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MEDIA CONTACT:

Donna White

donna@destinationgettysburg.com

(717) 338-1051

Gettysburg tourism leader announces retirement

Norris Flowers led marketing organization through many successes

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania – January 21, 2021

After more than 15 years at the helm of Adams County's tourism industry, Norris Flowers has announced his retirement, effective April 1, 2021.

Flowers, as President & CEO of Destination Gettysburg, led the destination marketing organization and its partnership of more than 300 local businesses through a number of milestones, developments and accomplishments since he arrived in 2005.

"I am very proud of the work that Destination Gettysburg accomplished over the past 15 years," Flowers said. "We are a much different organization than we were when I arrived, and I believe we have become more recognized and respected, not only locally but outside of Adams County. We've remained focused on achieving our goals and objectives in making Gettysburg and Adams County a popular travel destination, and in turn, a significant contributor to the local economy."

Most notably, Flowers led his team through the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and the Gettysburg Address in 2013, increased the lodging tax that visitors pay to support the organization's marketing work, rebranded the organization to focus on a variety of experiences beyond Civil War history, and expanded Destination Gettysburg's partnerships within the community.

Flowers announced his departure at a time when the travel industry globally is making preparations to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly impacted accommodations, restaurants, attractions and retail stores.

"The pandemic has been an enormous hit to the tourism sector, but the travel industry is strong and will rebound – not just across the country, but right here in Adams County," said Flowers. "I have the utmost confidence in the Destination Gettysburg team, our board, our partnership, and our community leaders, that tourism will soon return as a vital economic engine in our community."

In Adams County, visitors spend more than \$735 million annually, and tourism supports more than 5,000 jobs and generates \$130 million in federal, state and local taxes – according to 2019 statistics provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development.

Before coming to Destination Gettysburg – then known as the Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau – Flowers was Director of Tourism with the Kansas City Convention & Visitors Bureau in Missouri, and then President and General Manager of Coach USA operations in Kansas City and St. Louis, Mo.

Rick Beamer, General Manager of the Dobbin House Tavern in Gettysburg, was among the board members of the Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau in 2005 when Flowers started his post as President & CEO.

“Norris has taken the destination marketing organization and the tourism industry in Gettysburg to a new level,” said Beamer, who is now the Chairman of Destination Gettysburg’s board. “Destination Gettysburg and the tourism industry in Gettysburg is well respected locally and among fellow destination marketing organizations around the country.”

Beamer said that Destination Gettysburg will soon conduct a national search for a new President & CEO. Applications and cover letters can be sent to HR@destinationgettysburg.com.

Destination Gettysburg, the official destination marketing organization, markets Gettysburg – Adams County as a premier travel destination, producing a positive economic impact.