

Downtown Madison, Inc. is pleased to announce the hiring of Jason Ilstrup as its next President. Jason will take the reins at DMI starting January 2, succeeding Susan Schmitz, who steps down at the end of 2017 after 19 years of service to the organization and community.

Jason currently serves as the General Manager of HotelRED, where he has worked since 2011. Serving as the opening manager, Jason created the operational systems and culture for HotelRED. As Project Director for Development, Jason worked with the City and neighborhood to secure approval for an expansion of the hotel earlier this year. Since joining the hotel team, Jason has participated in countless city and state-wide community initiatives and boards.

Prior to his time in the hospitality industry, Jason served as legal counsel and aide for several elected officials including Congressman Martin Olav Sabo, Congressman Barney Frank, Wisconsin State Assembly Member Tom Nelson and British Member of Parliament Austin Mitchell. Jason advised the members in transportation, military affairs, economic development and urban affairs. In addition, Jason served as a volunteer in the Peace Corps in Niger, West Africa for two years, where he learned the value of creating authentic connections with different stakeholder groups within a community.

Jason earned a B.A. in Political Science from Boston University and a J.D. from the University of Minnesota Law School. He is married to lifelong Madisonian, Rachel Sattler.

Board Chair Stacy Nemeth says that the hiring committee was impressed not only by Jason's educational and occupational background, but by his passion for the mission of DMI and his sincere desire to have a positive impact on the Madison community. "The position attracted over 100 applicants from all over the country, and we found the best person for the job right here in our backyard. We feel confident that Jason's unique skill set will serve Downtown Madison, Inc. well into the future."

*DMI is a not-for-profit membership organization which effectively connects people, organizations and ideas to celebrate, sustain and grow downtown Madison as a thriving regional economic engine that offers exceptional quality of life for businesses, residents and visitors. The organization currently serves more than 475 members, comprised of businesses, residents, non-profit organizations and associations. Work is accomplished by a staff of 4 full time employees, a 50-member Board of Directors, a 14-member Executive Committee and 6 standing committees.*