Kelly Craighead is the President and CEO of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA). As the world’s largest cruise industry trade association, CLIA represents all segments of the cruise community, which includes 278 ocean-going cruise ships, 13 river marketing affiliates, a highly trained and certified travel agent community comprised of 53,000 agents worldwide, and hundreds of cruise line suppliers and partners ranging from ports and destinations to ship builders and developers and other maritime business services.

With offices located in seven regions around the world, Ms. Craighead is responsible for developing and executing on the overall strategy to support this broad and deep international business coalition and oversees the management of the global operations. Under Craighead’s leadership, CLIA and its members are leading the way in responsible tourism practices, significantly increasing the industry’s collective investment in research, development, and education, as well as executing advocacy and promotional efforts that add and create value for the cruise community and its partners.

Prior to joining CLIA in 2019, Craighead served in executive leadership positions in the public and private sectors.

As the first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Travel and Tourism and Executive Director of the National Travel & Tourism Office, housed at the U.S. Department of Commerce, Ms. Craighead served in the Federal Government as the senior representative for travel and tourism matters providing overarching coordination of federal government tourism policies and programs. In this position, Ms. Craighead led initiatives that generated more than $250 billion annually from international visitors to the USA while also representing the United States as the key point of contact with other government tourism ministers in critical travel and tourism policy efforts. Her prior government experience includes holding leadership roles on the White House staff.

For nearly ten years between her public service roles, Craighead helped lead and incubate cutting-edge advocacy organizations. Most recently, Ms. Craighead has been appointed to VISIT FLORIDA’s Board of Directors which provides guidance, input and insight into the evolution of the organization’s marketing programs.