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**Multi State Multi Sector International Investment and
Trade Mission to Colombia - UPDATE**

Northern Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - NOVAHCC will be leading an international investment and trade mission to Colombia on October 20th, 2018 the third largest South American market for United States exports, which relies on a U.S.-type variety of products. For this reason, Colombia will be our destination for the 2018 where members and non-members from the chamber and residents of Washington DC Metro region, including Maryland, Virginia and Washington DC are encourage to attend.

The eight-day proposed schedule includes business meetings in Bogotá, Cali, Buga, and Buenaventura- Colombia as well as tax incentive meetings with Colombian local government officials. To take advantage of this great opportunity, contact Susana Marino at smarino@novahispanicchamber.com

Date: October 20-28, 2018

Multi-city location: Cali, Buga, Buenaventura, Bogota - **Colombia**

Deadline: September 20th, 2018

Space limited to 25 U.S companies to ensure personalized attention.

Participation Fee:

\$2750 pp for members and **\$2900 pp** for non-members

Fee includes:

- Pre-travel briefing on subjects ranging from business practices in Colombia to security and more.
- Procolombia briefings on the business climate, political scenario, and best prospect sectors.
- 4 stars hotels, breakfast, ground transportation in all cities, and domestic air travel from Cali to Bogota.
- Pre-scheduled meetings with potential partners, distributors, end users, and local industry contacts.

*** Fee excludes international air travel from U.S to Colombia round trip, meals and other incidentals.**

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Why Colombia?

The U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA), which entered into force on May 15, 2012, provides duty-free entry for over 80 percent of U.S. consumer and industrial exports to Colombia. The South American country traditional' s acceptance of U.S. brands as well as U.S. and international standards, provide a solid foundation for U.S. firms seeking to do business there. Colombia is the third largest market in Latin America and is 15 globally as a market for U.S. exports. With more than 45 million people, an improved security environment, an abundance of natural resources, and an educated and growing middle-class, business opportunities are booming in Colombia.

Colombia is a democratic Republic, with a privileged and strategic place in Latin America. It has abundant natural resources. It is currently one of the main destinations for investors in the region; in a large measure due to the great commercial opportunities it offers, and its legal stability. Colombia was named by the World Bank as the country with the greatest progress in Latin America; thus, providing an ideal environment to do business in it. The growth of the GDP in Colombia has been significantly higher than the world average in the last decade. In recent years, the country has been known by its economic stability and by being able to control its inflation in an appropriate manner. Recently, the main risk rating agencies have assigned to Colombia the best indexes of trust.

Trade Mission Feature: A visit to meet the new Colombian President Dr. Ivan Duque at the Palacio de Nariño on October 25th, 2018 has been petitioned. In addition, several meetings will take place between mission attendees with producers, manufacturers, service providers, and more.

Targeted Sectors

The mission is open to U.S. companies from a cross section of industries with growing potential in Colombia, including, but not limited to defense, construction, safety and security equipment and services, medical equipment, agricultural machinery, and information technology, including cyber-security and more.

Best Prospects for U.S. Companies

Safety and Security Industry

The safety and security market in Colombia are a very dynamic sector, growing at an estimated rate of 5 to 10% per year. It is also estimated that the total Colombian budget for defense is US\$10 billion in 2012 (close to 6% of GDP). The Colombian government is investing heavily in intelligence equipment and services. Market opportunities exist for safety and security industry products such as CCTV cameras, telephones for security, reproduction and record devices for security, data processing equipment, radio transmission, biometric equipment, and communication jammers, among others. Opportunities exist in the defense sector for helicopters and fixed wing parts and maintenance services, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and mine detectors, modern communication systems (MCS), IT structure platforms, marine and coastal surveillance systems and logistics software solutions and applications, among others. The U.S.-Colombia TPA reduced tariffs for a wide variety of products and services in the safety and security industries.

Information Technology

Colombia's IT sector has been experiencing very dynamic growth due to government investment in infrastructure, expanding connectivity throughout the country, and transitioning it from being a hardware-demand driven market to a market that incorporates more value-added IT spending. The Ministry of Information Technology and Communications' (MinTIC) is halfway through its broadband expansion plan called Vive Digital, which seeks to provide connectivity to 8 million Colombians throughout the entire country by 2014. While all of the major bids for this process are in the execution phase, the new connectivity environment is very likely to drive up demand for services by households and businesses, which will seek to take advantage of expanded Internet access. They too are expected to strengthen their IT capabilities with investments in data centers and Customer Relationship Management Solutions, as well as IT Risk Services.

Medical and Dental Equipment

Strong opportunities exist for exports of medical equipment and other health industry-related products and services to Colombia. Following the entry into force of the U.S.-Colombia TPA, approximately 98% of all U.S. medical equipment imports into Colombia are subject to zero tariffs. U.S. imports enjoy the largest share of the local market, accounting for around a third of all medical equipment imports. Currently, the strongest competitors are companies from Germany and Japan, and companies from China are quickly increasing their market share. The best approach to enter into this market is through distributors. Seven of the twenty best hospitals and clinics in Latin America are located in Colombia, including: Hospital Fundacion Santa Fe in Bogota (4th place); and Fundacion Valle del Lili in Cali, Fundacion Cardioinfantil in Bogota, and Fundacion Cardiovascular de Colombia in Bucaramanga (7th, 8th, and 9th place, respectively).

Defense and Military Equipment

- All types of tactical equipment as well as bomb disarming gear;
- Construction of Command and Control Centers in Bogotá and other cities;
- Deming equipment, especially light hand-held devices to be used in rugged terrains;
- Equipment for manual eradication of illicit crops.
- Regular armament and survival equipment;
- Transport trucks, including regular (troop and cargo carrier), armored and tactical;
- Upgrades to fixed wing aircrafts
- Upgrades, parts and support for the Black hawk and Huey helicopter fleets;

Agricultural Equipment

Colombia is the 18th largest market for U.S. agricultural equipment exports. The U.S.-Colombia TPA provided immediate tariff reduction to 0% from 10% on combines, to 0% from 15% on tractors, and reductions on other equipment. The U.S.-Colombia TPA eliminated Colombia's restrictions on the importation of re-manufactured goods, and the Government of Colombia is encouraging farmers to participate in lease programs. The agricultural equipment sector accounted for nearly US\$19 million in U.S. exports to Colombia over 2008-10 (average) or less than 1 percent of total U.S. industrial exports to Colombia. Colombia has been a net food importer because food production was disrupted by the unstable security environment. With improved security, areas that had gone unfarmed for prolonged periods are now producing, and the agricultural sector in Colombia is likely to continue to grow without affecting natural forests.

Construction of Hotels and Dry Port in Buga, Colombia – Valle del Cauca

Buga is a city coated with four centuries, a huge historical weight that has taken the city to be one of the greatest expositors of patrimony character. Its historical downtown is national monument, it is represented by colonial and republican constructions, riches that included Buga in the patrimony touristic towns touristic net by the commerce ministry of industry and tourism. The city of Buga receives 3.5 million religious' visitors per year. There is high demand for the construction of hotels, restaurants and tourism operations to meet the high demand. *Additional tax benefits are given to domestic and international investors by the Colombian Ministry of Tourism, for the construction of hotels, restaurants, and tourism operations.

The municipal government for the city of Guadalajara of Buga in the state of El Valle del Cauca, has approved by official document, a ten-year tax incentive granting benefits including 10 year free of taxes to those companies, domestic or foreign who open operations in Guadalajara of Buga and promote employment, manufacturing and the construction of facilities and other infrastructures which promotes economic development. Priorities include private investment to build and a dry port - inland intermodal terminal to alleviate the high intermodal traffic of containers coming from the Port of Buenaventura – the largest port of Colombia.

Buga is an articulation node to the three most important traffic systems in Colombia's southwest, the road corridor Bogotá – Buenaventura, the road Buga – Eje Cafetero – north / center to the country and the road Buga – Cali – south to the country. This strategic location is reinforced by the excellent conditions of the national roads, the availability of a railroad, the connection with the Pacific port and the closeness to the international airport Alfonso Bonilla Aragón, all this facilitates the integration of the sub region with the rest of the country and the world.

The National Logistic Policy Conpes 3547 of 2008, identified Buga as one of the 22 key nodes to transfer load and as one of the logistic platforms of Valle del Cauca with Buenaventura and Yumbo to facilitate the efficient management of distribution. In Buga there are the main concentrated foods for animals' companies and the most important companies of poultry production, chicken, eggs, incubator eggs and any other that belong to the poultry chain.

Other Products and Services

***The foregoing analysis of the above industry sectors in Colombia is not intended to be exhaustive, but only illustrative of the many opportunities available to U.S. businesses.**

About Northern Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Northern Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - NOVAHCC foster opportunities for business and career growth. Our mission is to enhance the economic growth of our region through three core principles: "Connect, Unity, Achieve" Our main activities focus on delivering bottom-line results through procurement B2B/B2G matchmakings, networking events, assisting Veteran's with career/businesses opportunities, and connecting people to jobs in the region. For more information visit www.novahispanicchamber.com

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