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2650 E. 40th Avenue
Denver, Colorado
United States
+1 303 592 5760
www.wtcdenver.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Trade Center Denver Names Stephanie Garnica as New Chief Executive Officer
International business and diplomacy leader brings decades of Colorado experience and a deep global network to the region's premier international trade organization

DENVER, CO - [September 21, 2026]-World Trade Center Denver (WTC Denver) today announced the appointment of Stephanie Garnica as its new Chief Executive Officer, ushering in a new chapter for the organization as it expands its role connecting Colorado businesses, entrepreneurs and leaders to opportunities around the world.

Garnica brings more than two decades of experience promoting international business, economic development and diplomacy in Colorado. Her career has centered on strengthening Colorado's connections to global markets, attracting international investment, supporting companies expanding across borders, and building relationships with international business and diplomatic communities.

"Stephanie is uniquely positioned to lead World Trade Center Denver at this moment," said Jeff Popiel, Chair of the Board of World Trade Center Denver. "She has spent her career building bridges between Colorado and the world. She understands international business, economic development and diplomacy, but just as importantly, she understands the relationships that make global commerce work. Stephanie knows this community, she knows our organization, and she has a genuine passion for Colorado's global future. We are thrilled to welcome her back to WTC Denver as our next CEO."

Garnica currently serves as Director of Business Attraction, Global Engagement, Innovation & Entrepreneurship with the City and County of Denver's Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) office, where as part of positioning the city as a vibrant economic hub to attract businesses, she leads Denver's international strategy, promotes the city as a global business epicenter, supports foreign direct investment, oversees international diplomacy and advises on international affairs. The City's Global Engagement team works with Fortune 500 companies, international businesses, investors and inbound government delegations while helping Denver companies pursue international markets.



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Her career has included leadership roles with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity, Denver International Airport, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and World Trade Center Denver. Earlier in her career, Garnica served as WTC Denver's Director of Business Development, giving her firsthand experience with the organization and its mission.

"Global business has been the thread running through my entire career," said Stephanie Garnica, incoming CEO of World Trade Center Denver. "I have had the privilege of helping local companies look beyond our borders, welcoming international companies and delegations to our state, and building relationships with people from around the world. Coming back to World Trade Center Denver is an exciting opportunity to bring all of that experience together in service to an organization I deeply believe in."

Garnica's international perspective began early. After earning her undergraduate degree in International Marketing from the University of Colorado Boulder, she served in the Peace Corps in Nicaragua for two and a half years, an experience that shaped her lifelong commitment to cross-cultural connection and international engagement. She later earned a master's degree in International Business from the University of Colorado Denver. She is fluent in Spanish and has traveled and worked extensively throughout the world.

She has also been deeply engaged in Colorado's international community through organizations including the Japan America Society of Colorado, Biennial of the Americas, Study Colorado and World Trade Center Denver, as well as higher-education advisory initiatives focused on international business and global engagement.

"Colorado's global economy is changing rapidly, and there is tremendous opportunity ahead," Garnica said. "WTC Denver has an important role to play in helping Colorado companies compete and grow internationally, while also strengthening the connections that bring investment, talent, ideas and opportunity into our state. I'm excited to work alongside our members, community partners and board to build on the organization's strong foundation and chart its next chapter."



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Garnica assumes leadership of WTC Denver following the departure of Karen Gerwitz, who led the organization for nearly 16 years. Under Gerwitz's leadership, WTC Denver expanded its programs, membership and role as a hub for international business throughout Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region.

"Karen built an extraordinary foundation for this organization," Popiel said. "Stephanie brings the experience, relationships and vision to build on that foundation while taking WTC Denver forward."

Garnica will be formally introduced to the WTC Denver community at the organization's Annual Gathering on October 6, 2026, at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, where members and partners will celebrate the organization's history and look ahead to its next chapter.

About World Trade Center Denver

World Trade Center Denver (WTC Denver) is the leading international business network and services organization serving Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. Its mission is to help companies and entrepreneurs succeed in the global economy by providing access to international connections, trade expertise, education, strategic resources and business opportunities.

From Denver, WTC Denver connects its members to a global network spanning nearly 100 countries, more than 300 World Trade Centers and approximately one million affiliated companies. Its guiding philosophy is simple: Colorado is stronger when we trade.

Media Contact:

Sandi Moilanen

World Trade Center Denver

sandi.moilanen@wtcdenver.org

303-592-5362

www.wtcdenver.org