



ATAC Vice Chair and QAT Executive Director Dave Laveau appointed to Destination Canada's Board of Directors

Laveau is the first Aboriginal person to be appointed to this Canadian Crown corporation

Huron-Wendat territory (Wendake, QC), April 19, 2017 – Following a transparent, merit-based process, Dave Laveau became the first Aboriginal person to be appointed to Destination Canada's Board of Directors. The honourable Bardish Chagger, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, announced eight appointments to this prestigious board through a [press release](#) today after a selection process that factored in gender equality and Canadian diversity. The appointment of Dave Laveau undoubtedly gives another platform for the leaders of the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC), Québec Aboriginal Tourism (QAT) and our industry to express their views.

Laveau currently serves as Vice Chair of ATAC and is the Executive Director of QAT, an organization which aims at safeguarding the interests of Aboriginal tourism companies in Quebec by providing them with products and services to stimulate growth, best practices and market visibility. QAT is the oldest Aboriginal tourism organization in Canada and has been in operation for over 25 years. It represents more than 180 active, associate and delegate members involved in the core development of Aboriginal tourism in Quebec.

"As an Aboriginal person and as a leader of Quebec's tourism industry, I am honoured to be appointed to Destination Canada's Board of Directors. It is both a responsibility and a privilege to be part of this major decision-making circle that ensures the vitality of our industry," says Laveau. Recently, Quebec's ministry of tourism reaffirmed the strategic positioning of Aboriginal tourism in the implementation of its sectoral policies. This appointment thus consolidates the strong commitment shown to our industry by both levels of government.

"I am incredibly pleased to witness the wider acknowledgement of the role of the Aboriginal tourism sector with the appointment of Dave Laveau to Destination Canada's Board of Directors," says Keith Henry, ATAC President & CEO. "His ongoing commitment to the development of Aboriginal tourism goes beyond the province of Quebec. Dave is passionate about the growth of the sector from coast to coast. This is a further commitment to Aboriginal tourism, following the \$8.6 million in funding recently announced in the 2017 Federal Budget."

The Aboriginal tourism industry in Canada employs more than 33,000 people and produces \$1.4 billion of Canada's annual GDP. ATAC's five-year plan *The Path Forward* aims to increase revenues from the sector by \$300 million in annual Canadian GDP, to reach 40,233 Indigenous tourism workers, and have 50 new Indigenous tourism operators.

About the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) works to improve the socio-economic condition of Aboriginal people through the provision of economic development advisory services, tourism conferences, capacity development training and workshops, industry research and information for Aboriginal tourism operators and communities within the 13 regions; 10 provinces and three territories of Canada. ATAC develops relationships with other groups and regions with similar mandates, uniting the Aboriginal tourism industry in Canada and works to enable collective support, product development, promotion and marketing of authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism businesses in a respectful protocol. The ATAC Board is made up of Aboriginal tourism industry representatives from each of the provinces and territories. For more information, visit www.aboriginalcanada.ca.



About Québec Aboriginal Tourism

Québec Aboriginal Tourism (QAT) is the sectoral tourism association recognized by the provincial ministry of tourism as the official representative of Aboriginal tourism and by the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador as the services and exchange platform for the development and promotion of the Aboriginal tourism offer. Dedicated to the marketing of Aboriginal tourism experiences and products, QAT provides the Aboriginal tourism entrepreneurs of Quebec with a representative body that safeguards their interests, supports their development and offers a range of products and services that promote business development, improve business practices and increase their visibility in tourism markets. In Quebec, the number of Aboriginal tourism enterprises has more than doubled since the early 2000s. Each year, Aboriginal Quebec welcomes more than a million visitors, sustains about 3,500 jobs and generates an estimated \$169 million in economic benefits. For more information, visit www.quebecaboriginal.com.

-30-

Media contacts:

Brian Cant, Tartan: 250-592-3838 or brian@tartangroup.ca

Keith Henry, ATAC: 604-639-4408 or k.henry@aboriginalcanada.ca

Patricia Auclair, QAT: 418-254-5067 or pauclair@tourismeautochtone.com