

Nicole Radzievich Mertz Named New Vice President of Marketing & Communications at LVEDC

By LVEDC Staff

LV - Nicole Radzievich Mertz has been named Vice President of Marketing, Communications and Research at the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corp. as part of a new, integrated marketing and communication initiative and organization succession plan.

George Lewis, the current vice president, who retired from the private sector prior to joining LVEDC, will remain with LVEDC, moving to the new position of Special Assistant to the President and CEO, and will remain part of the organization's executive leadership team.

"We are fortunate to have a deep reservoir of talent at LVEDC," said Don Cunningham, president and CEO of LVEDC. "Nicole has been with us for three years, learned from George and is ready to take on a major leadership role. George is a deeply experienced professional who will remain with us to support me, Nicole, and the entire organization."

"Nicole has been outstanding, taking on many leadership roles in her work at LVEDC, and developing innovative and new approaches to broadening our marketing and communication efforts," Cunningham said. "She is smart, experienced and understands how to communicate a message."

The LVEDC Board approved a 2023 marketing budget of about \$740,000 – about 15 percent higher than last year – that integrates marketing, communications, recruitment, and retention work. It includes contract support for earned media efforts, increased targeted recruitment campaigns, quality of place marketing and stakeholder events. In 2023, LVEDC will launch an updated website and better integrate messaging across its multiple information platforms of social media, newsletters, web, paid advertising, and print.

LVEDC intends to engage private sector marketing and advertising agency support on both message and strategy development.

"We intend to increase our efforts to drive a Lehigh Valley regional brand around quality of place marketing, and to do that in conjunction with other organizations like Discover Lehigh Valley," Cunningham said. "Our aim is to help develop a regional logo, a broad-based marketing strategy and a public-private alliance to support it."

As growth of population – particularly that of young workers – and the availability of talent remains paramount in both the retention and recruitment of employers, broader awareness, and branding of the region's quality of place, authenticity, livability, and growth is critical, Cunningham said.

LVEDC has been a leader among regional economic development organizations in award-winning news reporting, annual reports, communications, and data gathering operations.

"Along with Colin McEvoy, our former director of communications, George and Nicole have been a critical part of LVEDC's success," Cunningham said. "I'm grateful that they are both here and working together to take us to the next level in seamless transition."

McEvoy left last month to take a position with Biography.com at Hearst Publishing in Easton. LVEDC is redefining positions in the group and will be hiring soon.

Mertz has been at LVEDC as director of market research and communications since 2020. Prior to that, she spent two decades in journalism, most recently at The Morning Call in Allentown where she covered local development issues, city government and national politics. She graduated from Pennsylvania State University with degrees in journalism and political science and completed a media studies program at The University of Manchester, U.K.

Lewis joined LVEDC in 2017 as director of research and analysis. Prior to that, he had a 30-year career in corporate communications at PPL Corp. and Talen Energy, having served as director of corporate communications for both companies. He began his career as a journalist. He also has a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism from Penn State.



2023
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FOOD & WINE DINNER WITH CELEBRITY CHEF LIDIA BASTIANICH • JUNE 2, 2023

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DEAR VALUED SPONSOR:

As we prepare for this year's Lehigh Valley Food & Wine Dinner, we are excited to announce that celebrated chef, Emmy award-winning public television host, a best-selling cookbook author, and restaurateur, Lidia Bastianich will be joining us as our celebrity chef. The date is Friday, June 2, 2023.

The event will take place in the beautifully designed new ballroom at Wind Creek Bethlehem. The evening will feature a reception and a Lidia inspired dinner, fine wines and open bar for sponsors and guests. The evening will also include an auction of fine wines, unique experiences and opportunities to support NCC. All sponsors will be given a signed copy of Lidia's newest cookbook, Lidia's A Pot, A Pan, and a Bowl.

Similar to last year, a media plan will be developed and coordinated to ensure a large audience exposure as outlined in the enclosed Lehigh Valley Food & Wine Dinner Sponsor Benefits marketing sheet. We continue to revise and adjust our plans as we come out of the pandemic. We are grateful for your patience, overwhelming support and encouragement over these past few years.

This event provides much-needed scholarship support and hands-on experience for our culinary and hospitality students. Our strength comes from so many, including our festival sponsors whose commitment to the college continues to transform lives, provide affordable access to a top-quality education, and life-changing opportunities. Now more than ever, our students need your support!

We are excited about this year's event and would like to thank you again for your continued support. We look forward to you joining us again in 2023.

With gratitude,

Mike Molewski
Festival Honorary Chair
CAPTRUST

SPONSORSHIP VISIBILITY PACKAGES

GOURMET SPONSORSHIP \$10,000 (\$7,500 Charitable Deduction)

Recognition as Gourmet Sponsor includes the following:

- 10 tickets to the Lidia inspired dinner at the Wind Creek Ballroom on June 2, 2023
- Name/logo featured in full page print ads in the Morning Call, Express Times, Lehigh Valley Style
- Name/logo featured on digital billboards running June 1 – July 1
- Spotlight video (60 seconds) provided by sponsor to highlight in social media and on website June 1 – July 1
- Sponsor provides spotlight editorial (300 words) to be used in social media, event program and website
- Name/logo featured on event signage/banners on site during dinner
- Inclusion in event news release
- PBS promotion to be determined
- Each couple will receive a signed copy of Lidia's A Pot, A Pan and A Bowl cookbook

PRESENTING SPONSORSHIP \$7,500 (\$5,500 Charitable Deduction)

Recognition as Presenting Sponsor includes the following:

- 8 tickets to the Lidia inspired dinner at the Wind Creek Ballroom on June 2, 2023
- Name/logo featured in full page print ads in the Morning Call, Express Times, Lehigh Valley Style
- Name/logo featured on digital billboards running June 1 – July 1
- Spotlight video (60 seconds) provided by sponsor to highlight in social media and on website June 1 – July 1
- Name/logo featured on event signage/banners on site during reception
- Sponsor provides spotlight editorial (300 words) to be used in social media, event program and website
- PBS promotion to be determined
- Each couple will receive a signed copy of Lidia's A Pot, A Pan and A Bowl cookbook

PREMIUM SPONSORSHIP \$5,000 (\$3,500 Charitable Deduction)

Recognition as Premium Sponsor includes:

- 6 tickets to the Lidia inspired dinner at the Wind Creek Ballroom on June 2, 2023
- Name/logo featured in full page print ads in the Morning Call, Express Times, Lehigh Valley Style
- Name/logo featured on event signage/banners on site during reception
- Inclusion in event news release
- PBS promotion to be determined
- Each couple will receive a signed copy of Lidia's A Pot, A Pan and A Bowl cookbook

VINTAGE SPONSORSHIP \$2,500 (\$1,500 Charitable Deduction)

Recognition as Vintage Sponsor includes:

- 4 tickets to the Lidia inspired dinner at the Wind Creek Ballroom on June 2, 2023
- Name/logo featured in full page print ads in the Morning Call, Express Times, Lehigh Valley Style
- Inclusion in event news release
- Name/logo featured on event signage/banners on site during reception
- Each couple will receive a signed copy of Lidia's A Pot, A Pan and A Bowl cookbook



SPONSORSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

Become a sponsor online at lehighvalleyfoodandwine.com or send your completed form to NCC at 3835 Green Pond Road, Bethlehem, PA, 18020. Please indicate your level of sponsorship:

☐ **Gourmet - \$10,000**
(\$7,500 Charitable)

☐ **Premium - \$5,000**
(\$3,500 Charitable)

Form of payment:
☐ Enclosed is my check for \$_____

☐ **Presenting - \$7,500**
(\$5,500 Charitable)

☐ **Vintage - \$2,500**
(\$1,500 Charitable)

Payable to 'NCC Foundation'
☐ Please invoice me

Please charge my credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Credit card no: _____ Expiration date: ____ / ____

For processing purposes circle card type: ☐ CORPORATE ☐ OR ☐ PERSONAL

Name: _____ Company: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Signature: _____