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Brad Loveless, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

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## **Kansas Governor's Tourism Award Announced**

TOPEKA – The annual Governor's Tourism Award was announced on October 21, 2020, during the virtual Kansas Tourism Conference. Governor Laura Kelly shared that Sylvia Rice, Director of Visit Salina, is the 2020 recipient of this prestigious award.

The Governor's Tourism award was established in 1983 to recognize Kansans for outstanding contributions to the Kansas travel and tourism industry. This annual award is presented to an individual or organization that demonstrates cooperation, sustainability, quality and accountability in their support of the overall growth of tourism in Kansas.

Since joining Visit Salina in 1991, Sylvia has championed many local and statewide tourism programs and initiatives. She has been a leader in numerous statewide tourism coalitions such as the Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK), where she served on the executive committee for more than five years, chaired multiple committees and served as the TIAK president in 2007. Sylvia is a founding member of the Kansas I-70 Association, which promotes communities along I-70 to travelers. She also helped form Meet Kansas, a coalition that advocates Kansas as a meeting and convention destination.

"Sylvia Rice has helped to positively shape nearly every tourism industry-related organization in Kansas. She is an example to us all on how to be a positive change-maker in a local community and is an inspiration to the entire tourism industry in Kansas," said Governor Kelly.

Because the Kansas Tourism Conference was held virtually in 2020, Bridgette Jobe, Kansas Tourism Director, presented the plaque to Sylvia at her Visit Salina office prior to the conference. In attendance were staff from Visit Salina, the Salina Chamber of Commerce, and select community and family members. Pictures and video of the in-person presentation were shared following Governor Kelly's announcement during the Kansas Tourism Conference.

The Kansas Tourism Conference – held annually in various locations across Kansas – is hosted by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, Kansas Tourism Division, in partnership with the

Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK). The 2021 Kansas Tourism Conference will be held in Liberal, KS.

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*The Mission of the Kansas Tourism Division is to inspire travel to and throughout Kansas to maximize the positive impacts that tourism has on our state and local communities.*

*Attached: Kansas Tourism Division logo*