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LAS VEGAS MARKET EXPANDS PARTNERSHIP WITH AID TO ARTISANS
Innovative Showcase of Global Artisan Exhibitors Returning For Summer Market

LAS VEGAS, June 13, 2018... Las Vegas Market announced today that it is intensifying its pioneering partnership with leading non-profit economic development firm Aid to Artisans to bring 25 unique artisan exhibitors to the Summer 2018 Las Vegas Market, running July 29 to August 2, 2018, the second consecutive show featuring the organization's artisanal showcase.

“Las Vegas Market is pleased to create greater synergies within our overall artisan and global handicraft offerings by extending our ground-breaking partnership with Aid to Artisans’ ‘Training for Entrepreneurs in Artisan Markets’ (TEAM) initiative,” said Esther Ossei-Anto, Senior Marketing Manager, International Market Centers. “Aid to Artisans is the standard-bearer for the global maker movement, and this TEAM showcase of unique artisan-produced goods is an important strategic advance in Las Vegas Market’s overall commitment to expanding our current *HANDMADE* product mix. As the leading furniture, home décor and gift destination in the western United States, Las Vegas Market recognizes the importance of supporting independent artisans and offering our retailer and designer audience an array of handcrafted, sustainable, environmentally-friendly and socially-responsible merchandise.”

The TEAM initiative from Aid to Artisans debuted at the Winter 2018 Market, featuring 20 first-time artisan exhibitors. The TEAM program is an on-site coaching and mentoring program for emerging international artisan businesses. The program uses Aid to Artisans’ holistic training and trade show preparation process to help artisan entrepreneurs worldwide grow their

businesses, expand into new markets, and achieve sustainable growth while exhibiting at Las Vegas Market.

Carola Mandelbaum, recently-named president of Creative Learning, Aid to Artisans' parent organization, said, "We believe in the mission of the Las Vegas Market and its potential for growth. Creative Learning/Aid to Artisans is proud to be a partner in this important initiative and we look forward to a long and productive collaboration that empowers artisan entrepreneurs around the world."

The Aid to Artisan showcase will be presented as part of the *HANDMADE* category in temporary exhibition space within Pavilion 1 at the Pavilions at Las Vegas Market for Summer Market. Five new companies from Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Tibet, Mexico and the Dominican Republic will debut at Summer Market, joining other TEAM exhibitors featuring products from Central Asia, Colombia, Guatemala, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Turkey and Vietnam.

Newcomers for Summer Market include: Azure Jewelry, based in Mexico City, which features clean, contemporary handcrafted jewelry created by founder Carlos Ruiz. Bibi Hanum, from Uzbekistan, is a socially responsible enterprise creating fashion apparel and accessories using traditional hand-woven silk cotton ikat fiber; founder and artistic director Muhayo Alieva's mission is to provide economic opportunities for women while preserving Uzbekistan's rich cultural and ethnographic heritage. "Attending Las Vegas Market with Aid to Artisans' TEAM is a great opportunity for Bibi Hanum to increase exposure to U.S. wholesale customers and to facilitate business interactions with potential partners," said Alieva.

Dropenling is a socially responsible, self-sustaining Tibetan provider of colorful toys and puppets supported by the World Bank's Poverty Alleviation Project and is a recipient of a

UNESCO Award of Excellence; the name is based on the Tibetan word that translates as “giving back for the betterment of all sentient beings.”

Foundation of Cultural and Creative Industries Inc. (FINCC) of the Dominican Republic was founded as a means of preserving the culture and traditional skills of the Dominican Republic artisan sector and features a number of artisan-crafted products, including wood carvings, reproductions of pre-Columbian ceramics, and jewelry using Dominican amber and rare blue amber found only in the country’s mountains.

Khyber Truck, based in Pakistan, translates the country’s colorful indigenous truck art into a wide variety of household items and collectibles, including kettles, lanterns, canisters as well as model trucks. Owner Noshad says, “Our items represent Pakistani culture, tradition and shows the people of our nation are friendly and peace-loving people. Each piece is entirely handmade, painted by master artists with bright color paints on metal.”

Las Vegas Market has been experiencing exceptional growth in handcrafted merchandise, and some 200+ craft resources will be featured in permanent showrooms and in temporary exhibition space at Summer Market. The largest concentration of handcrafted resources is presented in the *HANDMADE* category of temporary exhibits in Pavilion 1, which showcases a juried collection of some 70 exhibitors of handcrafted, artisanal and designer/maker products.

Aid to Artisans has spent 40 years creating economic opportunities for well over 100,000 artisans in more than 110 countries; and during the past 20 years, the organization’s efforts have leveraged nearly \$230 million in retail sales. This income has empowered 125,000 artisans in 72 emerging regions of the world. More Aid to Artisans information is available at

www.aidtoartisans.org.

Las Vegas Market is the nation's fastest growing gift and home décor market and the leading furniture marketplace in the western U.S., presenting 4,300+ gift, home décor and furniture resources in an unrivaled market destination. Las Vegas Market features thousands of gift, furniture and home décor lines, allowing for cross-category commerce among these industries. The Summer 2018 Las Vegas Market runs July 29 to August 2, 2018. For more information, visit www.lasvegasmarket.com.

About International Market Centers, L.P.

Las Vegas Market is produced by International Market Centers, L.P. (IMC), the world's largest operator of premier showroom space for the furnishings, home décor and gift industries. International Market Centers owns and operates 12.2 million square feet of world-class exhibition space in High Point, N.C. and Las Vegas. IMC's mission is to build and operate an innovative, sustainable, profitable and scalable platform for the furnishings, home décor and gift industries. For more information on IMC, visit <http://imcenters.com/>.

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