

USTOA TAPS CORNELL'S SC JOHNSON SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT FOR CONSUMER RESEARCH PROJECTS



NEW YORK – February 11, 2014 – The United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA) has engaged the expertise of graduate students from Cornell University’s prestigious SC Johnson Graduate School of Management to undertake a consumer insights project for its membership.

Announced at USTOA’s Annual Conference & Marketplace in Scottsdale, AZ, in December, the consumer research project is the first step of a multi-year “Innovation Lab,” intended to better define today’s tour customer and help members create relevant products and experiences for future generations.

The project kicked-off in mid-February at USTOA headquarters in New York City with eight assigned students as well as USTOA executive committee and marketing committee members. Pictured above are: Terry Dale, president & CEO, USTOA; Derek Mayer and Grace Schiodtz from Johnson; Jerre Fuqua, president, Travcoa and USTOA

chairman; Janice Claudio from Johnson; and Paula Twidale, executive vice president, Collette and USTOA vice chair.

“To say this partnership with Johnson is exciting is an understatement,” said Dale. “This initial meeting completely energized our board members who were there and sparked some insightful conversation and questions from the students. We have embarked on a new path for USTOA, one that we’re confident will yield critical intelligence to help shape our member’s current and future product and business development,” he added.

Results from this initial research are expected to be completed and presented to members in New York City in mid-May.

About USTOA:

Representing more than \$11 billion in revenue, the member companies of U.S. Tour Operators Association provide tours, packages and custom arrangements that allow six million travelers annually unparalleled access, insider knowledge, peace-of-mind, value and freedom to enjoy destinations and experiences across the entire globe. Each member company has met the travel industry’s highest standards, including participation in the USTOA’s Travelers Assistance Program, which protects consumer payments up to \$1 million if the company goes out of business.

As a voice for the tour operator industry for 40 years, USTOA also provides education and assistance for consumers and travel agents. For more information about USTOA, visit ustoa.com, call 212.599.6599 or email information@ustoa.com.

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