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For Immediate Release

HMSHost Previews Delaware Welcome Center, Restaurants and Stores on June 18, 2010

Delaware's Governor Markell, Senator Carper and Secretary of Transportation Wicks dedicate center's return to service scheduled for June 28



Celebrating the Delaware Welcome Center grand opening from left to right: Senator Tom Carper; Congressman Mike Castle; Elie W. Maalouf, President & CEO, HMSHost Corporation; Delaware Governor Jack Markell; New Castle County Executive Chris Coons; and Delaware Department of Transportation Secretary Carolann Wicks

BETHESDA, MD—A dramatic change in the driving experience is arriving soon for mid-Atlantic travelers. New choices in dining, shopping and fueling will open June 28 at the Delaware Welcome and Travel Center, located between exits 1 and 3 along Interstate 95, just minutes from Wilmington, Del.

Representatives from travel dining and shopping leader, HMSHost Corporation, alongside Delaware Governor Jack Markell, Senator Tom Carper, and Secretary of Transportation Carolann Wicks cut the ribbon today for the flagship 42,000 square foot Delaware Welcome and Travel Center.

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“This Welcome Center is a great example of how the private and public sectors can work together to achieve common economic goals,” said Governor Jack Markell. “The Center is a testament to Delaware’s commitment to tourism and is an economic tool that will truly ‘wow’ visitors to and through Delaware. It complements our efforts in creation, business development and environmental responsibility, giving travelers a great impression of our first state as they enter, exit or hopefully, decide to stay.”

Delaware Department of Transportation Secretary Carolann Wicks said, “Our goal with this facility is to meet and exceed the needs of the traveling public by providing essential travel services that lead to increased safety on our roadways, while showcasing all that our great state has to offer. This new center is a result of HMSHost and all our partners working with us to ensure we are receiving the best investment possible for Delaware residents and the traveling public.”

Local and state dignitaries, the center’s architecture and construction teams, and supporters joined HMSHost for a preview of the travel plaza, which is scheduled to open to the public on June 28 in advance of the Fourth of July holiday.

Approximately 250 HMSHost associates will staff the travel plaza—open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. An additional 50 people will be employed at Sunoco. More than 4.5 million visitors will pass annually through the entry doors. The center was constructed in less than 12 months in order to return services to travelers as quickly as possible.



“The Delaware Welcome Center represents a successful partnership between the state of Delaware and HMSHost,” said HMSHost’s President and CEO Elie W. Maalouf. “We’ve created a travel ‘oasis’ that will be a chosen stop for drivers, amplifying DeIDOT’s vision of transforming the Interstate 95 corridor.”

Maalouf added, “We appreciate the collaborative efforts between our team and Delaware’s Department of Transportation and are ready to providing the best restaurant choices, travel retail stores and comfort to travelers and the state for the next 35 years.”

The ten month construction time frame between September 2009 and June 2010 created approximately 250 jobs. HMSHost and its fuel partner, Sunoco, invested approximately \$35 million to finance, design and construct the Delaware Welcome Center. HMSHost will operate and maintain the center throughout the term of the agreement.

The new Delaware Welcome Center has been built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. It incorporates a number of energy and water conservation features along with the use of recycled and regional building materials. **Sunoco’s** 21-pump

fuel campus with an **A-Plus Convenience Store** is located on the northern end of the complex. At capacity, 40 cars will be able to fuel up at the same time. Fifty spaces of CabAire truck parking offering anti-idle truck electrification outlets are located on the southern end of the property.

Once inside the building, travelers will find outstanding menus and recognized brand names, including **Baja Fresh**, an innovative blend of Southwestern and Mexican cuisine of freshly prepared tacos and burritos; **Brioche Dorée**, a French bakery and café featuring sandwiches and salads with a European flare; **Famous Famiglia Pizza**, the NY-style pizza that is a favorite of Northeast and mid-Atlantic travelers; and **Starbucks Coffee**, where in its new center hall location at the Welcome Center, people will stop to chat, meet up or even work a few minutes while traveling along I-95. **Burger King**, **Cinnabon/Carvel**, and **Popeyes Chicken** complete the restaurant grouping.

Travelers at the Delaware Welcome Center will benefit from tax-free shopping as well. An assortment of merchandise is offered in four new retail shops: **Z Market**, an upscale convenience store offering travel essentials (maps, batteries, etc.), newspapers, magazines and gourmet pre-packaged food to go. **Postcards from Delaware**, home to Delaware products that highlight the state's distinctive heritage and culture joins **Bijoux Ternier** and **IShades** to complete the retail offering.

Photographs of Delaware attractions and scenery, representing every county of the state, grace the center's interior walls. Special consideration was given to the selection of these images where visitors will be able to see the authentic attractions of the state—from its beaches to the historic Brandywine Valley—all taken by local Delaware photographers and residents. There will also be a state-run **Delaware Visitor Center** that provides information on local and statewide attractions, events and activities.

"HMSHost provided an entire development, design and construction team to support and build this project—delivering it to the state and travelers in less than 12 months," said HMSHost's Vice President Michael Jones. "The Delaware Welcome Center is a game-changer in terms of making the traveler's day better on the highways—ease of access, sustainability, selection of restaurant brand names, dynamic retail offerings and a tourism center that welcomes visitors with highlights of the 'First State'."

About HMSHost

HMSHost is a world leader in creating dining and shopping for travel venues. With more than US\$2.5 billion in sales and 34,000 employees, HMSHost has won international recognition for its original restaurants and retail stores, creative designs and outstanding customer service. HMSHost operates restaurants and retail stores in 94 motorway travel plazas throughout North America and in 111 airports worldwide. A part of Autogrill S.p.A, HMSHost and the rest of the Autogrill Group are recognized leaders in travel restaurants and retail. With sales of \$5.7 billion in 2009, Autogrill operates in 43 countries and employs approximately 70,000 people. The Company manages more than 5,500 stores in more than 1,200 locations worldwide. Find HMSHost-Making the Traveler's Day Better on Facebook or visit www.HMSHost.com for more information.

For a complete press kit, contact kharacz@a-b-c.com.