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## Arizonans Promote Russian Heritage, McMurry Leads the Way

**Phoenix**—McMurry, a leading Phoenix-based marketing communications firm has expanded its client base across the European continent and into Russia by being named the marketing and public relations lead for the Russian Heritage Highway Foundation (RHHF).

The account is a tourism and economic development initiative connecting Moscow and St. Petersburg that conceptually follows in the footsteps of The American Scenic Byways program which includes Route 66, the Blue Ridge Parkway, the George Washington Parkway and the 17-Mile Drive. The Russian Heritage Highway is considered one of the most culturally significant historic highways in the world.

“In 1998 we got our first taste of international business when we became the agency of record for STMicroelectronics, global semiconductor manufacturer based in Geneva, Switzerland. We enjoy the relationship today and have learned in the process that there is tremendous opportunity abroad, especially in emerging markets,” said McMurry CEO Chris McMurry.

RHHF was conceived by Thomas Tait, the former CEO of the Nevada Commission on Tourism and the current vice president of the multibillion dollar Lake Las Vegas Resort project. Tait is also a consultant on tourism to Eastern Europe, and has been elected President of the RHHF.

Board members for RHHF include multinational business leaders and political dignitaries. Stephen Williams, senior vice president of business development for McMurry, sits on the board along with the Honorable Mikhail Gorbachev and former 10-year Nevada Governor Bob Miller. Other Arizona business leaders include Bob Gilbert, senior vice president at Best Western Hotels Worldwide, Mark McDermott, former executive director of the Arizona Office of Tourism, and Bob Diamond, former CEO of Diamond’s Department Stores.

Corporate involvement includes McMurry, Westrec Marinas, Best Western Hotels, The American Recreation Coalition, Focus Lighting, DERTOUR and the Western Russia Telephone and Communications Corporation.

Project planning sessions involving McMurry and board members were hosted recently by Gorbachev in Moscow. The project will focus attention on the 700-kilometer route from the Moscow region to the Leningrad (St. Petersburg) region that passes through Tver and Velikiy Novgorod Regions. Sites along the route include birthplaces, academies, residences or principal performance venues of cultural icons such as Tchaikovsky, Dostoevsky, Rachmaninov, Pushkin, Chekhov, Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky, Tolstoy, Nabokov and other international luminaries.

### **About McMurry**

McMurry (mcmurry.com), with three offices in Arizona and New York, offers a complete line of marketing communications services to a variety of clientele, including GlaxoSmithKline, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co., Amtrak, CBS, Aon, CVS Caremark, Waste Management, USAA and 24 Hour Fitness, as well as resources to more than 10,000 corporate professionals. The company has specialized practices in healthcare, finance and insurance. It is among the largest independent marketing communications companies in the U.S. and is recognized by the Great Place to Work Institute and Society for Human Resource Management as one of the top five “Best Small Companies to Work For” in the U.S.

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