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Tampa Attorney Announces Formation of Bi-National Tampa/Canada Chamber of Commerce

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Andrew L. McIntosh

MEDIA CONTACT

Wendy M. Byrne

wbyrne@shumaker.com

Tampa, FL – Canadian Consul General Louise Leger and **Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP** attorney **Andrew McIntosh** announced the formation of a Bi-National Tampa/Canada Chamber of Commerce. Leger and McIntosh made the announcement at a reception following The Association of Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS) Conference.

As a member of the bars of both Ontario and Florida, McIntosh provides representation to clients involved in cross-border business. He is a member of the firm's international practice group. "As a Canadian permanent resident, I don't have the right to vote in the United States. I do, however, have the ability to contribute," said McIntosh. "I consider it a privilege to be able to serve the community in various ways, including the formation of this Bi-National Chamber. The trade relationship between the United States and Canada is strengthened by promoting the exchange of ideas and providing business leaders with tools and structures that facilitate international commerce. I get very excited about business opportunities that create jobs, and that truly is what this partnership is about," said McIntosh.

At the reception, Louise Leger told the crowd of business leaders that trade between Canada and the United States is worth over \$700 billion per year- about \$2 billion per day, depending on the exchange rate. "That relationship obviously creates jobs. About 8 million jobs on this side of border and 2 million in Canada are directly related to this relationship," she said.

Leger went on to state that half a million Americans work for Canadian firms like BMO Harris, Cott Beverages, Stantec, Mayors Jewelers, Circle K and others. "In Florida, 535,000 jobs have been generated as a result of this relationship; some of these companies are not only located here but they are growing and creating more jobs," she said.

Leger noted that 40% of the tourism revenue in Florida comes from Canadians. "Our snowbirds who come to the state of Florida every year -close to 4 million of them – spend \$4.4 billion; they come with suitcases filled

with shorts and cash. They buy homes. Last year 31% of all homes bought by foreigners in this state were purchased by Canadians. You can absolutely count on our support for this Chamber.

Fast Company said the state of Florida is the most innovative state in nation. Who would have said that five years ago? The time is right to get this Chamber up and running to continue the important work your business leaders are already doing to create jobs and to foster this success," she said. Articles of Incorporation were filed with the State and the new Chamber attained active status on November 20, 2013.

From 2005 to 2012, Andrew McIntosh served as Honorary Consul for Canada, pursuant to the Government of Canada's "Enhanced Representation Initiative." His role has been to facilitate trade and investment activities through the Canadian Consulate General at Miami, assisting Canadian businesses with interests in Florida, and U.S. firms desiring to do business in Canada.

In addition to his practice at Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP, McIntosh is also a co-founder of Cross Border Partners Advisory Services, which provides project management, and consulting services to businesses seeking to expand their platform through exports or direct investment. The company is partnering with WorkForce Florida and Hillsborough Community College to deliver customized training to businesses wanting to export products or services, or engage in the supply chain for exports. The work of Cross Border Partners compliments Andrew's law practice and supports efforts for the benefit of clients and the community as a whole.



Canadian Consul General Louise Leger and Andrew McIntosh



Steve Morey, Tampa EDC, Shannon and Andrew McIntosh

Founded in 1925, Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP is a full service business law firm with more than 225 attorneys practicing in Toledo and Columbus, Ohio; Tampa and Sarasota, Florida; and Charlotte, North Carolina.