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Independence Visitor Center Corporation Announces Long-Time President & CEO, James J. Cuorato, to Depart Role

After leading the official visitor center of Greater Philadelphia for 13 successful years, Cuorato will transition out of the organization the end of the calendar year.

September 15, 2022 (PHILADELPHIA) – Today, Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC) announced that James J. Cuorato, will depart his role as President and CEO effective December 31, 2022. After 13 years of exceptional leadership, Cuorato informed the Board of Directors of his intention to leave at the end of the year so that a new leader for IVCC could be chosen and have the appropriate planning runway ahead of 2026 and the major events that will occur in Philadelphia, including FIFA World Cup 2026™, the Major League Baseball All-Star Game, and the nation's 250th anniversary celebrations.

Cuorato's service to IVCC has been marked with great success since assuming the role in 2009. Under his leadership, the Independence Visitor Center – the region's official visitor center, which is managed by IVCC – has welcomed an average of 2.5 million visitors annually, leading the organization to generate more than \$72 million a year in additional regional visitor spending. To drive these results, Cuorato introduced a series of transformative initiatives that have elevated the region's visitor experience. Notably, Cuorato:

- Oversaw all aspects of a \$15 million renovation of the Independence Visitor Center, which was completed in 2018, and served as the first such upgrade since the Center opened in 2001.
- Completed acquisition of the Philly PHLASH Downtown Loop in 2012 at a time when the visitor-friendly service was facing a shutdown and led the effort to secure annual state funding to maintain operations.
- Partnered with the City of Philadelphia's Parks & Recreation Department on the design and construction of the Love Park Visitor Center as part of the Corporation's strategy to expand its reach and presence in the city.

“Jim has put his heart and soul into growing an organization that not only operates as a family but has greatly contributed to the transformation and growth of the tourism economy across the region,” said IVCC Board Chair, Debbie O’Brien. “Whether taking a shift behind a Visitor Center desk, where one would often find him, or building strategic partnerships with attractions large and small, Jim has been a true champion for Philadelphia and all it has to offer its visitors. His passion, leadership and vision know no limits and we are forever grateful for his service to IVCC over these impactful 13 years. We wish Jim and his beloved family all the best as he enters this next chapter.”

“For the past thirteen years, I’ve had the privilege of leading an incredibly talented and dedicated team at the IVCC as we welcomed guests from all over the world,” said Cuorato. “As a lifelong resident of Philadelphia, I love this city and I have great pride in the important role we play in the hospitality industry. I believe now is the right time for a new leader to guide the organization’s future growth and prepare for the worldwide spotlight that 2026 will bring.”

Prior to joining IVCC, Cuorato had an esteemed career in both city government and the private sector focused on economic and urban development. In addition to his role with IVCC, Jim has been an outstanding civic leader serving on the Boards of Directors for the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB), PHL Sports, Welcome America, Inc., Be Well Behavioral Center, SpArc, and the West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. For his professional achievements, Cuorato received the 2019 “Opus Award” from Philadelphia Hospitality, Inc. “for his sustaining contribution and achievement in enriching the Philadelphia region.”

Angela Val, President and CEO of VISIT PHILADELPHIA, offered her perspective on Cuorato’s role in the local tourism and hospitality industry saying, “There is not a kinder, or more respected person in our industry than Jim Cuorato. He has been a collaborative partner and without fail always puts Philadelphia first. His leadership has transformed the Independence Visitor Center Corporation into the key partner within the visitor experience that delivers on the brand promise we make in marketing the region. This is a better place because of Jim. While I know all in our industry will miss him in this role, his legacy is lasting and for that, we are grateful.”

Independence Visitor Center Corporation Board of Directors is establishing a Search Committee, which will oversee a national search for a new President & CEO. The Board, with the IVCC Executive Team, will also work closely with Cuorato on a transition plan to ensure seamless continuity of operations upon his departure.

For more information on the Independence Visitor Center, please visit:

<https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com>.

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ABOUT THE IVCC

The Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC) is a Pennsylvania nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, which operates in cooperation with the efforts of the National Park Service, Visit Philadelphia®, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.