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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Valerie Patton To Participate In Prestigious Department Of Defense Program Hosted By The Secretary Of Defense**

**ST. LOUIS** (Apr. 17, 2019) – Valerie Patton, Senior Vice President, Inclusion & Talent Attraction at the St. Louis Regional Chamber, has been selected to participate in the 91st Joint Civilian Orientation Conference (JCOC 91) hosted by the Secretary of Defense. The JCOC program is the oldest and most prestigious public outreach and full immersion program in the Department of Defense.

As a JCOC participant, Valerie Patton will spend several days at the Pentagon and military installations, engaging with senior military officials and U.S. Service members. She will gain a better understanding of the roles and mission of the U.S. Armed Forces; their skills, capabilities and equipment employed in defense of our nation. The JCOC program directly links to the Department's Know Your Military (#KYM) initiative, which is designed to help close the growing civilian-military divide by educating the American public about their military.

"We are incredibly honored to have Valerie Patton participate in this program," said Tom Chulick, St. Louis Regional Chamber President & CEO. "With major military installations in the St. Louis region and a large veteran workforce population, it is critical that we are able to provide the private-sector support and resources they need to thrive in our regional economy. We are fortunate to have a passionate advocate like Valerie representing the St. Louis region at JCOC."

The objective of the JCOC public liaison program is to:

- Educate and inform participants about the strength and readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces through personal observation of Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard operations.
- Provide a better understanding of the rewards and challenges of military service.
- Provide the American public opportunities to obtain a better understanding of national defense policies and programs through the eyes of those JCOC participants who have spent time with their military.

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#### ***About the St. Louis Regional Chamber***

*The St. Louis Regional Chamber is the region's largest business organization, representing the St. Louis business community across 15 counties in both Missouri and Illinois. We champion a greater St. Louis region by serving as a catalyst for regional economic opportunity and forward-thinking public policy. For more information, visit [www.stlregionalchamber.com](http://www.stlregionalchamber.com).*