

# Annual Report 2004

*University of Minnesota  
Tourism Center*



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

**Tourism**  
CENTER

A Joint Effort of the  
College of Natural Resources  
and the University of Minnesota  
Extension Service

*Greetings,*

*In 2004, the Tourism Center energetically pursued new and improved ways to address industry needs. Our research and listening refined our efforts and led us to refreshed products, new programs, and innovative delivery. Further, we enhanced and broadened our communication strategies so you and others like you, know more about and use our products and services. I believe these efforts have truly made a difference for Minnesota tourism. Please share your perspective on our year as well as thoughts on how we can improve our efforts to strengthen tourism through research and education: [www.tourism.umn.edu](http://www.tourism.umn.edu), [ingridss@umn.edu](mailto:ingridss@umn.edu) or 612-624-2736.*

*Sincerely,  
Ingrid E. Schneider, Ph.D.  
Director*

The Tourism Center Team

Tourism Center staff work diligently to stay abreast of tourism industry issues and needs, supported by 18 faculty affiliates and several Community Vitality Extension Educators.

- Dan Erkkila, Ph.D.
- Kent Gustafson, M.P.A.
- Jodie Kaden, Administrative Assistant
- Cynthia Messer, M.A.

Graduate Research assistants provide critical support to the Center's research functions.

- Pascal Elizabeth, M.S.
- Tuan-Tran-Hung, M.S.
- Raintry Salk, M.S.

The Advisory Committee is essential for our success as they guide our work and are the 'ear to the ground.' Our sincere appreciation goes out to each and every one of them.

- Mark Anderson, Department of Transportation
- Tom Benson, Tour Minnesota Association
- John Edman, Explore Minnesota
- Steven Frank, AAA Minneapolis
- Randy Gutzmann, Minnesota Festivals & Events Association
- Doug Killian, Mall of America
- Dino LoBaido, Minnesota Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus
- Carol Lovro, Minnesota Association of Counties
- Colin Minehart, Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association
- David Moe, Congress of Minnesota Resorts
- Courtland Nelson, Minnesota State Parks
- JoLynn Reeves, Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce
- David Siegel, Hospitality Minnesota
- Michelle Snider, Minnesota Recreation & Parks Association
- Linnea Stromberg-Wise, Member-At-Large
- Jerrilyn Thompson, Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit
- Henry "Hank" Todd, Carlson Companies
- Tom Whelan, Nemer Fieger
- Deb Zak, University of Minnesota Extension Service

S U P P O R T I N G O U R M I S S I O N :

The Carlson Tourism, Travel & Hospitality Chair

Initiated in the mid-1980s and fiscally cemented in 1995, The Carlson Chair has been used to support a variety of research and education efforts across Minnesota. A total of \$456,000 has been used since inception (see chart).

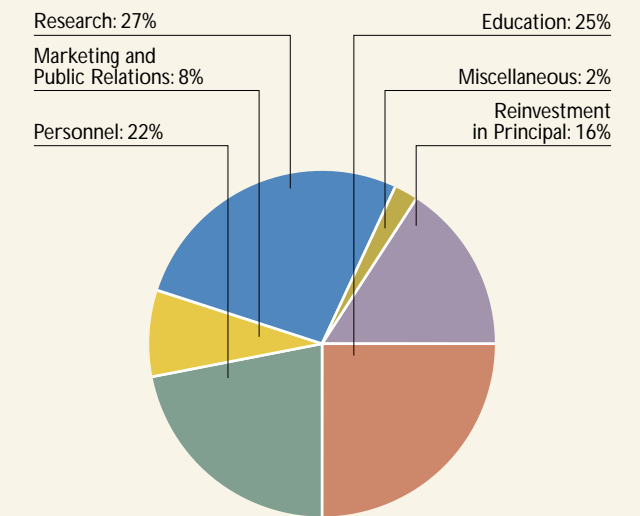
The Endowment is managed by the University Foundation Investment Advisors who seek a 6.0% minimum rate of return (net inflation). The Center can access up to 5% of the fund's market value, which was \$1,474,494 in 2004. Decisions about fund use are made by the director in consideration of established criteria, advice from the Advisory Committee, and approval by the Dean and Director of Extension. To formalize input from the advisory committee and ensure consistent communication about the Endowment, an advisory sub-committee was formed December 2004. The sub-committee will revisit and revise project selection criteria, consider project ideas, and provide advice to the Director.

In 2004, the Carlson Endowment supported research, education, and personnel. Two visitor profile studies, Leech Lake and I-90, leveraged Endowment dollars with state and private funds. One educational program, the Travel Counselor Certification, was created in part by personnel supported by the Endowment. The research projects enable communities, organizations, and industry to better understand their market and ultimately, create more satisfying tourist experiences whereas the enhanced educational offerings contribute to improving tourist experiences in Minnesota by providing better informed professionals.

Carlson Chair funds will continue to support industry-driven research and education needs to support Minnesota tourism.

The Center relies on the goodwill of its friends and supporters to facilitate otherwise impossible program and research efforts. Philanthropic support allows the Center to do important things we simply cannot through our traditional sources of revenue. We appreciate each and every contribution someone makes to our Center. We pledge to do our very best to apply each gift for maximum benefit to further the Center's important mission. There are many ways to give at the University, including cash, securities, estates, gifts of forestland, farmland, or other real estate or property, or individual retirement plan assets. Find out the details on how to support the Center at [www.tourism.umn.edu](http://www.tourism.umn.edu) or contact the Foundation at 612-624-3333.

CARLSON CHAIR FUND USE 1994-2004



## Educational Accomplishments 2004

Long known for its core programs, the Center worked to enhance those essential offerings and expand on them. Product development and promotion were guided by a substantial assessment of the Center and its mission, goals, and objectives. We completed an educational needs assessment with our stakeholders near and far, critically assessed our products, and relied on the expertise of our Advisory Committee Marketing sub-committee.

Our efforts resulted in three new publications, a new program, and refreshed products. To promote their use and the education of the tourism industry, we embarked on refreshing and creating consistent marketing materials for the Center as a whole as well as our products. Further, to enhance understanding of tourism and its importance among the University community, we celebrated Tourism Week with an information and poster session on the St. Paul campus.

To enhance product development from conception through delivery, a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee was formed December 2004. The sub-committee will identify optimal product content, serve as advocates for the products, and serve as liaisons to students in the academic degree offering. Our efforts will continue to both create and promote industry-driven educational offerings.

**At Your Service**, a customer service training program, was significantly revised in 2004. The product now addresses diversity issues more directly, is re-tooled more as a 'workshop in a box', and emphasizes a 'train the trainer' approach. Scheduled training sessions are offered each spring and fall, accompanied by a front-line training class. In addition to these scheduled deliveries, community-wide initiatives are offered to engage entire areas in enhanced service provision. *Program lead: Cynthia Messer*

**A Certificate in Festival Management**, achieved through completion of three sessions and writing assignments, remains responsive to festival and event industry needs. In 2004, its third class session focused on access at events. A special 'behind the scenes' at the TCF Holidazzle Parade was offered. *Program lead: Kent Gustafson*

**The Community Tourism Development** text was revised and updated, resulting in its second edition. Beyond basic updates, an appendix on wildlife tourism was included. The information in the appendix will also be used as a basis for workshops delivered by Explore Minnesota Tourism spring 2005. *Product lead: Cynthia Messer*

**A Travel Counselor Certification** program was created in partnership with Explore Minnesota Tourism. The program, sanctioned by the Travel Industry Association of America, offers anyone who interacts with the traveling public the opportunity to enhance, test, and certify their knowledge about our state. To become certified, participants must obtain a score of 85 or higher on a 100-question exam with questions across twelve categories related to Minnesota tourism. The exam is offered online and is supported by online study materials, as well as a study session sponsored by Explore Minnesota Tourism. *Program lead: Kent Gustafson*

### Degree Program

The Tourism Center supports undergraduate and graduate degree programs in Resource Based Tourism (RBT). Congratulate our first graduates: Kara Borstad, B.S. and Tuan-Tran-Hung, M.S.! To attract more students to the degree options, we created a special seminar for freshman as well as added an introductory course to the curriculum. The Department of Forest Resources in the College of Natural Resources administers the B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. opportunities.



Ingrid E. Schneider,  
Ph.D., Director, and  
Tourism Center graduate  
Tran-Tuan-Hung, M.S.



## MEETING OUR MISSION:

### Research Accomplishments 2004

The Center continued its visitor profile research, as well as embarked on a concerted effort to disseminate existing information. Four visitor profiles were conducted, with varying time frames and audiences. In an effort to share the research results more quickly and briefly, the Center created an 'At a Glance' series. These one-page summaries report on key information from our research and cull out various segments. In addition, we initiated an 'emerging issue' series where we provide quarterly information on an important and emerging market. This year, the focus was **travelers with disabilities**.

#### Visitor Profile Overviews

Winter Carnival Ice Palace Visitors

Personnel: Ingrid E. Schneider & students in Visitor Behavior Analysis class

Financial support: College of Natural Resources, January-February, 2004

*A profile of Ice Palace visitors, their expenditures, and St. Paul visit using an onsite contact throughout the Winter Carnival (n=456). Results provided essential information for future event planning, sponsorship, and travel information.*

#### Leech Lake Area Summer Visitor Profile

Personnel: Ingrid E. Schneider & Raintry J. Salk

Financial support: Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce, Explore Minnesota Tourism, UM Tourism Center Carlson Endowment

*A profile of summer visitors in the Leech Lake area focused on the potential for nature- and culture-based tourism development using an onsite contact (n=506). Results, expected January 2005, will guide development of future opportunities and enhance return-on-investment for area marketing.*

#### Study of Current Area Tourists: Customer Profiles—Southern Minnesota

Personnel: William Gartner, Ingrid E. Schneider, & Raintry J. Salk

Financial support: Chambers and Convention Bureaus of Blue Earth, Fairmont, Jackson, and Worthington; Explore Minnesota Tourism, and UM Tourism Center Carlson Endowment

*This is a profile of tourists along the I-90 corridor using an onsite contact over nine months. Results, expected February 2005, will guide effective marketing resource use as well as destination development.*

#### Economic Impact of Snowmobiling in Minnesota

Personnel: Ingrid E. Schneider & Pascal Elizabeth

Financial support: Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association

*Two components, a consumer survey and manufacturing survey, will assess the economic impact of snowmobiling in Minnesota. Results, expected January 2005, will inform snowmobiling experience management and update data on this market.*



## MEETING OUR MISSION:

### Outreach Accomplishments 2004

Following the University's land-grant mission, the Tourism Center provided service to the citizens and businesses in Minnesota, the U.S., and across the globe. These experiences allow us to disseminate our work, as well as highlight the University and the Center. Center staff are both interested and able to speak to your group or discuss critical tourism issues with you. Please contact us for details.

#### A sampling of our presentations:

##### U and Your Economy

Personnel: Cynthia Messer, Kent Gustafson, Dan Erkkila

Location: Rochester, Moorhead, Montevideo, Grand Rapids, Minnesota

##### Partnering For Community Event Success

Personnel: Kent Gustafson

Location: USDA Rural Development Conference in Cookeville, Tennessee

##### The State of Tourism Education in North America

Personnel: Cynthia Messer

Location: International Federation of Women's Travel Organizations Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa

##### Extreme Makeover-Resorter Edition: Adapting to an Ever-changing Visitor Demographic

Personnel: Dan Erkkila

Location: Minnesota Resort Association Annual Conference.

##### Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises in Regional Development

Personnel: Dan Erkkila

Location: Congress of the Association Internationale D'Experts Scientifiques Du Tourisme, Petra Jordan.

#### A sampling of our facilitations

##### Pioneer grounds

Personnel: Kent Gustafson

Location: Perham, Minnesota

Sponsor: East Ottertail Historical Society

##### Tourism planning

Personnel: Kent Gustafson

Location: Deerwood, Minnesota

Sponsor: Cuyuna Range Tourism Coalition

#### Boards and committees served

##### Across the state

Goods from the Woods

Governor's Council on Tourism

Minnesota Executive Women in Tourism

National Extension Tourism Design Team

Minnesota Festival and Events Association

Sustainable Development Partnership Boards

Northeastern & North Central Minnesota

Tour Minnesota Association

Travel & Tourism Research Association

Washburn High School Travel Academy

World Tourism Organization

##### Within the University

All-University Council of Academic Professional

and Administrators Advisory Committee

Business Retention & Expansion Strategies Program

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs

Community Assistance Program Review

Department of Forest Resources

Extension Faculty Consultative Committee

Extension Community Vitality Program Leaders

North Central Research and Outreach Center



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