



For Immediate Release
October 15, 2025

Contact: Brett McWethy, Senior Director, Communications
313-570-7686 | bmcwethy@visitdetroit.com

VISIT DETROIT ANNOUNCES PROMOTIONS FOR SENIOR LEADERS

- *Ken Hayward named Chief Operating Officer (COO)*
- *Harriet Carter promoted to Senior Vice President, Services, Partnerships, and Events*
- *Andrea Cadotto promoted to Associate Vice President, Sales*
- *Sheila Neal promoted to Associate Vice President, Strategic Alliances*

DETROIT – Visit Detroit President and CEO **Claude Molinari** today announced four promotions on the organization's senior leadership team.

Ken Hayward has been named Visit Detroit's Chief Operating Officer, **Harriet Carter** was promoted to Senior Vice President of Services, Partnerships and Events, **Andrea Cadotto** was named Associate Vice President of Sales, and **Sheila Neal** was elevated to Associate Vice President of Strategic Alliances.

"I am excited to announce promotions for Ken Hayward, Harriet Carter, Andrea Cadotto and Sheila Neal during a critical period of growth for Visit Detroit and the Detroit Sports Commission," said **Claude Molinari**, President and CEO. "All four leaders have helped us capitalize on Detroit's momentum and will continue to push our organization forward into the future."

Hayward is being promoted to Chief Operating Officer (COO) after most recently serving as Visit Detroit's Executive Advisor of Government and Community Affairs. Hayward has enjoyed an illustrious career in hospitality, including 35 years as the Executive Vice President and Managing Director at Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. He also served as the Vice President and Special Assistant to the CEO for Community Relations at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan from 2020-24.

Hayward will report directly to Molinari, and oversee Visit Detroit's sales, strategic alliances, services, partnerships and events departments. Detroit Sports Commission Executive Director **Marty Dobek** and his team will also report to Hayward.

Carter recently celebrated her 36th anniversary at Visit Detroit, having joined the organization in 1989. In her elevated role, Carter will continue to manage the services and partnerships teams, along with the newly established events department.

The centralization of all three functions will allow Visit Detroit to maximize resources, create cohesive customer and partner experiences, and highlight Southeast Michigan's position as an ideal destination for meetings, conventions, and ancillary events.

Carter recently became a Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME), the tourism industry's highest individual educational achievement that prepares senior executives to thrive in a constantly changing environment.

Cadotto has been elevated to Associate Vice President, Sales following a 13-year tenure at Visit Detroit, most recently serving as the Senior Director of Sales Strategy. Her career in hospitality sales spans more than 25 years, specializing in destination marketing, sales management, and strategic planning to her new leadership role.

Cadotto will lead Visit Detroit's growing sales team, including sales managers and staff members located in Detroit, Midwest and Washington D.C. The team will continue to focus on strategic selling and securing large special events, meetings and conventions throughout the Metro Detroit region's hospitality ecosystem.

As the new Associate Vice President of Strategic Alliances, Neal will lead the activation and growth of Visit Detroit's partnerships in the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. Neal has enjoyed a 25-year career at Visit Detroit, including her most recent role as Senior Director of Sales & Strategic Alliances.

Visit Detroit serves as a strategic partner with several industry organizations, and sponsors programming at numerous events on an annual basis. Neal will lead the engagement of partnerships with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), Informa CONNECT, the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), IMEX, the U.S. Travel Association, Destinations International and more.

Neal also leads Visit Detroit's engagement efforts with the Diversity Executive Leadership Program (DELP) in partnership with ASAE, including the annual reunion in Detroit. She is also Visit Detroit's primary liaison to the Customer Advisory Board (CAB).

About Visit Detroit

Visit Detroit is the official destination marketing organization for the tri-county region of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties and the city of Detroit, dedicated to promoting Detroit as a world-class international destination for leisure and business travelers. With a focus on showcasing the region's dynamic culture, rich history, and diverse attractions, Visit Detroit aims to drive tourism, economic growth, and community pride. Visit Detroit was founded in 1896 as the world's first convention and visitors bureau, and more than 900 businesses are represented in the membership. For more information go to VisitDetroit.com.

###