



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Anna Thill, President

1 Civic Center Plaza

Mankato, MN 56001

507-381-6815

athill@visitmankatomn.com

May 13, 2013
For Immediate Release

VISIT MANKATO RECOGNIZES AMBASSADORS TO MANKATO

MANKATO, MN – As a special part of Travel and Tourism Week held nationwide, Visit Mankato recognized four outstanding ambassadors of Mankato for making our visitors feel welcome.

- David Peters, the owner of the Courtyard by Marriott was awarded the **Hotel Travel and Tourism Award** for being the first person to build a LEED (Leader in Environmental and Energy Design) Certified Hotel in the State of Minnesota.
- The Planning Committee for the Minnesota Air Spectacular was awarded the **Attraction Travel and Tourism Award** for bringing the very popular event to Mankato on June 9-10, 2012.
- J. Longs was awarded the **Retail Travel and Tourism Award** for providing a unique men's boutique that brings customers to Mankato from Northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota and for working with the hotels to take care of the attire needs of business guests from around the country. Matt Long and Aaron Jones were presented with the award for their work with the business.
- Tom Frederick, the owner of Pub 500, was awarded the **Restaurant Travel and Tourism Award** for his involvement in the Front Street Initiative and the City Center Partnership.

"It's important for people in our community to make our visitors feel welcome," said Tom Frederick, Owner of Pub 500. "We want them to have a great time in Mankato and our local citizens know best how to do that."

That is exactly what Visit Mankato is finding. The number one reason visitors come to our community isn't our amazing trails, our unbelievable wellness events or our exciting music scene. The reason most of our visitors come to Mankato is to visit friends and family. That makes the citizens of Greater Mankato our most important ambassadors. Citizens can learn more about what to do with friends and family while they are visiting at www.visitmankatomn.com where they will find Visit Mankato's new video and a wealth of information about the community.

In 1983, U.S. Congress passed a joint resolution establishing National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW). In support, President Ronald Reagan signed a Presidential Proclamation urging citizens to observe the week with "appropriate ceremonies and activities." The tradition is celebrated

the first full week of May and paves the way for people to gather nationwide to spread the word of travel.

Thirty years later, travel is more relevant than ever as a driver of the U.S. economy – the industry creates jobs at a faster pace than the rest of the economy.

“Travel is one of the healthiest sectors in terms of job creation and hiring, employing one out of every eight Americans,” said Anna Thill, CEO of Visit Mankato. In Minnesota, the leisure and hospitality industry accounts for 11% of the state’s total private sector jobs. In Blue Earth County alone, travel and tourism supports over 3,600 employees in hotel, restaurant, attraction, transportation and retail jobs.

Without even realizing it, travelers drive revenue into a broad spectrum of businesses and local establishments, including food services, public transportation, lodging and retail. Minnesota travelers spend more than \$32 million a day which accounts for 17% of the state’s sales tax revenue. The tax revenue generated reduces the amount of money each U.S. household would pay in taxes by \$1,060.

For more information about Mankato as a travel destination visit www.visitmankatomn.com.

About Visit Mankato:

Visit Mankato, LLC, the local Convention & Visitors Bureau, is a Limited Liability Corporation of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. Visit Mankato leads the development of the visitor economy in Mankato by actively promoting Mankato as a premier destination for conventions, tournaments and tourism. These activities bring a steady flow of visitors and business activity to Mankato that benefits local residents and future visitors. The work of Visit Mankato helps strengthen the hospitality industry which provides jobs, a diverse tax base and amenities for everyone to enjoy. www.visitmankatomn.com