate from a variety of destination organizations of all sizes, including Brand USA, Visit Panama City Beach, Tourisme Montréal and Choose Chicago.

"The 30 Under 30 program recognizes the up and coming talent of destination organizations nationwide," said Brown. "The Foundation created this initiative to develop the future leaders of our industry and is proud to have supported the 210 professionals who have participated in the program the past seven years."

Draper holds an impressive array of experience in the hospitality industry working with multiple hotel brands and venues in Peoria, IL and Chicagoland areas. Since joining the DuPage CVB almost two years ago, he has developed the role of Partnership & Services Manager applying both his experience as well as passion to the organization. Commanding full ownership of membership recruitment & retention, he has assisted the DuPage CVB with achieving a 94%-member retention rate which lies high above the 82% national average. Draper also oversees convention services, events and system administration.

Outside his destination marketing role, Draper is a trained musician with a history in musical theater and dance. Crediting his start in destination marketing to working in college admissions experience at Bradley University, he cites his personal passion for the arts as his professional inspiration. "I remember seeing my first musical at Drury Lane Theatre, the rush of my first on-stage performance, even the excitement of working my first professional conference," said Draper. "If I can help our members create and share those experiences for our visitors to enjoy, I think that is the real reward for not just for myself, but our entire team."

"We are thrilled to welcome this year's 2018 30 Under 30 class to our Annual Convention in Anaheim," said Welsh. "Attendance to the convention will be the first of many educational and professional development opportunities offered through the program."

Program benefits include:

- Complimentary registration and three nights' accommodations during Destinations International's 2018 Annual Convention in Anaheim, California
- Complimentary registration for Fundamentals in Destination Marketing, the first course of Destinations International's PDM program
- Year-round professional development focus, including regular interactive webinars and an online community to share ideas
- Opportunity to apply to attend the Association of Australian Convention Bureaus's Annual Conference

*The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official sales and marketing organization for DuPage County. The DCVB was formed to attract business and leisure travelers to DuPage County's 38 communities and is responsible for generating billions of dollars in revenue every year in the form of hotel nights, tourist attractions, meals and more. The DuPage CVB is the only Illinois State certified not-for-profit organization authorized to represent DuPage County's tourism and convention business.*

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"Each year our convention attendees are inspired by the astute, creative minds in the 30 Under 30 program," said Tammy Blount-Canavan, Destinations International Chair and President and CEO of the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The program provides the best and the brightest additional insights, opportunities and tools for success in destination marketing and management. These young leaders give us a glimpse into a very bright future for our industry."

The 30 Under 30 program is supported by founding program partner, SearchWide and sponsored by IMEX and Northstar.

"In its eighth year, SearchWide is still thrilled to sponsor such an incredible program," said Mike Gamble, President and CEO of SearchWide. "We're looking forward to connecting with the 2018 recipients at Destinations International's Annual Convention as well as offering our mentorship to these rising stars as they continue their career paths."

For more information about the 30 Under 30 program or Destinations International, visit [www.destinationsinternational.org](http://www.destinationsinternational.org).

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