

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attn: All Media Outlets

From: Gregg Van Horn, ICTB Board President

Re: Executive Director Announces Retirement

Date: February 11, 2021

Gregg Van Horn, President of the Indiana County Tourist Bureau (ICTB) Board of Directors, recently announced the retirement of Executive Director Denise Liggett. While the Board of Directors is thankful for the many years of leadership and service Denise has provided, she will surely be missed. Van Horn stated, "I'm happy for Denise! I think everyone should have the opportunity to retire, but obviously, I'm sad to see her go. Denise has done a great job of representing the Indiana County Tourist Bureau and she has developed strong partnerships throughout Indiana County."

Denise has held several roles during her tenure of more than 10 years with ICTB. Denise first started out as ICTB's Advertising and Special Events Coordinator, which was a perfect fit after 30 years of living in Atlanta, GA where she built a successful career in advertising and corporate communications.

In October 2013, after a brief departure from ICTB, Denise was asked by the ICTB Board of Directors to return as the Interim Executive Director. Soon after, Denise was permanently appointed the position in April 2014.

Denise fondly reflects on her time as ICTB Executive Director: *"One of the first major committees I was asked to take part in was for the 2014 Governor's Awards for the Arts. I found myself sitting at a table with the President of IUP, in his Executive Conference Room, surrounded by twenty or so other high-level IUP representatives, as well as numerous community leaders. It was a little overwhelming at first, but the project was incredibly exciting and it was an honor to serve on the committee. That one event opened so many doors for me, and I embraced walking through every single one of them! I am overwhelmed with gratitude for having held this position and the opportunity to meet, work, laugh, and build relationships with so many wonderful people. I've been blessed with a Board that always stood by me and supported me. My success and enjoyment at ICTB is because of the team members I've had the privilege to work with because we are only as good as our TEAM! I'm excited about my decision, though I will miss the day-to-day folks I collaborate with regularly."*

Strengthening relationships between community leaders, local businesses, organizations and partners in the tourism industry has been one of Denise's personal hallmarks. Denise is deeply admired by many throughout Indiana County and the sentiment is echoed as fellow members from the community have offered their well-wishes to Denise as her retirement date draws near;

“Denise has been an incredible partner with so many university initiatives, and especially in the work we have done with the Indiana Area Collaborative Team’s communications and community relations subcommittee. She’s a great strategic thinker and an incredibly hard worker. She’s an outstanding ambassador for Indiana County and for its businesses, organizations, attractions and citizens. Wherever you go, no matter how big or small an event, Denise is there, actively supporting Indiana County in every possible way. She always has a smile on her face and is ready to do whatever it takes to get the job done. She will be missed!”

- Michelle Fryling, Executive Director of Media Relations, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

“When using words such as tourism, marketing, commitment, knowledge, expertise, leadership, collaboration, and friend – I think of Denise Liggett. Denise epitomizes all those attributes and much more. Denise has been a great partner over the years on many critical issues and has served as an advocate and resource for County residents, businesses, and certainly visitors to our community. My sincere appreciation to Denise for her dedicated years of service to the Indiana County Center for Economic Operations and wish her “... a Wonderful Life” during her long and well-deserved retirement.

- Byron G. Stauffer, Jr., Executive Director, Indiana County Development Corporation

“This is such bitter sweet news. I have truly enjoyed working with you and I will miss your passion for the Indiana Community. You were such a pivotal part of the orientation and family weekend experiences. I will always remember the warm/inviting way you interacted with me, our orientation staff, and especially the parents and family members. Thank you so very much. I will miss you dearly.”

- Megan McCue, Assistant Director/Student Advocate, Academic Success Center, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

“Downtown Indiana has had an unparalleled partner in Denise Liggett. She is a champion for our downtown and an enthusiastic, knowledgeable promoter of our events and business community. When needed, we can always count on Denise to roll up her sleeves and pitch in with the heavy lifting. She has brought so much to the First Commonwealth Bank It’s a Wonderful Life Festival over the past five years, it’s hard to imagine its success without her. Indiana County will miss Denise’s expertise, vision and hard work - luckily, she has laid the groundwork for the Tourist Bureau to continue successfully in her absence. I will miss my sounding board, partner in crime and dear friend.”

- Linda Mitchell, Executive Director, Downtown Indiana

Additional accomplishments Denise proudly completed during her tenure with ICTB include her leading role in the production of several promotional videos and advertising campaigns, with the goal of attracting visitors, new businesses and residents to Indiana County. She is also grateful to have been involved with The Challenger Project, IUP Welcome Mat Orientations, the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association Conference, Indiana Borough’s Bicentennial Celebration and so many others.

Denise is proud to have served as a board member of several Indiana County organizations, including: the Indiana County Center for Economic Operations, Welcome to Indiana, “It’s A Wonderful Life” Festival and Parade, and Downtown Indiana. In 2019, Denise was honored to receive the “Heart of Downtown” award for her work in partnering to promote the downtown Indiana business district as a destination for tourists and locals alike to shop, dine, and visit.

Denise’s retirement will be effective April 30, 2021. ICTB Office Manager, Laura Herrington, will serve as the Interim Executive Director to fulfill Denise’s vacancy.