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**VISIT PHILADELPHIA® ANNOUNCES THREE NEW STAFF MEMBERS**  
*Company Added Executive Position For Innovation & Multicultural Marketing*

**PHILADELPHIA, March 4, 2019** – VISIT PHILADELPHIA® today announced the hire of three new staff members: Rachel Ferguson in the new role of vice president of innovation and diverse marketing; Deirdre Childress Hopkins, director of public relations; and Laiza Montanez, social media content producer.

“VISIT PHILADELPHIA has always recruited the very best staff in marketing, and our three most recent hires confirm our commitment to attracting top talent,” said Jeff Guaracino, president and CEO. “Plus, with the addition of a vice president of innovation and diverse marketing to our staff, we’re excited to ramp up our efforts to attract African-American, Latinx and LGBTQ travelers—three groups that represent great opportunities for us to grow first-time and repeat visitation to the region.”

**Rachel Ferguson, Vice President of Innovation & Diverse Marketing:**

Employed by VISIT PHILADELPHIA from 2008 through 2012 as media relations manager, Ferguson returns to the company in a newly created role that will enable the tourism marketing organization to elevate its already strong multicultural marketing program. Under Ferguson’s leadership, VISIT PHILADELPHIA will launch a new Latinx campaign in June, develop an initiative tied to its award-winning **We Got You** video series to attract African-American travelers and work on a marketing effort around the international celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stonewall riots that launched the LGBT civil rights movement in the United States. In addition, Ferguson will work on the company’s strategic plan and diversity and inclusion efforts, and analyze new ways for VISIT PHILADELPHIA to remain competitive in the highly changing marketplace.

Ferguson returns to Philadelphia from New York City, where she worked as the communications and public affairs director at CBS 2 & WLNY 10/55 for nearly seven years and served on the steering committee for the CBS Corporation Diversity Council.

She is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Association for Multi-Ethnicity in Communications and the Alliance for Women in Media. Ferguson is a graduate of Penn State University.

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**Deirdre Childress Hopkins, Director of Public Relations:**

As director of public relations, Childress Hopkins will execute national, regional and local public relations efforts for all VISIT PHILADELPHIA campaigns and story angles. In addition, she will develop the overall communications plan for all multicultural markets, including African-American, Latinx and LGBTQ.

For the last seven years, Childress Hopkins has worked as strategic communications manager at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, where she focused on branding, customer experience and public perception of the facility. She began her career in journalism, working as a reporter and editor at *The Washington Post* and then in various editorial roles at *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Childress Hopkins is a graduate of Colgate University and currently serves as president-elect of the Philadelphia Public Relations Association. She is the first African-American president in the organization's 75-year history.

**Laiza Montanez, Social Media Content Producer:**

In her role as social media content producer, Montanez will create compelling visual content for VISIT PHILADELPHIA's social properties (YouTube, Facebook and Instagram Stories) that strategically aligns with the organization's goals. In addition, she'll often serve as the on-air host for VISIT PHILADELPHIA's social media productions.

Montanez has worked in social media roles for Mural Arts Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Latino Film Festival and PHL Democratic National Convention Host Committee. She is a graduate of LaSalle University.

VISIT PHILADELPHIA® is our name and our mission. As the region's official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia's image, drive visitation and boost the economy.

On Greater Philadelphia's official visitor website and blog, [visitphilly.com](http://visitphilly.com) and [uwishunu.com](http://uwishunu.com), visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the sites effective trip-

planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets.

*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](https://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).*