



December 10, 2009

Contact: Ed Healy
(716) 852-0511, x236

For Immediate Release

**Dottie Gallagher-Cohen named President and Chief Executive Officer of the
Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Buffalo, NY – The Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau has announced the appointment of Dottie Gallagher-Cohen as president and chief executive officer, BNCVB, effective late January 2010.

The announcement was made by Dr. Gary Praetzel, BNCVB chairman and dean of Niagara University's College of Hospitality & Tourism Management.

The national search for a successor began in July with more than 50 candidates who expressed interest. A search committee of six board members worked with Williamsville-based, Performance Management Partners, Inc.

“It was an exhaustive process, generating a wide range of candidates possessing CVB and marketing backgrounds,” Praetzel said. “Dottie Gallagher-Cohen stood out immediately in this pool of candidates. The results she achieved at The Buffalo News as Senior Vice President of Marketing and as the person providing oversight of the newspaper's digital division were outstanding. Her passion for Buffalo, creativity, marketing success in a variety of venues, and strong knowledge of technology provide the skill set needed to position the Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau as a leader in the 21st century.”

Gallagher-Cohen currently serves as senior vice president, and is a member of the executive management team, of The Buffalo News, a wholly owned subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway.

At The Buffalo News for 13 years, she led the development and management of The News' digital properties including the launch of Buffalo.com and Buffalonews.com. She also supervises the promotion, research, education and creative marketing departments of the paper.

Her previous management experience includes positions as the Executive Director of the Kelly for Kids Foundation, Marketing Manager at Buffalo Place, Inc. and Director of Public Relations at Erie Community College. She was honored in 1999 with the New York State Governor's award for Excellence in Media. (N.Y. State Division of Women.)

“I am passionately committed to this community and a true believer in its potential as a tourism and convention destination,” Gallagher-Cohen said. “This is a once-in-a-career chance to serve my hometown and make a contribution to its re-birth. I am deeply honored by the confidence the CVB Board has shown in me and genuinely excited to be given this opportunity. I'm eager to get to work with my new colleagues at the CVB and Convention Center.”

-more-

Gallagher-Cohen has decades of leadership experience collaborating with organizations as varied as the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Darwin Martin House and Buffalo Place. She planned many well known local events including Jim Kelly's Stargaze, Thursday at the Square and the Gus Macker tournament, to name a few. In 1991, Gallagher-Cohen won a national award from the International Downtown Association for Marketing Program of the Year for her work promoting downtown Buffalo.

She has served on various community boards including time as President of the board of trustees of Cradle Beach Camp, and Secretary of the board of directors of Shea's Performing Arts Center. Currently, she serves in a leadership role on the regional advisory board of Univera Health Care.

Gallagher-Cohen is a graduate of Towson University (Baltimore, Maryland) and has an EMBA from the University of Buffalo. She resides in Snyder, with her husband Pascal and two children.

"As County Executive, I want to be among the first to congratulate Dottie Gallagher-Cohen on her appointment as the president and CEO of the Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau," said Erie County Executive Chris Collins. "I had the opportunity to speak with Dottie after she was identified as a finalist and I believe the search committee found exactly the right person to lead the CVB at a critical time in our community. Dottie will bring a fresh perspective, a passion for Buffalo and the necessary marketing and managerial experience to the job. Dottie and I both agree that our community needs to be appropriately re-branded and I think Dottie will make us all proud as she leads that effort in her new position."

In her new role, Gallagher-Cohen will oversee operations at both the Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. The two entities have 71 full-time employees and a combined 2010 budget of \$5 million.

As chief executive of both organizations, Gallagher-Cohen will lead the efforts to market Buffalo Niagara as a destination for conventions, meetings, sporting events and leisure travelers.

"The BNCVB has developed a solid strategic plan and has already begun seeing positive results from the effort," said Praetzel. "There's more work to do, but we believe that we can significantly grow tourism to this region which will benefit everyone who lives here and loves Buffalo Niagara. We have a glorious past that provides us with a unique American experience for visitors and we have a bright future with new attractions like the Erie Canal Harbor and the Burchfield Penney Art Center. It's an exciting time for Western New York."

The Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau sells and markets our assets and attractions to visitors outside of the Buffalo Niagara region as a convention, tourism and leisure destination for the economic benefit of the community.

For more information contact: Ed Healy, (716) 852-0511, x236, or healy@buffalocvb.org

###