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PRESS RELEASE

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Kern County Fair & Event Center Announces Retirement of CEO Michael Olcott

Board begins leadership transition process; Olcott to remain through July.

BAKERSFIELD, CA – The Kern County Fair & Event Center (15th District Agricultural Association) announced today that Chief Executive Officer Michael Olcott will retire from his role effective July 2026, following more than 14 years of leadership after becoming CEO in January 2012.

“Michael’s leadership has strengthened the Kern County Fair & Event Center in ways that will last well beyond his tenure,” said Jared Britschgi, Chairman of the 15th DAA Board of Directors. “From navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to advance the Fair’s year-round impact in our community, he has led with integrity, professionalism, and a clear commitment to our mission. We are grateful for his service and the difference he has made for Kern County.”

Since stepping into the CEO role in January of 2012, Olcott has overseen operations of the Kern County Fair & Event Center, including the annual Kern County Fair and year-round facility programming. During his tenure, the organization grew in ways that supported its ongoing commitment to agriculture, youth development, education, and community enrichment.

“It has been an honor to serve Kern County in this role,” Olcott said. "I’m proud of what our team has accomplished together and grateful to the Board, staff, partners, and the community for their support over the years. The Kern County Fair & Event Center plays

an important role in bringing people together, and I'm confident in the organization's continued success."

The 15th DAA Board of Directors will begin a transition process to ensure leadership continuity. With the help of the State, a search for Olcott's successor will begin immediately. Olcott will work closely with the Board and executive team to support a smooth transition through July.

Additional details regarding the transition will be shared as they become available.

About the Kern County Fair

The Kern County Fair & Event Center (15th District Agricultural Association) is a year-round destination in Bakersfield, California, hosting the annual Kern County Fair and a wide range of community events, concerts, competitions, trade shows, and rentals. The organization is committed to celebrating agriculture, supporting youth and education, and providing engaging experiences for residents and visitors throughout the region.

The 2026 Kern County Fair runs September 23 – October 4, 2026.

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