



Media Release

Tourism Calgary's White Hat Academy trains Calgary's frontline to be ambassadors
New learning program helps frontline tourism members serve visitors to Calgary

May 8, 2019 – Tourism Calgary currently works with over 4,800 visitor-facing employees to foster a city experience that is welcoming and helpful and that showcases the best Calgary has to offer. To better support this frontline community, Tourism Calgary recently launched the White Hat Academy, a free online, multi-level learning program, offering Calgary's tourism industry the knowledge, tools and resources they need to be better storytellers and ultimate hosts.

"Visitors tend to rely on recommendations from those who have experienced a city first-hand such as friends, family and those in the tourism industry," says Cindy Ady, CEO, Tourism Calgary. "Through the White Hat Academy, Tourism Calgary is ensuring the city's frontline is well versed in Calgary's diverse offerings. This helps build Calgary's robust visitor economy, pride of place for residents and our reputation as the Ultimate Host City."

Designed with the industry, the White Hat Academy combines online modules with experiential learning and features over 850 images, 300 stories about Calgary experiences, 160 insider tips for experiencing the best of Calgary and much more.

Initial feedback of the White Hat Academy has been overwhelmingly positive, with over 550 tourism industry members registering for the program and over 220 graduates earning their certification since the program launched in March. As the program grows, a standard knowledge baseline is being established among all frontline tourism representatives. This will increase the likelihood that visitors recommend Calgary as a travel destination, ultimately leading to increased visitation and economic benefits.

Tourism Calgary developed the White Hat Academy after a clear need was identified for easily accessible tourism industry-focused tools and resources. After a year of planning and development, the White Hat Academy has become the ultimate resource for Calgary's tourism industry.

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About Tourism Calgary

Tourism Calgary is the official destination marketing and development organization for Calgary's tourism industry. For more than 50 years, the organization's primary purpose has been to promote Calgary and area as the destination of choice for leisure travellers. With a vision of making Calgary the Ultimate Host City, Tourism Calgary markets the city locally, nationally and internationally and advocates for its ongoing development as a destination. The organization hosts and attracts visitors and events and activates the city by fostering the growth of shareable, memorable experiences. Calgary's tourism industry welcomes over 7.7 million visitors who contribute approximately \$2 billion in visitor spending annually. For more information about Tourism Calgary, please see www.visitcalgary.com.

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