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Kansas City Kansas Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. Announces Annual Award Winners at Tourism Celebration on May 7, 2014

Kansas City, KS....The Kansas City Kansas Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc (KCK CVB) celebrated another successful year at its annual Tourism Celebration on Wednesday, May 7, 2014. The luncheon was held at the Jack Reardon Convention Center, 520 Minnesota Ave., in Kansas City, KS. Approximately 165 people were in attendance, including elected officials and tourism industry professionals. Four awards were presented to the following tourism advocates and organizations.

The **Tourism Event of the Year Award** was presented to the 2013 AT&T MLS All Star Game, held July 31, 2013 at Sporting Park. The award was presented by Jimmy Lopez, Cabela's Kansas City and a former member of the KCK CVB Board of Directors. The MLS All Star Game was a sell out with 21,175 in attendance and ticket buyers from 36 states. The game was broadcast worldwide with over 250 credentialed media covering the match for local, national and international publications. Combined US and Spanish viewership of the game was over 616,000. The award was accepted by Chris Wyche, Executive Vice President of Operations for Sporting KC.

The **Tourism Organization of the Year Award** was presented to Dave & Buster Kansas City. The award was presented by Matt Lawrence, General Manager of Great Wolf Lodge and a member of the KCK CVB Board of Directors. Dave & Buster's was one of the original businesses to open at Legends Outlets KC. It currently has 125 employees and in 2013, did just under 9 million dollars in sales, while hosting over 620 corporate and social events. The award was accepted by Greg Jackson, General Manager of Dave & Buster's.

The **Tourism Advocate of the Year Award** was presented to former Unified Government County Administrator Dennis Hays. The award was presented by Gary Ortiz, Assistant County Administrator for the Unified Government and a member of the KCK CVB Board of Directors. Mr. Hays was thanked for his many years of service and significant contributions to tourism. "Kansas City, KS is the number one tourism spot in the state of Kansas for a reason: and a large part of that reason is named Dennis Hays" stated Mayor Mark Holland. Mr. Hays retired from the Unified Government in March of 2014. The award was accepted by Dennis Hays.

The **Excellence in Hospitality Award** was presented to Justin "Doc" Shobe, Corporate Account Manager for Kansas Speedway. Doc was unable to attend the award ceremony due to commitments at Kansas Speedway for the upcoming race weekend, but KCK CVB staff presented the award in advance of the luncheon in front of his Kansas Speedway colleagues. The award recognized Doc for his support and partnership with the bureau while showing professionalism, hospitality and exceptional customer service to all visitors.

The theme of the Tourism Celebration was "Kansas City Kansas – Insanely Fun", chosen because Kansas City KS was recently named by Guinness World Records as the home of the World's Tallest Waterslide, Verruckt at Schlitterbahn Waterpark Kansas City. Verruckt, which means "Insane", measured in at 168', 7". Also, debuted at the Tourism Celebration were several short video vignettes created by the KCK CVB to pique the interest of potential visitors to Kansas City, KS. The videos may be viewed on the KCK CVB's website at www.visitKansasCityKS.com

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