



# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF VENUE MANAGERS REGION 5



## A letter from the director

It's not too late to register for this year's Super Regional Conference in Lexington! As of this writing, over 100 IAVM members have signed on for this year's meeting. The educational content is outstanding but I'm personally most excited about the bourbon tasting event. What better way to network than by sampling some of the world's finest beverages? So if you haven't made your reservations for Lexington on April 22-24, [click here now](#). Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

*Todd Hunt*

April 1st, 2018

## **WE WANT YOU!**

Do you want to become involved in IAVM Region 5? Do you want to meet colleagues who share your passion for our industry? A great way to achieve your goal is to sign up for a Region 5 committee. You will receive far more than you give and make some incredible friendships to boot! You won't be sorry, so complete the form today and return as directed.

**[Download the 2018 Volunteer Form](#)**

**[Region 5 IAVM News](#)**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**I A SUPER REGIONAL  
V M CONFERENCE**

**APRIL 22-24, 2018**



**WHAT TO  
EXPECT:**

- TRAINING FOR FRONT LINE STAFF
- SAFETY/RISK MANAGEMENT
- CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD SERVICE
- HR - ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE #METOO MOVEMENT?  
& ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS!

**PLUS – BOURBON TASTING, HORSE RACING, OPERA HOUSE TOUR, AND MORE!**



**REGISTER NOW**

For information on sessions, hotels, travel and registration, [click here now!](#)

**Region 5 IAVM Job Postings**

**FedExForum (Memphis, TN) - Event Manager**

The Event Manager is responsible for the complete operation and execution of all events and functions from initial costing to settlement. This position will manage the operational needs and requirements for all events at FedExForum, as well as events in the community. The Event Manager is the primary departmental liaison with all departments for the successful planning of

all events at FedExForum.

For full job description and application information, visit the employment page at <http://www.nba.com/grizzlies/team/about/careers>.

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### **Richmond Convention Center (Richmond, VA) - Assistant Parking/Box Office Manager**

The Assistant Parking/Box Office Manager assists in managing all aspects of parking, box office and utility services operations.

For full job description and application information, visit the employment page at <https://www.richmondcenter.com/employment/>.

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### **Richmond Convention Center (Richmond, VA) - Maintenance Laborer (Electrician Helper)**

The Maintenance Laborer (Electrician Helper) assists the Center's Electrician with installing and maintaining electrical/power systems and will assist the Maintenance Technicians on various maintenance related tasks.

For full job description and application information, visit the employment page at <https://www.richmondcenter.com/employment/>.

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### **Richmond Convention Center (Richmond, VA) - Security Guard**

The Security Guard provides general protection of facility property and personnel; monitors facility and protects against fire, damage and theft; provides general information and assistance to facility guests; and serves as the lead for all Base Security systems.

For full job description and application information, visit the employment page at <https://www.richmondcenter.com/employment/>.

**Please submit any job postings to [iavmr5@gmail.com](mailto:iavmr5@gmail.com)**

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## **Alabama**

### **HUNTSVILLE - Paul Yant Senior Operations Supervisor Retires**

On May 31, 2018, Paul will be retiring after 27 years of dedicated service. Paul Yant started working at the Von Braun Center as a part-time "red coat" in 1989. On November 29, 1995, Paul began his full-time career as a security officer. His strong work ethic, his drive for excellence and his passion for customers guided him to his present position as Senior Operations Manager. Paul's dedication will never be matched in our facility. His name defines

the "can-do" attitude, never refusing to meet a client's request, no matter how difficult, how tiring or how impossible the demand may seem. Over the last 4 years, he has assumed the direct leadership role for the arena and has worked long, tiring hours to ensure our players have the best ice conditions possible and the fan experience exceeds expectations. Last year, the SPHL teams voted the Von Braun Center as the "best ice" for the 2017 season. That is a milestone for this facility.



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**MOBILE** - Visitors to the SMG-Mobile managed Mobile Convention Center are now welcomed with colorful, Mobile-themed artwork in our parking garage. A mural was painted by a group of students on one of the garage walls while they were in town in March for the 69th annual Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC). The conference offered its 4,500+ attendees classes and workshops on all things theatre, including a scenic painting master class with Scott Bradley, head of scene design at Virginia Commonwealth University. Prior to the conference, Bradley researched Mobile history and came up with a design that features the Bragg-Mitchell Mansion and Mobile's famous Azalea Trail Maids. 27 students spent two days painting the mural, with each student taking a 3-foot-square portion. The idea for the mural was conceived by the Convention Center's Director of Operations, Brandt Wilhelm. He presented the idea to SETC organizers during a site visit last summer, and they agreed to it on the spot. SMG-Mobile provided the paint, art supplies and cleaning materials. Brandt has already met with local artists about creating additional murals on other garage walls to give personality to an otherwise dull space.



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## Puerto Rico

Please submit your news to [iavmr5@gmail.com](mailto:iavmr5@gmail.com)

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## Florida

### **ORLANDO - ORLANDO VENUES ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST ADOLFINA ORTIZ HONORED WITH "WOMEN WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE" AWARD**

La Prensa, a Spanish-language newspaper covering Florida, has recognized Orlando Venues Administrative Specialist Adolfina Ortiz with its Mujeres Destacadas (Women Who Make a Difference) 2018 award for her ongoing commitment and service to the Central Florida Hispanic community. She has been active with numerous organizations in diverse roles including as an ambassador for the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando, co-founder and past president of the Metro Orlando Hispanic Community Emergency Response Team, member of the Hispanic American Professionals and Business Women Association as well as past president of the Villas of Costa del Sol neighborhood. In 2016, Ortiz was also the recipient of the City of Orlando Dennis McNamara Employee of the Year Award.

"It's an honor to receive this award because the most beautiful thing I have done for love is to be compassionate and that leads you to be tolerant and able to understand others," said Ortiz.

Orlando Venues is the City of Orlando department that manages five public venues including Amway Center and Camping World Stadium. Ortiz has been instrumental in creating

awareness for each of these venues while also helping boost Hispanic attendance at concert, family shows and sporting events.



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## **Georgia**

### **ATLANTA - Former Georgia Dome Site Clearing: What's Next?**

If you haven't visited the GWCCA campus since the Georgia Dome implosion this past November, you're in for quite a surprise. In its place now sits a voluminous crater bustling with activity as large machines move mounds of dirt and infill and construction workers ready the site for not one, but three new structures that will reside in the Dome's former footprint.

First up is the Home Depot Backyard, a 13-acre green space designed for game day tailgating experiences just outside Mercedes-Benz Stadium (MBS). On non-game days, the Backyard will feature arts, entertainment and cultural experiences for locals and visitors alike. Approximately 200,000 tons of Georgia Dome concrete is being used as infill for the site, which is scheduled to open in the fall.

Visitors to the GWCCA campus will also have another parking option with the addition of the Orange Deck. Featuring 600-plus parking spaces, the deck will sit adjacent to the Home Depot Backyard and provide easy access to the stadium and the Georgia World Congress Center just steps away. Work on the deck is slated to begin this May and be completed in time for Super Bowl LIII, which will be played at MBS on February 3, 2019. Finally, and arguably most exciting, is the new 1,010-room luxury convention center hotel that will serve the adjacent Georgia World Congress Center. Ground breaking is scheduled for early 2019 and additional information is expected to be announced this spring.



## Louisiana

### NEW ORLEANS - Smoothie King Center Welcomes Concerts With Unique Back-of-House Project



After many months of concept-development, research, and design, SMG New Orleans unveiled its latest project. The new upgrades to the arena's "Back-of-House" area incorporate the deep history of New Orleans' music and pay tribute to some of the famous musical artists who have



contributed to the rich legacy including Fats Domino, Mahalia Jackson, and Louis Armstrong.

Aside from the original artwork through the hallways, the arena received a hallway makeover with fresh paint and bumpers, as well as a new "Autograph Wall" that features brushed-metal customized plaques that will be given to performers to sign. Katy Perry, the first artist to perform at the Smoothie King Center in 2018, kicked off the wall with a personalized message: "Always a blast, love you NOLA - Katy Perry."

These renovations have created a premium space that will provide a uniquely New Orleans experience to visiting artists from all over the world.

For more information, check out the articles below.

- ["Smoothie King Center's backstage makeover to remind rock stars they're in New Orleans" - The New Orleans Advocate](#)
- ["Dig the cool new Smoothie King Center dressing room dÃ©cor" - NOLA.com/The Times-Picayune](#)



*"I'm not sure, but I'm almost positive, that all music came from New Orleans" - Ernie K-Doe*

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## **Mississippi**

**Please submit your news to [iavmr5@gmail.com](mailto:iavmr5@gmail.com)**

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## **North Carolina**

**CHARLOTTE** - Nina D. Simmons, director of Student Activity Center & Venue Management,

will retire from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte on April 1 after 19 years with the university.

In her position, Simmons oversees the James H. Barnhardt Student Activity Center, including the Miltimore Wallis Athletic Training and Academic Complex and the Dale F. Halton Arena, as well as the Jerry Richardson Stadium and Judy Rose Football Center. Prior to her arrival at UNC Charlotte, Simmons was employed by the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Diamond Ridge Motorsports, the NC Blumenthal Performing Arts Center, and Blockbuster Pavilion.

"Nina's leadership has been instrumental to the success of some of UNC Charlotte's most visible events," said Jim Hoppa, senior associate vice chancellor for student affairs. "From countless commencement ceremonies and basketball games to the opening of football in 2013, her dedication and passion for event management has helped create memorable guest experiences for the UNC Charlotte community and hundreds of thousands of visitors."

After leaving the University, Nina plans to relocate to Florence, South Carolina where her husband Bud is director of the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center. Friends may continue to reach her at [ninadsimmons@gmail.com](mailto:ninadsimmons@gmail.com).



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**South Carolina**

Please submit your news to [iavmr5@gmail.com](mailto:iavmr5@gmail.com)

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## Tennessee

**MEMPHIS** - The Memphis Grizzlies and FedExForum have announced Dwight Johnson as Vice President of Arena Operations. Johnson joins the organization after working for SMG Richmond as the General Manager since 2009. Prior to his role as General Manager, he acted as Director of Operations with SMG Richmond beginning in 2005. During his 13-year career at SMG, Johnson developed a strong background in building operations, construction and event management while overseeing operations at the Richmond Coliseum, Altria Theater, Dominion Energy Center and the Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center.

Johnson began his career in Facility Management in 1997 as an Operations Lead at the 15,000-seat Pete Maravich Assembly Center on the campus of Louisiana State University. After receiving many promotions, Johnson oversaw all daily operations and booking for the facility during his final position as Director. In his time at LSU, Johnson managed multiple national sporting events including the NCAA Women's Basketball Regional, Men's Basketball NIT Tournament games and SEC Championship events.

A native of Thibodaux, Louisiana, Johnson is a graduate of Louisiana State University. He and his wife, Katy, have two children, Avery Kate and Drew.

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## Virginia / Washington / Maryland

Please submit your news to [iavmr5@gmail.com](mailto:iavmr5@gmail.com)

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## Allied Member News



*Creating the Science of Facility Management*  
Facility Operations, Evaluation & Analysis

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Venue Solutions Group ([www.venuesolutionsgroup.com](http://www.venuesolutionsgroup.com)), an industry leader in operational consulting to the public assembly facility industry, is pleased to announce that registration is now open for the 2018 Venue Operations Summit ([www.venueopssummit.com](http://www.venueopssummit.com)) taking place in Nashville, TN April 29-May 1, 2018. VOS is the premier conference for our industry's operations and engineering professionals. This year's topics include leadership, risk management in housekeeping, vertical transportation maintenance, electrical system management, establishing KPI's, venue-specific Town Halls, life safety, and much more. Regardless of venue type, attendees can be assured of a program that will provide actionable information to assist you in your facility responsibilities, along with very valuable networking opportunities.

IAVM Region 5 | 635 Fritz, Dr. Suite 100, Coppell, TX 75019

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