

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**PHILADELPHIA VISITOR CENTER CORPORATION ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL
PHILLY OPENER SPRING FUNDRAISER**

*Philadelphia Eagles defensive end Brandon Graham will be honored with the
Most Valuable Philadelphian award*

PHILADELPHIA, PA (May 9, 2024) – On Monday, May 20, 2024 from 5:30p.m.-8p.m., the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation (PVCC) will host its first ever Philly Opener celebration and fundraiser at the Independence Visitor Center, its flagship location in the heart of Independence National Historical Park (Sixth and Market streets). The 2024 Philly Opener will take place during National Travel and Tourism Week (May 19 through May 25) and officially kicks off Philadelphia’s 2024 tourism season.

Funds raised through the Philly Opener support the mission of the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation, including the upcoming launch of a new Philly Ambassador initiative that will leverage the most powerful and untapped marketing tool the city has at its disposal – Philadelphians themselves. PVCC strives for visitors to create lasting memories of Philadelphia through exploring the city and region, and the Philly Opener will allow tourists and locals alike to experience a celebration unlike any other.

“We are so excited to unlock Philadelphia’s tourism season with the inaugural Philly Opener,” stated Kathryn Ott Lovell, President and CEO of the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation. “The event wouldn’t be possible without the help of our team, sponsors, partners, and honoree. This is only the start of what is promising to be a remarkable tourist season, and I look forward to a night celebrating all that the city has to offer.”

At the Philly Opener, PVCC will present its first-ever Most Valuable Philadelphian (MVP) Award to an individual who has raised Philly's global profile and exemplifies the values of the city. The 2024 honoree is Brandon Graham, defensive end for the Philadelphia Eagles. Graham, who is gearing up for his 15th season with the Eagles, was nominated as the Eagles' 2022 Walter Payton Man of the Year candidate, which recognizes players who have impacted people's lives in their community. Through his work with the Eagles Autism Foundation and his own nonprofit, Team Graham, Brandon Graham is a Philadelphia icon and leader who embodies the spirit of brotherly love on and off the field.

"It is an honor to be recognized by the Philadelphia Visitor Center as the inaugural recipient of its Most Valuable Philadelphian Award," said Brandon Graham. "Since being drafted by the Eagles in 2010, Philadelphia has been my home. I'm very fortunate to have experienced some of the best moments of my life here. It is where Carlyne and I started our family. Philadelphia has given so much to us over the years, and for that, we are forever grateful. Serving this community has always been important to me and it is something I will continue to do for many years to come."

The open-to-the-public ticketed event will feature a pep-rally atmosphere with festive food from the city's best chefs and restaurants, live entertainment from renowned Philly band SNACKTIME, and a sneak peek at local visitor attractions this upcoming season. There will also be a special live auction where attendees can bid on exciting prizes. Event sponsors will be invited to an exclusive VIP reception with Graham, along with additional special surprises.

This year's sponsors include:

- John and Janet Haas
- Otto Haas Charitable Trust
- PA Convention Authority
- Visit Philadelphia
- Comcast/Spectacor
- PNC
- Delaware Valley Regional Economic Development Fund

General admission tickets are \$125 and can be purchased [here](#).

ABOUT THE PHILADELPHIA VISITOR CENTER

The Philadelphia Visitor Center (PVC) connects visitors to memorable, authentic, and fun Philly experiences at our four visitor center locations: 6th and Market, City Hall, Love Park, and the Parkway. It facilitates the operation of the Independence Visitor Center, the primary point of orientation for Independence National Historical Park and the official visitor center of the Philadelphia region, including Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. PVC also operates the LOVE Park Visitor Center, Parkway Visitor Center, City Hall Visitor Center, and Philly PHLASH Downtown Loop transit service, and the private event space, The Liberty View at Independence Visitor Center. For more information, please visit www.phlvisitorcenter.com.

Media Contact:

Abby Kleman

Cashman & Associates

abby@cashmanandassociates.com

302-668-4781