

MAY 17-19, 2021



# DESIGNING THE FUTURE

**GACVB ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
**SAVANNAH**

**Marriott Savannah Riverfront**

**May 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

VISIT  
**SAVANNAH**  
EST.  1733



**GEORGIA**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAUS



**Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**

6:00 pm **Board of Directors Dinner**  
*Board of Directors Dinner Partner: by Epsilon*

**Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**

9 am – 5 pm **Registration Open** **Boardroom A**

9 am – 1pm **Sponsor & Exhibitor Setup** **Atrium**

10 – 11:30 am **GACVB Board of Directors Meeting** **Plaza**

12 pm **Lunch on your own**  
 Enjoy the unique coastal cuisine of Savannah  
<https://www.visitsavannah.com/food-drink>

12:30 – 1:15 pm **First-time attendee / New Member Meet & Greet**

1:30 – 3 pm **Welcome & Opening General Session** **Savannah Ballroom AB**

**Katie Williams**, Director, Athens CVB / President GACVB  
**Joseph Marinelli**, *President*, Visit Savannah  
**Van Johnson**, *Mayor*, City of Savannah

**General Session** **Savannah Ballroom AB**  
**Architecting Our State’s Destination Marketing Organization**

In support of the theme of GACVB’s 2021 annual conference – Designing the Future – Deputy Commissioner Jaronski will expand on how Explore Georgia’s recent organizational changes were designed to be a new starting point from which the state’s official tourism marketing organization will grow. Mark will share with us the facts and figures impacting tourism now, and the strategies for



supporting tourism recovery marketing across the state and continuing to inspire travel to and within Georgia for years to come.

*Session Partner: Explore Georgia*

**Mark Jaronski**, Deputy Commissioner, Tourism  
Georgia Department of Economic Development

- 3:00 **Afternoon Break** **Atrium**  
Networking with partners  
*Break Partner: Harris County Chamber of Commerce and Advertising Unlimited*
- Auction Opens** **Atrium**  
Supporting Education Programs & Scholarships  
*Auction Partner: Expo Auctions*
- 3:30 – 4:30 pm **General Session** **Savannah Ballroom AB**  
**Deciphering Destination Data**  
Inundated with data, hear from industry leaders on what data to use and how to use it.  
*Session Partner: MediaOne North America*
- Moderator: Mike Robertson**, MediaOne North America  
**Guest Panelists:**  
**Chenelle Mcgee**, ShelbyKY Tourism Commission & Visitors Bureau  
**Jill Anderson**, Meet Minneapolis  
**Josh Sherwood**, MediaOne North America  
**Tim Reis**, Act 3, LLC
- 6:15 pm **Transportation Departure to Opening Event & Dinner**  
*Transportation Partner: Old Town Trolley Tours*
- 6:30 - 9:30 pm **Opening Reception at Service Brewing Company**  
*Reception Partner: Visit Savannah*

## Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>

- 7 – 8:15 am **Continental Breakfast / Networking** **Savannah Ballroom AB**
- 8 am **Registration Open** **Boardroom A**
- 8:30 - 10 am **Concurrent Leadership Development Sessions**
- Setting Priorities from the Inside Out** **Oglethorpe AB**  
**Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC)**  
**Course 1 : Part 1**

**Presenter: Cedricia Thomas**

Instructor/Facilitator of Leadership Development  
The Leadership Institute at Columbus State University

Why is it so hard to follow through on time management/priority setting advice? In this session we will learn about and use a system created by Julie Morgenstern dubbed “The Queen of putting people’s lives in order” by USA Today to develop your big picture view, find out what’s holding you back, design a plan that fits your personality, makes choices about & take ownership in your schedule and your life.

**Careers & Coffee (or Cocktails!)**

**Savannah Ballroom AB**

**In Tourism Economic Development**

Back by popular demand! This new CEOs panel series launched in 2020 interviews DMO executives to share their career paths of successes and obstacles as well as tackling current issues in Georgia’s tourism industry.

Session qualifies for Advanced LEC Credits.

*Session Partners: Atlanta Magazine/Compass Digital  
Laurie Rowe Communications*

**Moderator: Shana Young**, Assistant Vice President of Leadership Development and Executive Director of the Leadership Institute at Columbus State University

**Panel Guests:**

**Joe Marinelli**, Visit Savannah

**Lisa Anders**, Explore Gwinnett

**Peter Bowden**, VisitColumbusGA

**Katie Williams**, Athens CVB

10:00 am

**Morning Break**

**Atrium**

Networking with partners

*Refreshment Break Partners: Carrollton Area Convention & Visitors Bureau*

10:30 am

**Concurrent Leadership & Destination Development Sessions**

**Setting Priorities from the Inside Out**

**Oglethorpe AB**

**Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC)**

**Course 1 : Part 2**

**Presenter: Cedricia Thomas**

Instructor/Facilitator of Leadership Development  
The Leadership Institute at Columbus State University

**Destination + Downtown Development**

**Savannah Ballroom AB**

Collaboration between destination and downtown development partners has proven crucial to economic survival in 2020. During this session, you’ll hear about best practices in fostering relationships with downtown partners, as well as



case studies demonstrating effective strategies in which Main Street and local CVBs mutually develop and deliver the visitor experience.

Session qualifies for Advanced LEC Credits.

*Session Partners: Advance Travel & Tourism*

**Moderator: Tara Bradshaw**, Economic Development Specialist, Office of Downtown Development Georgia Department of Community Affairs

**Panel Guests:**

**Steven Fulbright**, *Director of Tourism*, Visit Macon

**Emily Hopkins**, *Director of Place*, NewTown Macon

**Lindsay Fruchtl**, *VP of Marketing*, Augusta CVB

**Margaret Woodard**, *Executive Director*, Downtown Development Authority of Augusta

11:45 am

### **Leadership & Awards Luncheon**

**Savannah Ballroom AB**

*Luncheon and Recognition Partners: Pineapple Public Relations, Warner Robins CVB, and Georgia Trend*

- **Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC) Graduation**
- **Special Membership Presentation**
- **GACVB presents the 2021 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Travelblazers***  
Recognizing community destination development projects

1:15 pm

Stretch Break

1:30 – 2:30 pm

### **General Session**

**Savannah Ballroom AB**

**The Heart of the Matter - A discussion of achieving action and sustaining ownership in a fair and just organizational framework:**

From board and leadership development to product and destination marketing, concrete culture investment for consistent corporate integrity takes intentional, structural change. Join tourism industry leaders for this panel of perspectives and strategies entrenching authentic inclusion and diversity practices for measurable success.

*Session Partner: J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development – University of Georgia*

**Moderator: Bennish Brown**, *President/CEO*, Augusta CVB

**Panel Guests:**

**William Pate**, *President and CEO*, Atlanta CVB

**Elliott Ferguson**, *President and CEO*, Destination DC (DDC)

2:30 – 2:45 pm

### **Transportation to Breakout Group Field Sessions**

3:00 – 4:45 pm

### **Immersion Excursions**

**Group A** – Savannah Convention Center  
**Group B** – Kehoe Iron Works at Trustees Garden & American Prohibition Museum  
**Group C** – Perry Lane Hotel  
**Group D** – JW Marriott Savannah Plant Riverside District

5:45 pm **Transportation to Evening Experience**

6:00-7:30 pm **Evening Reception – Electric Moon Rooftop at Plant Riverside District**  
Tours of JW Marriott/Plant Riverside District available  
*Reception Partner: Accent Creative Group*

7:30 pm **Plant Riverside District - Dine around** on your own and enjoy Savannah participating restaurants “Show Us Your Badge” program

## Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>

7 – 8:15 am **Continental Breakfast / Networking** **Savannah Ballroom AB**

8:30 - 10:15 am **Concurrent Leadership Development & Breakout Sessions**

**Supervising and Empowering Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC)** **Oglethorpe AB**

This session encourages leaders to develop direct reports through empowering assignments and leadership development exercises that result in professional growth and competence. Participants will know the difference between a boss and a leader and will be enabled to develop others.

**Presenter: Cedricia Thomas**  
Instructor/Facilitator of Leadership Development  
The Leadership Institute at Columbus State University

**Local Government and DMO: The ‘DTR’ Conversation** **Savannah Ballroom AB**

*Defining the relationship* (DTR) between the DMO and the city or county government can be tricky, with funding, staffing, space-sharing, and other sensitive considerations. This session will address two issues that can help build a mutual understanding of that relationship – the “big picture” discussion of the variety of organizational structures of DMOs and how they are (or aren’t) intertwined with the local government, and the “in the weeds” discussion of valuable components of the annual hotel-motel excise tax contract/MOU.

**Tyler Reinagel, Ph.D.**, Director, Office of Planning & Research  
Georgia Department of Community Affairs

9:30 – 10:15 am **Morning Break** **Atrium**  
Networking with partners

- 10:15 **Auction Closes**
- 10:15 – 10:45 am **GACVB Business Session & Legislative Update** **Savannah Ballroom AB**
- 10:45 – 12:00 pm **Closing General Session** **Savannah Ballroom AB**  
**Delta Air Lines**  
**Bob Somers**, Senior Vice President – Global Sales
- Session Partner: Hospitality & Food Industry Management/  
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences – University of Georgia*
- 12:00 pm **Closing Remarks & Adjournment**  
(Auction check out)
- Lunch**  
Enjoy Savannah – Dine around on you own
- 1:00 – 2:30 pm **Georgia Hotel & Lodging Association (GHLA) Luncheon**  
**Executive Briefing & 2021 Legislative Recap for Hospitality Leaders**  
[GHLA Luncheon Registration Link – Seating is limited. Please register early.](#)  
*(Separate from GACVB Conference. GACVB Members get GHLA Member rate)*  
**A Panel Featuring Leading Lobbyists Supporting Hospitality:**  
**Jay Morgan**, Georgia Hotel & Lodging Association  
**Lee Hughes**, Georgia Association Convention & Visitors Bureaus  
**Karen Bremer**, Georgia Restaurant Association  
**Chris Hardman**, Georgia Hotel & Lodging Association

### LINGER LONGER

#### **WEDNESDAY, MAY 19 - LINGER LONGER w/ TOURISM FRIENDS & FAMILY**

We have not been able to network at this conference since Feb. 26, 2020. Please consider a LINGER LONGER with friends and colleagues. After we adjourn Wednesday mid-day, consider relaxing at least one more evening with peers and enjoy Savannah. There is no way to take in all there is to see and do during the two-day conference... refresh, check in with the office, and enjoy a conference wind-down evening with your friends in tourism. The Marriott is offering us the conference rate through Thursday, May 20.

# Thank You to Our Partners and Exhibitors

## Our Host



## Board of Directors Dinner Partner

EPSILON

## Session Partners



J.W. Fanning Institute  
for Leadership Development  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



MEDIAONE



Hospitality and Food  
Industry Management  
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE  
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

## Leadership & Awards Luncheon Partners



## Local Partners



## Reception Partner



## Sustainer Partners



## Travelblazers Recognition Partner

GeorgiaTrend

## Break Partners

## Exhibitors

- 365 degree Total Marketing
- AAA Living
- Advance Travel & Tourism
- Advertising Unlimited
- Atlanta Magazine / Compass Media
- Bandwango
- Bridal Guide & Afar
- Epsilon
- Explore Georgia
- Georgia Magazine
- Harris County Chamber of Commerce
- HiDow International
- Hospitality & Food Industry Management/  
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences  
– University of Georgia
- J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership  
Development
- Key Data
- Laurie Rowe Communications
- The Local Palate
- MediaOne
- Phoenix Printing
- Pineapple Public Relations
- Rhyme & Reason Design
- tempest

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