

We, staff and board members, of eXplore Lawrence are pleased to present our 2019 Annual Report.

This report showcases our accomplishments and provides goals that we will be working towards in 2019. eXplore Lawrence (EL) is a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to promoting Lawrence and Douglas County as a premier tourism destination. Funding for our organization is a portion of the Transient Guest Tax (TGT) collected at hotels, bed & breakfast and short-term rentals located within the city of Lawrence.

The 2018 Economic Impact in Douglas County issued by Tourism Economics highlights the significant role tourism plays in the local economy. Visitors spent \$267 million in 2018 which ranks Douglas County 5th among all counties in the state. Visitors spending supported 2,818 local jobs in addition to generating \$42.7 million in tax revenues, with \$24 million accruing to state and local governments.

We say good bye to Victoria Cleary who left EL to take a position at KU, as we welcome Caleb Deines our new Manager of Visitors Services and Richard Renner as a part-time Travel Counselor at our Visitor Center.

2020 will see a number of new initiatives; foremost is the creation of the first Travel guide in the State that incorporates Augmented Reality. Readers who download the Blippar App in their mobile device can unlock bonus content by pointing their device at specially-marked pages throughout the guide. In addition we plan on doing a comprehensive website redesign incorporating the most up-to-date technologies to provide an outstanding visitors experience.

We are committed to being a data-driven destination management organization that assures the greatest possible return on investment.

Looking forward, we will continue to employ best practices in marketing and sales as we work together to grow tourism in Lawrence and Douglas County.

Derek Felch

Michael Davidson

Board Chair

Executive Director