

From Disney to Green Bay: Why not?

By Beverly French – Arts, Culture and Entertainment signals team

In 2015, our local Green Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau was looking to build a visitor center that would be a front door to our community, welcoming visitors and sharing our unique story. After all, tourism has a \$1.3 billion economic impact in Brown County, contributing nearly \$100 million to state and local taxes. We want visitors to see more, stay longer, and return again and again. But, to create a welcome center would require fundraising, building design, content creation, and programming, and the Chamber needed just the right leader to make it happen. Meet Cameron Teske and *Discover Green Bay!*

Cameron made his way to Northeast Wisconsin from Illinois by way of Disney World and a lot of other interesting places. Now Vice President of Visitor Experiences, he grew up in Crete, Illinois, a small suburb about 40 miles south of Chicago. He was fortunate to be part of a family that loved to travel. He earned a BA in Communicative Arts with an emphasis on Public Relations from Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee and then went on to earn a master's degree in Leadership and Innovation. During his junior year of college, Cameron was accepted into the Walt Disney World College Program. There he learned that extraordinary customer service depends on the finest of details. He also recognized the opportunity for a career in the travel and hospitality industry. Based on his own travel experiences, the knowledge gained through working at Disney World, and some great mentors, Cameron now focuses on the visitor experience at the *Discover Green Bay Visitor Center*.

“In October 2015,” Cameron explained, “I started in the digital marketing department for the Greater Green Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau – now rebranded as *Discover Green Bay*. I got in on the ground floor and, as the project grew, I eagerly shifted full-time into overseeing the completion of this visitor center.” Through the ups and downs of funding and a global pandemic, project completion took nearly eight years. The *Discover Green Bay Visitor Center* opened in September 2023. It now welcomes visitors and presents the message of Green Bay's storied past, its thriving present, and its exciting future.

Having lived here for almost nine years, Cameron has seen tremendous growth and development throughout the entire Green Bay area. He's witnessed the addition of residential buildings along the riverfront downtown, the Tiletown Development, new attractions, amazing restaurants, expansions of outdoor recreational opportunities, a variety of arts and cultural events, and the impressive TitleTown Tech – a venture capital firm by the Green Bay Packers in partnership with Microsoft. These add to the quality of life for residents, while also creating more reasons for visitors to come to Green Bay.

Discover Green Bay views every visitor as a potential resident, business owner, employee, or investor in the community. The Green Bay area has become a highly sought-after place to live, recently hailed as the #1 place to live in the United States. “With an increase in people moving

to our area,” Cameron said, “we will celebrate a growth in new cultures, thoughts, ideas, and opportunities.”

Quick growth of a community can sometimes present challenges related to infrastructure, housing, and job opportunities, he conceded. In order to ensure that growth and change are positive, the Green Bay community must approach the future with a plan. Capitalizing on the success of a growing region will be monumental in the economic vitality over the next decade, Cameron explained.

“In the future, we will see more recreational opportunities along the waters of Green Bay and the Fox River. More restaurants. More trails. More parks. More beaches. More arts. More festivals. Green Bay will be seen as a community of innovation,” he said, “not just the moniker of ‘smallest city to host a professional sports team.’ There is so much happening in this community that many people don’t even know about. We need to stop with the *‘Midwest Humility.’*”

Discover Green Bay can boast to the world the great things happening in the Green Bay area and what a great place this is to live, work and play.