



U. S. Travel Association awards Brad Dean State Tourism Director of the Year for his leadership in the recovery of tourism in Puerto Rico

The destination has broken all records and is experiencing the highest number of passenger arrivals and accommodation revenues in its history, highlighting the island's resilience and the effective strategic planning of the DMO.

Los Angeles, California, August 17, 2021- The National Council of State Tourism Directors of the U. S. Travel Association awarded Brad Dean the organization's highest recognition, "**State Tourism Director of the Year**," for the exceptional results achieved under his leadership for the accelerated recovery of the visitor economy in Puerto Rico.

The award was announced during the U. S. Travel Association Convention held in the city of Los Angeles on Sunday and was presented to Dean yesterday, Monday, August 16, in the plenary session of the activity.

"It is truly impressive how Brad has excelled in understanding the culture and spirit of Puerto Rico, and how he has positioned it to attract travelers.," said U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Roger Dow. "His affection for the beauty of the Island is reflected through the organization's industry-leading marketing efforts, which despite the headwinds of the past year, has resulted in phenomenal success. "This award is not just a recognition of my colleague accomplishments, but for his passion for Puerto Rico and the people whose livelihoods are made better by the Island's thriving travel and tourism industry."

Governor Pedro Pierluisi, for his part, added that, "Despite challenges in recent years, Puerto Rico's tourism industry has seen consistent success under Brad Dean's leadership, from strong branding that aided in cementing Puerto Rico as a global destination, to critical crisis planning and management, which has been integral in allowing us to stay resilient in the face of adversity." "His unwavering commitment to Puerto Rico has paved a strong road ahead for Discover Puerto Rico and the Island's tourism industry, a crucial part of our DNA, and we are honored to celebrate him as he receives this award."

Since the start of 2021, the Island has seen a remarkable recovery, topping 2019 numbers, which were then, record-breaking. July 2021, for example, topped the previous record set in June in terms of passenger arrivals to the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport (SJU); and the second quarter of 2021 had more arrivals than any other quarter on record. The Island is experiencing the highest average daily rate for both hotels and short-term rentals, and the year-to-date demand is at a record high, surpassing 2019 by 8%. With record demand and rates, the Island is also seeing the highest year-to-date lodging revenues, and room rates and occupancy outpace other U.S. destinations.

These numbers are a testament to the Island's resilient local communities, as well as the tourism industry as whole, and overall speak to the work of Discover Puerto Rico, under Brad Dean's unwavering leadership.



Candidates for the State Tourism Director of the Year Award are nominated by other state tourism directors and a slate of three finalists is presented for selection by ballot. Puerto Rico is the first-ever U.S. territory to be recognized with this award.

Since taking the helm of Puerto Rico's Destination Marketing Organization in July 2018, Dean has guided the Island's tourism industry through a remarkable period of recovery and growth following setbacks including the coronavirus pandemic and Hurricanes Maria and Irma.

Under Dean's leadership, the organization launched a successful brand re-positioning campaign to promote Puerto Rico as a destination that is resilient and welcoming, which led to increased visitor spending and longer stays. Amid the challenges of the pandemic, Discover Puerto Rico's marketing efforts resonated with customers who overwhelmingly cited the destination as both desirable and safe. Weekly hotel demand in 2021 has outpaced 2019 levels, while Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan received a record number of passenger arrivals in July—significant achievements that continue to boost Puerto Rico's recovery.

For more information about the Destination Marketing Organization, visit: DiscoverPuertoRico.com/industry.

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About Discover Puerto Rico

Discover Puerto Rico is a newly established, private, not-for-profit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) whose mission is to make Puerto Rico visible to the world as a premier travel destination. The DMO brings prosperity to the people of Puerto Rico by collaboratively promoting the Island's diversity and uniqueness for leisure and business travel, and events. It is responsible for all global marketing, sales, and promotion of the destination and works collaboratively with key local governmental and non-governmental players throughout Puerto Rico's visitor economy and the community at large, to empower economic growth. To discover all the beauty the Island has to offer, visit DiscoverPuertoRico.com.