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HVAB announces Board of Directors appointment

Joe Battista joins board of Centre County's destination marketing organization

STATE COLLEGE, PA, July 13, 2020 – The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB) announced the election of Joe Battista to the destination marketing organization's Board of Directors.

"Joe is a true champion for Happy Valley," said HVAB Board Chairman Edward Tubbs, Chief Operating Officer for Hospitality Asset Management Company. "We welcome his energy and enthusiasm as we continue to move forward during a time of great uncertainty, but also with tremendous opportunity on the horizon."

Battista will begin serving a three-year term on July 21.

Now a professional speaker and author, Battista had a successful career as a collegiate hockey coach and NHL executive. A member of the American Collegiate Hockey Association Hall of Fame, he coached the Penn State Nittany Lions Hockey team for 26 years and was instrumental in the fundraising effort to build the Pegula Ice Arena, among other notable career accomplishments.

"I am very passionate about life in Happy Valley and all the amazing businesses and activities that welcome you to Centre County," Battista said. "Having lived here for over 40 years, it's exciting to be a part of the HVAB board that shouts from the mountain tops what amazing adventures await you when you visit our area!"

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HVAB President and CEO Fritz Smith said Battista's sports background is a welcome addition to the board as one of the organization goals is even greater emphasis on the youth sports and athletic tournament market.

"2020 was set to be a promising year before COVID-19," Smith said. "But we are already seeing interest from tournament organizers for the remainder of this year, and into next year. This is a very promising market for Happy Valley. Growing it will be a priority for the board and the HVAB team moving forward."

In addition to announcing Battista's board election, the HVAB also recognized the long-term service of outgoing board member Ken Martin.

Martin, Executive Director of the American Philatelic Society, recently completed serving two three-year terms.

Smith said Martin was a thoughtful voice on the board and a great representative for the Bellefonte area.

"It's been an honor to serve with community leaders who have helped guide the HVAB and its dedicated staff to develop, promote, and engage the wonderful resources Centre County offers to attract and wow visitors," Martin said.

Martin said the past six years, while challenging, have brought new sports facilities, greater funding, and improved coordination between organizations, as well as new staff leadership and a change in name.

"While the pandemic may test our resolve, I look forward to watching the organization increase awareness and elevate Centre County tourism to a higher level in the future," Martin said.

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