

Travel South USA Announces Stephen Foutes as New Chairman of the Board

Stephen Foutes is named Chairman of the Southern Travel Directors Council, focusing on new tourism campaigns and strategic growth for the Southern region.

ATLANTA, GA, UNITED STATES, August 26, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- We are excited to announce that Stephen Foutes, Director of the Missouri Division of Tourism, has been elected Chairman of the Board for the Southern Travel Directors Council, Inc. for the FY24/25 term. Foutes brings with him extensive experience and a strong passion for the tourism industry. Joining him on the Executive Board for this term are Vice Chair Mark Ezell, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development; Secretary Wit Tuttell, Executive Director of Visit North Carolina; Treasurer Rochelle Hicks of Visit Mississippi; Immediate Past Chair Mike Mangeot, Commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Tourism; and Liz Bittner, President & CEO of Travel South USA.

Foutes' career in journalism and his integral role in the Missouri Division of Tourism since 2009 have provided him with a deep understanding of the tourism industry. As a lifelong Missourian, Foutes is committed to enhancing Southern tourism and is eager to build on the achievements of his predecessors. "I am honored to serve as Chair of the Southern Travel Directors Council," said Foutes. "It's a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated and innovative group of professionals. My focus for the FY24/25 term will be on advancing our B2B2C campaigns, creating engaging online content to attract travelers to the region, and introducing targeted 'power hours' training sessions to keep our state destinations at the forefront of industry trends.

We will prioritize our Signature Events, including the Travel South International Showcase, Global Week & Media Marketplace, and IPW Client Activation, which are crucial for connecting our Southern destinations with global tour operators and journalists." Foutes emphasized the importance of adapting strategies to meet evolving consumer demands and market dynamics. "Our initiatives for FY24/25 will be guided by research-driven approaches and strategic partnerships. We aim to strengthen our regional identity and expand our global presence through efforts such as Tourism Exchange USA, supported by Brand USA. This will revolutionize our stakeholder connections and enhance engagement across the Southern states."

Travel South USA works directly for states and partner stakeholders on international marketing, product development, distribution strategies, and managed media campaigns in over 20

countries to boost the travel industry, strengthen the national economy, create jobs, support small businesses, and increase tax revenues for local and state governments. Together, we will keep elevating the South to new heights.

About Travel South USA: Founded in 1965, Travel South USA is America's oldest and largest regional travel promotion organization. Representing the state tourism offices of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, the organization plays a vital role in the region's economic development. In 2019, tourism ranked among the top three industries in the region, contributing \$133 billion in visitor spending, generating 1.4 million direct jobs, \$30 billion in worker paychecks, and nearly \$16 billion in state and local taxes. For consumer information, visit [TravelSouthUSA.com](https://www.TravelSouthUSA.com), and for industry insights, visit [TravelSouthUSA.org](https://www.TravelSouthUSA.org). For more information, please

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