

# Willamette Valley Visitors Association Celebrates Autism Acceptance Month with Certified Autism Center™ Designation

*WVVA is committed to providing better and more inclusive experiences for autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals through IBCCES' certification program*

SALEM, OREGON, UNITED STATES, April 6, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Willamette Valley Visitors Association](https://www.wvva.org/)

(WVVA) has worked with The

International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES), a global leader in training and certification programs, to receive designation as a [Certified Autism Center](#)™ (CAC) – a timely announcement for April which is celebrated as Autism Acceptance



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We are thrilled to partner with Willamette Valley Visitors Association team to enhance its focus on accessibility and ensure that more travelers can have a fantastic experience when visiting.”

*Myron Pincomb, Board  
Chairman of IBCCES*

month. The esteemed certification is granted to businesses and organizations that have gone above and beyond to make their experience more accessible and enjoyable for autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals. In order to receive the CAC designation, WVVA's team has completed training and certification in best practices and is committed to undergoing additional autism-specific training to be better equipped in providing inclusive experiences.

Many autistic individuals and their families want to travel yet may worry they will not be understood, welcomed, or have access to accommodation needs. Recently the CDC

updated the autism diagnosis rate to 1 in 36

children([https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/ss/ss7202a1.htm?s\\_cid=ss7202a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/ss/ss7202a1.htm?s_cid=ss7202a1_w)), which means the need for more hospitality and entertainment options for these travelers and their families has never been greater. WVVA is also initiating a movement with the help of IBCCES to become a [Certified Autism Destination](#)™ (CAD). The CAD designation is awarded to destinations where hospitality and recreation organizations are trained and certified to better serve autistic individuals and those with other sensory disorders. WVVA's team is taking the first steps to help

build a more inclusive community.

"More visitors and their families need to feel welcomed and understood so they can create memories and feel comfortable traveling," shared Myron Pincomb, IBCCES Board Chairman. "We are thrilled to partner with Willamette Valley Visitors Association as the team enhances its focus on accessibility and ensures that more travelers can have a fantastic experience when visiting the valley."

"Providing the neurodiverse community the opportunity to interact and to take part in shared activities and recreation while they are here is key, as is the ability to support engagement in face-to-face social interactions," says WVVA's Executive Director Dawnielle Tehama, who spearheaded the certification process. She adds that "WVVA also wants to help facilitate the travel planning process for those individuals who are autistic and sensory-sensitive."

"We understand the importance of providing potential visitors with travel information that they need and how they need it when planning and implementing a trip. That's why we are working with our partners to better understand the gaps in support and help to craft strategic goals for these businesses so individuals and their families can easily plan and enjoy their time here." says Tehama.

For more information on what WVVA is doing to make the valley an inclusive place for all, visit: [willamettevalley.org/dei/](http://willamettevalley.org/dei/)

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About the Willamette Valley Visitors Association

The Willamette Valley, defined as the area between the crest of the Cascade Mountains and the crest of the Coast Range, from Newberg south to Cottage Grove, is the largest river valley in the Pacific Northwest. Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) is a private, nonprofit organization that supports travel and tourism in the Willamette Valley, Oregon's Wine Country. Comprising six



destination marketing organizations, WVVA works to maintain the Willamette Valley as Oregon's premier travel destination, while also highlighting the culture, heritage and natural resources of the region. For more information, visit <https://willamettevalley.org/>.

About IBCCES, the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards IBCCES has been the leader in cognitive disorder training and certification for healthcare, education, and corporate professionals around the globe for over 20 years. IBCCES is the only global credentialing board that provides travel and entertainment organizations with training and certification from subject matter experts and autistic self-advocates, and other resources, as well as long-term support that help them understand how to accommodate and assist autistic or sensory-sensitive visitors, as well as their families. IBCCES created programs specifically for hospitality and recreational organizations such as hotels, theme parks, and other attractions so staff would be more knowledgeable and other accommodations could be offered to this growing but underserved part of the community.

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