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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Western DMOs Take Top Honors Among Peers Best Idea Program Achievement Awards

Four destination marketing organizations received achievement awards in a recent competition with their colleagues from the West. Sponsored by Destination Marketing Association of the West (DMA West), the annual **Best Idea Program** showcases innovative projects and creative marketing strategies as submitted by DMA West members.

This year's Best Idea Program awards were presented during the 2018 DMA West Education Summit, September 11-13, in Boise, Idaho.

Following receipt of the entry forms, a Board-appointed Task Force reviewed the submissions and selected several ideas for presentation. Representatives presented their best ideas during the recent Education Summit.

DMA West congratulates the following member DMOs for receiving outstanding achievement awards for their organizations in the 2018 DMA West Best Idea Program.

Aspen Chamber Resort Association (Colorado)

Project Title: How To Aspen: A Collection of Tips on How To Enjoy Aspen in a Sustainable and Meaningful Way

Following the summer of 2017, which resulted in unprecedented tragedies on Aspen's local mountains, as well as a Colorado population boom (more than 100K moving into the state each year), the Aspen Chamber Resort Association reflected that with an increased population looking to recreate in the outdoors perhaps it was necessary to launch a campaign educating enthusiastic newcomers about how to enjoy the area's beautiful natural resources. The 'How To Aspen' campaign is the go-to resource for planning a trip to Aspen or simply for anyone seeking some local advice. The How To Aspen campaign expands on three main categories: How To Get Here, How To Enjoy Aspen, and How To Get Outside, along with multiple sub-categories that help ensure a safe and fun vacation in the mountains. The 'How To Get Outside' section includes vital information such as best hiking and biking practices, pet information, camping tips, wildlife and wildfire information, and tips for the best way to enjoy the iconic Maroon Bells. The campaign is promoted on the Aspenchamber.org website, print collateral in the Spring, Summer, and Fall Brochure (distributed at visitor centers in town, 10 official Colorado Welcome Centers throughout the state, the Pitkin County Airport, and through direct mail for registered participants), and on all Aspen Chamber social platforms. The Aspen Chamber has also created a blog post to help announce the new campaign, the post links to all 'How To' sections on the website. Along with the written content and photography, the Aspen Chamber also produced several 'How To' videos on Vimeo including: How

To Hiking Etiquette, How To Wildlife, and How To Visit the Maroon Bells – all of which are being pushed on social platforms and corresponding website pages. The project also consists of an “Aspen Pledge” that follows a series of pledges that help the visitor experience and explore Aspen responsibly. The pledge has been administered at our visitor centers located in town for display in addition to printed copies distributed with crayons intended for kids to color. <https://www.aspenchamber.org/how-to>

Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau (Alaska)

Project Title: Empowerment – Video Production

Four years ago with the rising importance of video, Mat-Su CVB budgeted \$10,000 for contracting video production for its marketing efforts. At the same time the executive director recognized that the membership manager has a keen eye for photography and is an avid birder and posted amazing photos. In an effort to challenge and empower him, the executive director had a discussion with him about the CVB buying a camera and having him assume video production for the organization. The membership manager accepted the new responsibilities. Three weeks later, when he was scheduled to go film the restart of the Iditarod Dog Sled Race, Simpleview announced a contest for destinations to submit a short video about what makes their destinations great. The Mat-Su CVB submitted the Iditarod Dog Sled Race video produced that weekend by the membership manager and it was chosen as one of the three finalists that delegates would vote on at the Simpleview Summit. The video overwhelmingly won the contest! So, three weeks into the challenge, the membership manager had proven his value and it was confirmed by others. Since then, the membership manager has produced more than 50 videos such as marketing spots played at baggage claim in the Anchorage airport, videos for the website and blog, member communications about the CVB’s DestinationNEXT workshops, efforts regarding the new Gateway Visitor Center and tutorials for members about how to access and use the extranet. The video production process has also touched many of our members and shown the professionalism and attention from staff. Here is a link to the winning video from the Simpleview Summit and also a video produced for the CVB’s annual meeting about the value of membership: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gj370FG-8Zo>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irMbPNIU8Vc>

Visit Santa Rosa (California)

Project Title: Santa Rosa Beer Passport

Santa Rosa breweries and Visit Santa Rosa collaborated to create the Santa Rosa Beer Passport, a guide to explore the craft beer scene in Santa Rosa/Sonoma County. The Santa Rosa Beer Passport has become part of the FeBREWary celebration that runs the entire month. Passports are picked up at participating breweries, hotels and the California Welcome Center. Participants take their passports to each of the participating breweries to receive a stamp. Completed passports are redeemed at the California Welcome Center for a prize. Prizes include an extra-large Santa Rosa Passport bottle opener medal and lanyard or a commemorative Santa Rosa Passport beer stein. The medals are by far the favorite! This year (2018) was the second year of the Beer Passport Program and it produced twice the results of the first year. It also gave a tremendous boost to breweries located in areas closest to the Coffey Park neighborhood, which was destroyed during the fires in October 2017. The passport and the promotion of it helped in keeping business flowing to those establishments. Redeeming the prizes at the Welcome Center helped bring both visitors and locals into the Center, introducing them to a terrific resource they may not have been aware of before. It also gave the Welcome Center staff the opportunity to promote other offerings in the destination. <http://www.visitsantarosa.com/beer-passport-2018>

Visit Tri-Valley (California)

Project Title: The Tri-Valley Ice Cream Trail

Here's The Scoop! Everyone has a beer trail, but the Tri-Valley Ice Cream Trail is the first sweet trail of its kind in Northern California and quite possibly the West Coast. Using a passport program, Visit Tri-Valley has been able to connect its widely spread three cities and one town (straddling two counties!) with the common thread of America's favorite treat. The DMO's slogan is “Sunshine You Can Count On,” so every season is ice cream season in the Tri-Valley. When the ice cream trail was initially launched in the fall of 2017, it was a huge success. So, as summer rolled around, the staff decided to really pick up the pace and turn the trail into a fundraiser for the Valley Humane Society, from Memorial Day through Labor Day: 5 Scoops = \$5 Donation. The deal: Visit 5 stops on the nationally acclaimed Tri-Valley Ice Cream Trail and Visit Tri-Valley will donate \$5 to Valley Humane

Society and give you a Tri-Valley Ice Cream Scooper! Visit Tri-Valley created animated airport signage, TV digital display, SEM, e-mail blasts, social media posts, press releases, secured free TV ads, made window clings (static stickers) for all the ice cream stops to display, set up booths at the Farmers' Markets and downtown near the Veterans Hall, all with the intention of grabbing attention with puppies and ice cream...what an easy sell and it makes everyone so happy! Visitors and locals love the ice cream trail and it's a fun family activity to do! On a daily basis, visitors come into the Visit Tri-Valle office, proud of themselves for filling in the passport!

<https://visittrivalley.com/activities/ice-cream-2/>

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The Destination Marketing Association of the West (DMA West) is a regional professional association serving more than 150 destination marketing organizations (DMOs) in the West. Membership is open to DMOs in the western U.S. and western Canada.

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