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## **‘Mask UP Tahoe’ Advocacy Campaign Further Extends North Lake Tahoe’s Efforts to Encourage Safe, Responsible Travel**

*Local community leaders, small business owners and nationally recognized athletes share a unified message rooted in adventure and personal responsibility: Mask UP Tahoe.*

**NORTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. (July 22, 2020)** – The North Lake Tahoe destination continues to amplify messaging around safe travel, reminding visitors and residents that wearing a face covering is a simple act, but a grand gesture to help slow the spread of Coronavirus. The ‘Mask Up Tahoe’ advocacy campaign is their latest effort to communicate the importance of personal responsibility to an audience determined to recreate through summer months and beyond.

“We recognize the innate need to keep North Lake Tahoe communities safe and local businesses open,” explained Jeffrey Hentz, CEO of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association. “Our role is to manage tourism responsibly and ensure we are proactively communicating with incoming visitors about the importance of washing hands, social distancing and wearing masks. While we are not promoting travel to the destination, we know there is an overwhelming desire for people to get outside and enjoy nature. We want to ensure they are doing so responsibly and through a variety of content campaigns, are sharing that message across all of our platforms.”

At the onset of business closures and stay at home orders in March, the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association (NLTRA) and Placer County partnered to convey a “Stronger Together” message for the local business community. The video series evoked messages of positivity during a time when many small business owners were concerned about their survival. Throughout the phased reopening process, the NLTRA developed reopening toolkits for select business industries in the region, hosted Town Hall meetings to communicate effectively across each business sector, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was sourced free of charge for local businesses to share with customers and staff. In conjunction, the North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative produced multiple safe-travel content pieces and worked closely with regional partners to advocate for safety messaging on trails and in front of high-trafficked areas.

“Placer County remains vigilant on all aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic,” stated Erin Casey, Principal Management Analyst for Placer County. “We continue to work closely with public health officials, the NLTRA and local business associations to decipher state guidance and maintain safety compliance among the business community. We know there is a lot of work ahead, but we feel confident in how far we’ve come and the new, collaborative systems in place. Personal responsibility is critical during this time. If we practice responsible distancing and safety measures, it shouldn’t matter who is in the house down the street, at the grocery store, at the lake, or on the trail. We are committed to the health and safety of North Lake Tahoe to ensure our community is a beautiful place to live, visit, work and play.”

The Mask UP Tahoe campaign features local leaders with global reach who share a unified message that is rooted in adventure and responsible travel. Through a montage video that anchors campaign messaging, the sentiment is clear: “For North Lake Tahoe to stay open, we all need to do our part and show that we truly care. You wear a mask to protect me and I wear a mask to protect you. When we show up with a mask on, we’re showing up for each other. It’s pretty easy to wear a mask.” Local community leaders featured in the series include:

**Travis Ganong, Olympic Skier:** North Lake Tahoe’s own Travis Ganong, 2014 Winter Olympics athlete, is a World Cup alpine ski racer in downhill and super-G with six top 10 World Cup finishes. He is passionate about the wellbeing of the North Lake Tahoe community and believes we should all have fun while pursuing our goals. Travis wears a mask to protect his beloved community and family.

**Michelle Parker, Professional Skier:** Whether it’s big mountain skiing, cruising over technical single track with ease, or cleaning problem pitches and crags, North Lake Tahoe native and Red Bull athlete, Michelle Parker, shows up full force as a formidable opponent in any outdoor sport. She has big game and an even bigger heart. She’s the co-founder of S.A.F.E.A.S. (Skiers Advocating and Fostering Education for Avalanche and Snow Safety) and sits on the board for High Fives Foundation. Michelle wears a mask because she loves North Lake Tahoe and wants to continue to share it.

**Sherry McConkey, Shane McConkey Foundation:** Sherry McConkey, founder of The Shane McConkey Foundation, and her daughter Ayla are dedicated to protecting the environment while carrying on the legacy of free skiing pioneer, Shane McConkey, Sherry’s late husband and Ayla’s father. They hope to inspire others to live by Shane’s philosophy that, “You have one life, live it. You have one world, protect it.” Sherry and Ayla wear masks to protect the small business community and to get back to school this fall.

Additional videos will launch through North Lake Tahoe’s website ([www.gotahoenorth.com/maskuptahoe](http://www.gotahoenorth.com/maskuptahoe)) and social channels in coming weeks. Stay tuned for videos from professional athletes Jim Morrison, Hilaree Nelson, JT Holmes and Rory Bosio; Jessi, Jenni and daughter Mable of the Dead Winter Carpenters; award-winning photographer, Ming Poon; professional skiers, Elise Saugstad and Cody Townsend, and small business owner, Brendan Madigan.

The travel and leisure industries comprise over 60 percent of the jobs in North Lake Tahoe, and visitor spending averages over \$835 million annually. Visit California anticipates unprecedented economic impacts to the statewide travel industry, eclipsing the impact of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks by sevenfold. The organization estimates a statewide loss of \$10.9 billion in revenue, a decline in direct visitor spending by \$54.5 billion, and a loss of 554,000 jobs this year.

Here are six ways to provide immediate support to North Lake Tahoe businesses and families:

1. Donate to the [Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe’s COVID-19 Relief Efforts](#) in support of local families
2. [Purchase gift cards from Tahoe area businesses](#) to be used at a later date
3. Contribute to the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation’s [Emergency Response Fund](#) to support local nonprofit organizations assisting the community
4. Buy a [family-friendly activity box](#) packed with locally-made goods
5. [Live stream an exercise class](#) offered by one of our local fitness or yoga instructors
6. Participate in a [virtual field trip or tour](#)

The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association and Chamber of Commerce is collaborating with local business associations, the Sierra Business Council and Placer County Economic Development to provide additional resources for local business and community recovery. Community updates, including how to support local businesses will continue to be updated at [www.nltra.org/north-lake-tahoecovid-19-community-update](http://www.nltra.org/north-lake-tahoecovid-19-community-update).

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**Press Contact:**

Liz Bowling, North Lake Tahoe Resort Association  
[liz@gotahoenorth.com](mailto:liz@gotahoenorth.com) or (303) 726-7104