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Media Contacts
NICOLE WOODS, IVCC
c | 484.343.0057
e | nwoods@phvisitorcenter.com

INDEPENDENCE VISITOR CENTER CORPORATION REVEALS EXCITING CHANGES FOR SUMMER 2018

PHILADELPHIA, May 24, 2018 – Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC) is kicking off Philadelphia’s busy tourist season by debuting exciting changes at the **Independence Visitor Center**, the primary point of orientation for **Independence National Historical Park (INHP)** and the official visitor center for the Greater Philadelphia region.

Since opening in November 2001: Independence Visitor Center has provided a welcoming first impression for an average of **2.5 million visitors** per year from the United States and abroad.

Since March 2017: The IVCC and INHP have embarked on a **\$15 million renovation project**, aptly named the **Visitor Experience Improvement Project**, to provide an informative, interactive, and world-class welcome to the region.

For Memorial Day 2018: Phase I of the Visitor Experience Improvement Project is officially complete, with the re-opening of the newly expanded **Independence Gift Shop**, the official gift shop of Greater Philadelphia and largest retail location for Philadelphia-themed merchandise.

The expansion **doubles the retail space** from the gift shop’s original footprint, bringing its total square footage to **3,450 square feet**.

“By expanding the gift shop’s capacity, we are now able to offer something for everyone, tourists and locals alike,” said **James J. Cuorato, President and CEO, IVCC**.

“We now have fresh, locally-made fudge and candy. We have souvenir items, like mugs and T-shirts, for every occasion; and an incredible array of Philadelphia-themed items, like the LOVE statue and *Rocky* memorabilia, which are incredibly popular with our visitors. The whole space is completely transformed.”

Some additional **new inventory** and **design features** in the brand-new Independence Gift Shop include:

- **Three-dimensional, themed window displays** of Philadelphia icons like *Rocky* + the LOVE statue;
- **Sound-reactive “lightning” bolts through clouds strung through the rafters**, an ode to Benjamin Franklin and the IVCC’s new logo;



- **Apparel / accessories / home accent product line** by Philadelphia artist, [April Melchior](#);
- **Special “Tavern Story”** highlighting the Founding Fathers.

Event Network, Inc., which **oversees retail management and operations** for Independence Gift Shop, has used the opportunity of the shop’s expansion and remodel to apply its **conservation and sustainability initiatives**.

This is evident in the shop’s **greatly reduced use of plastics**, which have been replaced with sustainable materials, such as **Falconboard®**; signage created using **eco-friendly materials** and **ink**; **LED lighting**; **reduction in single-use and unnecessary packaging**; and sourcing of **local and sustainable merchandising**.

“As the longtime retail partner of the Independence Visitor Center, Event Network could not be more excited about the opportunity to unveil a truly extraordinary shopping experience for the city of Philadelphia and its millions of visitors. Visitors to Philly should come to the Independence Visitor Center Store to get lost in history and to take a piece of it home with them. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to serve everyone who visits,” said **Jerry Gilbert, Chief Marketing Officer and Principal, Event Network, Inc.**

The re-opening of Independence Gift Shop is not the only exciting improvement that visitors can enjoy at the Independence Visitor Center this summer.

Other exciting updates now complete include:

- **New Logo and Brand Assets**, featured in easier wayfinding throughout the Visitor Center;
- **Expanded, Wrap-around Liberty View Terrace**, featuring panoramic views of Independence Mall;
- **State-of-the-Art, Accessible Public Facilities**, including a dedicated lactation room;
- **Website Redesign** of PHLvisitorcenter.com, with user-friendly, responsive design and functionality.

In addition to serving the tourism industry and visitor community, these updates also signify a boost to the **local economy** and **job creation**.

The increase in ongoing operations due to construction upgrades is estimated to support annually **\$2 million in expenditures; \$22,000 in taxes**, and **12 full-time permanent jobs** in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (*Econsult Solutions, 2013*).

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About the Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC):

The Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC) is a Pennsylvania nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, which operates in cooperation with the National Park Service, Visit Philadelphia, Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The IVCC manages the Independence Visitor Center, the official visitor center for the Greater Philadelphia Region and primary point of orientation for Independence National Historical Park, the City of Philadelphia, the Southern New Jersey and Delaware River Waterfronts, as well as Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties in Pennsylvania.

PHLvisitorcenter.com

About the Visitor Experience Improvement Project:

The IVCC is dedicated to strengthening the tourism and hospitality industries in the Greater Philadelphia region, by supporting arts and culture, historic, and entertainment destinations; and ensuring an enhanced visitor experience within the Visitor Center and during visitors' stay in the region. PHLvisitorcenter.com/2018

About Event Network, Inc.:

Event Network, Inc. is the leading operator of gift shops for cultural attraction stores, serving millions of guests every year. Through partnerships with art; science; natural history; children's and cultural museums; zoos; aquariums; gardens; iconic landmarks; and historic sites, Event Network extends and elevates the guest experience to achieve maximum retail potential. Event Network is committed to conservation and sustainable initiatives within its operations. EventNetwork.com