



NEWS RELEASE | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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Tourism Manager graduates from Tourism Leadership Institute in partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation

The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism (DOEDT) announced that Lisa Meriwether, Tourism Manager, has graduated from the Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (VADMO) Tourism Leadership Institute (VTLI). This new statewide initiative was created to strengthen Virginia’s tourism industry by developing leaders who can bridge the gap between operational expertise and executive-level strategy.

Through a partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), participants completed a rigorous curriculum focused on leadership, communication, strategic planning, and budgeting. Graduates earned the Certified Virginia Tourism Professional (CVTP) credential, marking a significant professional milestone. Meriwether is part of VTLI’s 2026 inaugural graduating class.

VTLI uses a selective enrollment process to identify current and emerging tourism leaders from across the Commonwealth. Industry experts facilitate the program, guiding participants through best practices, case studies, and collaborative discussions. The two-year program includes four required in-person sessions held in different regions of Virginia, along with a Tourism Impact Capstone Project. These quarterly sessions provide both high-level instruction and valuable peer-to-peer networking opportunities.

Kelvin Perry, Assistant Director of DOEDT, praised Meriwether’s achievement. “Lisa’s commitment to professional growth is matched only by her dedication to elevating our region’s tourism presence. We are proud of her accomplishment and look forward to the positive impact this training will continue to bring to our community.”

Lisa Meriwether said, “Graduating alongside such a dedicated and inspiring group has been truly meaningful to me. I’m grateful for the opportunity to grow through this experience and excited to continue navigating an evolving tourism industry while making a positive impact in our community.”

Meriwether joined DOEDT in 2021 with more than 40 years of experience in hospitality, sales, and tourism. She was named Associate Member of the Year by the Virginia Society of Association Executives in 2023 and was appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin in 2024 to a six-year term on the Virginia Tourism Authority Board of Directors. She was also recognized as the Destination Marketing Organization Employee of the Year by the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging, and Travel Association in 2024.



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About the Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism

Visit SoSi is the fastest-growing tourism destination in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism, which serves as the official Destination Marketing Organization for the region, leads the City of Danville's tourism promotions under the Visit SoSi brand. The office promotes tourism assets and attractions across the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County and leverages advertising, earned media, promotions, trade events, and visitor experience initiatives to stimulate economic growth for the region. Learn more at www.VisitSoSi.com