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## **ESD ANNOUNCES NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS MARKETING DIVISION**

*Ross Levi will oversee tourism and business marketing efforts to specialized audiences*

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced Ross Levi has joined ESD as Vice President of its Business Marketing Division. As Vice President, Mr. Levi will oversee specialized marketing efforts and events, as well as the promotion of niche tourism to enhance outreach to targeted audiences. Mr. Levi will also work closely with the state's newest business marketing campaign, "The New New York Works For Business."

"Mr. Levi is a tremendous addition to our business marketing team with his many years of leadership experience in the areas of policymaking and communications work," said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. "His role is integral to further expanding the state's marketing efforts and promoting New York as the premier place to live, work, and visit. With his focus on specialized tourism promotion, we will continue to advance our goals of a diverse and comprehensive approach to driving private sector job growth and economic opportunity throughout New York."

In his new role, Mr. Levi will work to: develop tourism initiatives appealing to people, groups and communities with distinctive interests; maximize tourism and cross-promotional opportunities around special events in the state, including sporting events; promote ESD services to Women and Minority Business Enterprises; increase ESD's presence at important trade events nationwide; and expand outreach to small and midsize businesses throughout New York. Mr. Levi will work closely with both the Business Marketing Division and Tourism Division to further its goals of attracting and growing business in New York State.

Before joining Empire State Development, Mr. Levi held a number of staff roles at the Empire State Pride Agenda and Foundation, New York's largest and oldest statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights and advocacy group. He most recently served as Executive Director, where he oversaw the group's advocacy, policymaking, fundraising and communications work. Mr. Levi was instrumental in the achievement of the Pride Agenda's legislative priorities, including the historic passage of New York's marriage equality law.

“I’m excited to take on this new role with Empire State Development, working to promote the great state of New York under the tremendous leadership of Governor Cuomo,” Levi said. “Whether by making sure businesses are aware of the support and incentive programs offered by New York State, or encouraging groups like history aficionados, roller coaster enthusiasts or LGBT travelers to experience all that our state has to offer, I’m honored to be a part of the ongoing efforts to attract new investment, grow New York business and showcase the Empire State to an increasingly wide and diverse audience.”

Prior to his time at the Empire State Pride Agenda and Foundation, Mr. Levi worked as a Legislative Director in the New York State Senate. He also has six years marketing experience working in publicity and promotions at film companies, including Twentieth Century Fox, Universal and Miramax. Mr. Levi is a graduate of Brooklyn Law School, and majored in communications at Boston University, where he received local and national recognition for filmmaking and commercial writing.

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York’s chief economic development agency ([www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov)). The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of “I Love NY,” the State’s iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit [www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov](http://www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov) and [www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov).

