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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF DESIREE ROGERS AS CHAIR OF CHOOSE CHICAGO BOARD

Experienced Business Leader to Guide Tourism Organization toward Mayor's Goal of 50 Million Annual Visitors

Monday morning, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced the appointment of Desiree Rogers as Chair of the Choose Chicago board. Rogers replaces Bruce Rauner, who resigned from the position earlier in May to pursue personal interests.

"Desiree Rogers is a world-class business executive and a truly proud Chicagoan, and her unique talents and experience are a perfect fit for this important role," said Mayor Emanuel. "I am confident that she will help Choose Chicago reach the next level as it continues to find creative ways to lure tourists and convention business. I am excited at the prospect of working alongside Desiree again and I celebrate both her appointment and her success."

Rogers is the CEO of Chicago's iconic Johnson Publishing Company, which publishes Ebony and Jet magazines, and owns Fashion Fair cosmetics company. As chair of the Choose Chicago board, Rogers' focus will include increasing marketing and advertising of the city of Chicago around the United States and the world, and she will play a leading role in the positioning of Chicago as a global city. She is expected to work closely with the leadership of Choose Chicago as well as Mayor Emanuel in achieving the Mayor's ambitious tourism goals.

"I am thrilled to once again be working with Mayor Emanuel in a job that allows us to showcase Chicago to the country and the world," Rogers said. "The Choose Chicago team has had two incredible years of success, and I look forward to helping them further elevate Chicago so that the city can reap the economic, job creation and investment benefits that come from increased tourism and convention business."

“Desiree’s leadership and support will be instrumental as we continue to implement our aggressive marketing, sales and communications strategies to achieve Mayor Emanuel’s goals for the organization,” said Don Welsh, Choose Chicago President and CEO. “Choose Chicago has successfully elevated the destination through these efforts which will further enhance Chicago’s position as a global leader in this fiercely competitive visitor industry.”

In her career, Desiree Rogers has worked for a number of companies, government organizations, and utilities, including AT&T, Allstate, and Peoples Energy. She served as President Obama’s first Social Secretary, and previously ran the \$2 billion Illinois State Lottery for six years, dramatically expanding the lottery’s reach. She serves on two non-profit boards in Chicago -- Keep a Child Alive and DonorsChoose. She has previously been a board member of the Polk Bros. Foundation, WTTW, Ravinia Festival, and Lincoln Park Zoo.

Rogers has a bachelor's degree in political science from Wellesley College and an MBA from the Harvard Business School.

Her appointment is effective immediately.

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