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Heartland Coca-Cola Acquires Two Emporia, Kansas Companies

June 24, 2024 (Lenexa, Kan.) – Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling (Heartland Coca-Cola) has acquired Coca-Cola Bottling of Emporia (Emporia Coca-Cola) and Classic Vending – both of Emporia, Kansas. This move aligns with our overarching growth strategy of becoming the premier bottler in the Midwest.

“It truly is an exciting time for all of us to work at Heartland,” **said Chuck Wyant, President and COO.** “We have delivered consistent, predictable, sustainable results the right way against the business goals and objectives expected in our first 7 years, progressed seamlessly with the construction of our new Olathe Production Campus, and now we are adding a new element to our business family, a pivotal milestone in our growth strategy.

Emporia Coca-Cola and Classic Vending will become a part of our North Kansas Hometown led by General Manager Mike Berry. The employees at Emporia Coca-Cola and Classic Vending will stay intact as we integrate them into our Heartland family. We anticipate learning from them as they learn from us – with insights gained from both sides.

Emporia Coca-Cola and Classic Vending were both established by the DeBauge family in Emporia, KS. Jeff DeBauge has served as Chief Executive Officer since 1994. Today, Emporia Coca-Cola has distribution rights in the counties of Chase, Coffey, Greenwood, and Lyon. About 400 different product lines are distributed by Emporia Coca-Cola. In addition, Classic Vending provides vending, coffee, and micro-market services to businesses and entities in the greater Emporia area.

As we move forward, Jeff DeBauge will report directly to me. He will work with the North Kansas Hometown to help ensure a seamless transition focused on our employees and customers in the greater Emporia area.

As we look forward, mapping our trajectory for the next six years and beyond, it is evident that the foundation of Heartland's success rests upon our commitment to developing, innovating, and expanding our company's portfolio. As we strive to generate capital and nurture our business across expanding territories, this acquisition presents a compelling opportunity to put our vision into action. By integrating these two Emporia companies into our operations, we bolster our existing footprint while also exploring new avenues that offer diverse opportunities for Heartland's consideration.

About Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company

Based in Lenexa, Kan., Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company, LLC (Heartland) was founded in early 2017 by successful former NBA professional and business leader Junior Bridgeman. Bridgeman's longstanding connection to Coca-Cola and the Midwest began 30 years earlier during his NBA career when he volunteered at basketball clinics sponsored by the company. His partnership with Coca-Cola continued as he built several notable restaurant franchise operations and led to the establishment of Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company.

Today, Heartland is an anchor Coca-Cola bottler in the Midwest, proudly serving over 25,000 customers across Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, and several counties in both Iowa and Nebraska. In addition, Heartland recently acquired Emporia Coca-Cola and Classic Vending, both of Emporia, Kansas. The Bridgeman family's founding principles guide the organization's daily operations: putting people first by creating a culture of value and inclusion, connecting with and serving its local communities, and providing the highest quality products and service to its customers and consumers. For more information on the company, please visit www.heartlandcocacola.com.