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Alaska Travel Industry Association Announces Resignation of CEO Sarah Leonard

Anchorage, AK - The Alaska Travel Industry Association, a statewide, leading nonprofit for Alaska's travel and tourism announced today that its President and CEO Sarah Leonard has resigned after 10 years with the organization. The association's board of directors has appointed a hiring committee to immediately begin an in state and national search to replace her.

ATIA's board of directors shared that Leonard will continue in her role until mid-February, before beginning a new position with Visit Longmont in Colorado. She leaves a well-experienced team of professionals at ATIA who will manage the transition until a replacement is selected.

"On behalf of the board of directors, I thank Sarah for her leadership and commitment to Alaska's travel community during her tenure with the association. Sarah leveraged financial resources and streamlined business operations that kept ATIA serving tourism businesses and our partners throughout the pandemic," said ATIA's board chair and vice president of TEMSCO Helicopters, Craig Jennison. "More importantly, she showed compassion and grace during two very challenging years to our many business members and partners, with the priority of keeping our teams, our employees and visitors safe."

"I appreciate Sarah's leadership and everything she's achieved for Alaska tourism, particularly her attention to highlight cultural and Indigenous tourism experiences and strengthen partnerships with Alaska's Native communities," said Emily Edenshaw, ATIA membership chair and president and CEO of the Alaska Native Heritage Center.

Colleen Stephens, longtime ATIA board member and president of Stan Stephens Cruises shared, "The mark Sarah leaves on Alaska's tourism community is impactful, as she has led our government and community relations efforts, giving ATIA more credibility and respect as Alaska's travel resource and trusted brand. She leaves ATIA on solid ground and poised for the next phase of growth."

"It has been an honor to serve as ATIA's president and CEO," Leonard reflected. "I have learned so much from Alaska's tourism leaders and believe my greatest achievement is being part of ATIA's team, as they exemplify true commitment and passion for Alaska tourism. I am confident that they will continue to



provide the best support for Alaska’s tourism community. After 10 years with ATIA, it is the right time for myself and my family to take the next adventure, while remaining in the travel and tourism world.”

Leonard will remain in Alaska until the summer, when she will then move with her family to Colorado.

About the Alaska Travel Industry Association:

The Alaska Travel Industry Association, Alaska’s leading statewide nonprofit membership association for the travel industry, promotes Alaska’s tourism industry as an economic contributor while providing statewide marketing resources, education opportunities and advocacy to members. ATIA has long managed Alaska’s destination marketing program: Travel Alaska. For more information, visit www.alaskatia.org.

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