



CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION  **THEEX.COM**

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Darrell Brown Named Chief Executive Officer of the CNE Association

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Toronto, Canada ... "On behalf of the Board of Directors of the **Canadian National Exhibition Association (CNEA)**, I am very pleased to announce the appointment of **Darrell Brown** as **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of the CNEA, effective March of this year," **Suzan Hall**, President of the CNEA, stated today.

Concurrent with the appointment of **Darrell Brown** as the CNEA's CEO, **Mike Cruz**, who has served as the CNEA's Executive Director, Operations, assumes the role of Chief Operating Officer (COO), while **Adam Blodgett** continues as Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

"Like many organizations, attractions and events throughout the world, the past two years have been a challenge for the CNE Association," Ms. Hall said. "Our signature event, the **Canadian National Exhibition (CNE)**, had to be cancelled in both 2020 and 2021, due to the **COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic**. As a result of these cancellations, our revenues have evaporated, our expenses were reduced, which resulted in layoffs of many full-time staff last year. Now is the time to stabilize our business environment, and Darrell Brown's appointment as CEO and the related operational changes, represent an important first step in this process," Ms. Hall elaborated.

"Darrell Brown has been central to the stabilization of our organization, having secured substantial funding from both the **Government of Canada** and the **Province of Ontario** that has enabled the CNEA to survive," President Suzan Hall added.

Mr. Brown was external counsel to the CNE from 2016 until mid-2019. He joined the CNE Association as General Counsel in 2019 and shortly thereafter assumed the role of Executive Director, Corporate Support and Legal Services in February 2020, just weeks before the pandemic descended on the world.

"Despite the post-pandemic challenges we face, I believe tremendous opportunities lie ahead for the CNEA and its affiliates. I am honoured to have been appointed to lead this historic 144-year-old organization at this critical time and look forward to negotiating a renewed relationship with the City of Toronto and Exhibition Place as we collectively seek to secure the future of the CNE," Mr. Brown said.

Darrell Brown has worked as a consultant, legal advisor and entrepreneur in a career that spans five decades across four continents. From practicing law and consulting on employee benefits issues in Canada to leading international development projects to staging acclaimed art exhibitions, his experience ranges from planning and implementing project and financial management, leading marketing, research, communications, legal advisory services, strategic planning and governance initiatives to providing numerous governments with consulting services on a variety of topics.

He has been in the thick of crisis situations in Asia and Europe and, ironically, assumed his executive director position at the CNEA just before it faced the most significant financial challenge in its history.

Born and raised in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Mr. Brown has both M.B.A. and LL.B. Law/Business Management degrees from **Dalhousie University**, where he also received an undergraduate honours B.Sc. in Psychology.

Having worked extensively in Ukraine, Mr. Brown and his Ukrainian-born wife Lyudmila, are actively involved in fundraising for those people internally displaced to enable them to secure a temporary safe haven within the Ukraine, as well as helping those seeking to leave the war-torn country, to achieve refuge in Canada.

The **Canadian National Exhibition** is Canada's largest community event and one of the top 10 agricultural exhibitions in North America. Founded in 1879, the CNE generates an economic impact of approximately **\$93.1 million** for the Greater Toronto Area and **\$128.3 million** for the province of Ontario each year (when in operation). It is celebrated as one of the "greenest" fairs in North America and attracted **1.4 million visitors** over 18 days in 2019.

The 2022 CNE takes place from **August 19 to September 5, 2022** at Exhibition Place in Toronto, Canada.

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