



Letter from the Director



Greetings Region 5 Members!

Welcome to the continuing episodes of Summer! Hopefully you are all feeling some relief from the record highs of September! Now it is time to welcome in Fall and the lovely sounds of increased business as we head toward the holiday season.

Your Region 5 representatives have been hard at work. We have kicked off the planning for next year's Super Regional Conference. In 2019, many of you joined us in Daytona Beach for a great time learning about changes and advances in our industry and hopefully you made time to "network" on the beach. In 2020, we will be welcomed by our host region, Region 3 and Region Director Scott Hallgren! The

host city will be Kansas City – so Kansas City here we come!

On another note, have you attended a recent Chapter Meeting? Chapter Meetings are a fantastic way to introduce your staff to other IAVM members while keeping your travel budget intact. In fact, please consider hosting a chapter meeting and inviting industry colleagues to your building. Would you be interested in hosting one? We have the Chapter Meeting extraordinaire Robert Rose available to guide you through the process.

If you haven't done so already, please make sure to save April 26-29, 2020 for the Super Regional Meeting in Kansas City. Have an idea you think would be of interest on the program? Please let me (b.quick@dittolanding.org) know. I will gladly pass it along. Would you like to be a part of the

planning? Shoot me an email about that too. We've got some useful sessions in store, but are looking for more.

Best Regards,

Brandi Quick, CVE
October 2, 2019

Career Opportunities

**EVENT SUPERVISOR - Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center
Florence, SC**

<https://www.fmarion.edu/job/event-supervisor-performing-arts-center-19-96/>

**EVENT COORDINATOR - Charleston Coliseum & Convention Center
Charleston, WV**

<https://cityofcharleston.applicantpro.com/jobs/1203859.html>

**ADVERTISING SPECIALIST - Steven Tanger Center for the Performing Arts
Greensboro, NC**

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/greensboronc/jobs/2570670/tanger-center-advertising-specialist?keywords=advertising&pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

**CHANGEOVER MANAGER - North Charleston Coliseum and Performing Arts
Center
Charleston, SC**

<https://recruiting.adp.com/srccar/public/RTI.home?c=1152751&d=ExternalCareerSite&r=5000528037906#/>

News & Venue Updates

ALABAMA

**HUNTSVILLE - Samantha Nielsen Joins Von Braun Center as Marketing and Public
Relations Manager**



The Von Braun Center (VBC) announced Samantha Nielsen as the new Marketing and Public Relations Manager. She began her post on July 10.

As the Marketing and Public Relations Manager, Nielsen manages all aspects of internal and external communication including all media relations and advertising campaigns for the VBC.

A native of an ambassador for all things Huntsville, Nielsen has worked in the hospitality and tourism sector for the past six years. Before joining the VBC, she was the Director of Communications at the Huntsville Museum of Art. Prior to the Museum, she assisted the marketing and public relation efforts at the Port of Huntsville.

"I have had the pleasure of promoting different aspects of our city throughout my career and am excited to now begin marketing the VBC as it continues to grow with Huntsville," commented Nielsen. "I am honored to begin marketing an organization that constantly works to improve the quality of life for our community."

Samantha received a BS in Communication from the University of North Alabama with a focus in Journalism, and a Minor in Professional Writing.

FLORIDA

ORLANDO - Amway Center Celebrates Unprecedented Hot Streak of Seven Straight Sold-Out Shows



Orlando's Amway Center welcomed its hometown band, the Backstreet Boys, and a capacity crowd on August 24, and with it, entered the history books for the best run of shows in the arena's eight-year history.

The unprecedented hot streak began on July 10 with JoJo Siwa followed by New Kids on the Block (July 13), Jennifer Lopez (July 23), Shawn Mendes (July 30), Jonas Brothers (August 9) and Khalid (August 16). Amway

Center has hosted numerous sold-out concerts through the years, but never has there been a succession this successful in such a short amount of time. This series of sold-out events collectively amassed 89,284 tickets sold and a total gross of \$8,085,668.

"Summer is usually a slower touring season for concerts but not this year as the Amway Center has remained consistently busy bringing the best in live entertainment to Central Florida," said Orlando Venues Chief Venues Officer Allen Johnson. "We're proud of this milestone but more importantly, we're thrilled to deliver truly legendary experiences and diverse entertainment to our patrons that will last a lifetime."

GEORGIA

ATLANTA - Georgia World Congress Center Authority Promotes Leaders From Within



Longtime Georgia World Congress Center Authority (GWCCA) team member Jeff Oden has been named the organization's Senior Director of Campus Operations effective July 1. Oden has risen through the ranks over the course of his 28-plus years with the Authority, most recently serving as Director of Project and Program Management.

In a related move, Otto Johnson, formerly a Senior Project Manager, has been promoted to succeed Oden as Director of Project and Program Management, effective August 1.

ATLANTA - Best Buy Joins GWCCA's Self-Service Offerings



A new Best Buy kiosk has joined the Georgia World Congress Center's (GWCC) lineup of self-service vending outlets, offering personal electronic devices and accessories.

The Best Buy machine is located in the Building B Lobby area next to one of two CVS automated pharmacies inside the 3.9-million-square-foot-and-growing GWCC.

With a touch of a finger and the swipe of a debit card, guests can purchase cellphone chargers, USB cords, adapters, a variety of headphones and earbuds, Amazon Fire TV Sticks, and electric razors from Best Buy, without leaving the convention center.

As mentioned, there's another CVS kiosk in Building A on the 400 level, and also earlier this year, two Mamava pods were installed in Buildings A and B that allow nursing mothers to breastfeed in private.

ATLANTA - Revamped Visitor Information Center Opens at Centennial Olympic Park



Now open, the refreshed Visitor Information Center at Centennial Olympic Park located near the popular Fountain of Rings is a collaboration between the Georgia World Congress Center Authority (GWCCA) and Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB).

The discerning eye may notice the swirling, circular Atlanta logo (that's ACVB's) on the building exterior – that's because ACVB staff is managing the center's info desk and this spot essentially replaces the organization's old downtown Visitor Information Center at Underground Atlanta.

Inside, guests will find screens displaying 4K video with the most up-to-date information on downtown events and attractions, along with brochures and other publications showcasing the city's award-winning dining scene, and entertainment and shopping destinations.

"Centennial Olympic Park is the starting point for a visitor's journey through Atlanta, making this a great location for our new visitor information center," said William Pate, president and CEO, ACVB. "The new

facility is surrounded by world-class attractions, award-winning dining and, more than 12,000 hotel rooms, giving visitors a fantastic resource to help them navigate the destination.”

NEWNAN - Newnan Centre Outdoor Venue Being Built



A new outdoor venue, primarily targeting weddings, is under construction on the Newnan Centre campus. The building was designed to reflect the architecture of the other structures and to look as if the venue has been there from the beginning. The outdoor venue is being constructed at the tree line of the outdoor amphitheater. “The requests by brides for outdoor weddings has increased tremendously” said Peyton Shelnett, Sales and Events Manager. “While the main focus will be

outdoor weddings, the venue can be used for other activities as well, such as small concerts, comedians, etc.,” said Shelnett.

The project cost is \$399,851 and is expected to be completed by the end of September.



LOUISIANA

NEW ORLEANS - Renovation of Iconic Mercedes-Benz Superdome Takes Significant Step Forward



The Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans, managed by SMG, has cleared a major hurdle in the Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District’s (LSED) plans to renovate the venerable stadium; a fixture of the New Orleans skyline since it opened in 1975.

Recently the Louisiana Bond Commission gave its unanimous approval to sell bonds for a 450-million dollar renovation project with construction to begin in early 2020. The renovation will include

expanded concourses, enhanced food and beverage options, and new club viewing areas that have

proven popular in recently built stadiums. The four-year phased construction will take place in between New Orleans Saints football seasons and will not impact events like the Essence Festival, The BCS National Championship, and The Sugar Bowl.

NEW ORLEANS - New Orleans Convention Center Named a "Top Workplace"



The New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center has been selected as one of the city's Top Workplaces by The Times-Picayune|The Advocate. This is the fourth time the Convention Center has received the prestigious honor.

The Top Workplaces are determined based solely on the results of an employee feedback survey administered by Energage, LLS (formerly Workplace Dynamics), a leading provider of technology-based employee engagement tools. Several aspects of the workplace culture were measured, including Alignment, Execution, and Connection.

"It is truly a testament to all of our employees, whom we consider internal customers, in helping maintain a work environment where internal customer satisfaction is among our highest priorities. We are indeed honored that the Convention Center has been recognized as a Top Workplace. When our SPICE Customer Service Program was implemented ten years ago, one of the goals was to make the Convention Center a place where our internal customers/employees would sincerely feel good about doing their jobs, and in turn create a positive experience for our external customers/patrons," said Michael J. Sawaya, President and General Manager of the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. "Our employees truly understand and appreciate the role they play and the positive affect they have on the state and local economy."

All 500 full-time and part-time employees are required to attend regular training on the five Customer Service Standards that are the guiding philosophy of the program. These standards are reinforced during a daily SPICE Rack meeting. During SPICE Rack, employees are encouraged to recognize fellow employees for exceptional acts of service. The Convention Center also holds motivational, educational and teambuilding events for employees during the year, to reinforce the program.

The program was named "SPICE" to reflect the celebrated culinary heritage of New Orleans. The acronym SPICE stands for:

- S – Serve with flexibility and a sense of urgency;
- P – Perform with pride and passion;
- I – Identify issues and provide solutions;
- C – Convey a positive attitude;
- E – Exceed expectations always. =

"Our efforts have been successful, and our external customers, our clients, have taken notice. The Convention Center has received numerous industry awards and letters from clients praising the heightened level of service. Our employees truly make a difference in our success," Sawaya added.

NEW ORLEANS - New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Conducts Successful Fire Drill with New Orleans First Responders



The New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center conducted a Fire Drill on August 8 in cooperation with the New Orleans Fire Department and New Orleans Emergency Medical Services. The 350 staff members of the Convention Center participated in the exercise in order to demonstrate their understanding of emergency evacuation procedures. The outcome of the exercise was to enhance communication systems, strengthening intra- and inter-agency coordination and continue to create and maintain a safe environment for internal and external customers.

The New Orleans Fire Department rated the drill Excellent.

The emergency scenario simulated a fire due to malfunctioning equipment near the second floor meeting rooms. The alarm was sounded at 9 a.m., the building was evacuated, and the drill was ended just over 5 minutes later. This exercise demonstrated how Convention Center staff will be prepared to assist the nearly one million visitors attending events annually in the event of an emergency evacuation.

“We are very pleased with the results of this drill. The evacuation was swift and handled in a safe and orderly manner,” said Adam Straight, Vice President of Operations for the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. “This exercise is just one of the many precautions we take in order to make sure emergency situations are managed with resolve and the professionalism that our guests deserve.”

Last year, the New Orleans Fire Department toured safety-critical areas of the Convention Center to become familiar with its fire prevention, detection, and emergency response initiatives. This fire drill is yet another step in the Convention Center’s long-standing initiative to keep its guests and staff safe.

MISSISSIPPI

VICKSBURG - 6th Annual Ritz on the River a Huge Success



The Vicksburg Convention Center (VCC) team produced the 6th Annual Ritz on the River on Thursday, July 18th. The 12South Band from Nashville wowed the crowd with a plethora of songs and choreography. The dance floor stayed packed during the unforgettable Havana Nights themed evening. The community helps raise funds each year for a different charity. This year they came together to raise funds for the Warrior Bonfire Program. The Warrior Bonfire Program is an organization created for service members who have been wounded in combat operations. We were able to present a check for \$4,024 to assist in their mission. This presentation was the

largest we have been able to donate through Ritz. This event was made possible by many organizations and individuals that supported the Havana Nights themed evening! The VCC is managed by VenuWorks.

VICKSBURG - 6th Annual Ritz on the River a Huge Success



Schindler Corporation completed the elevator and escalator project at the VCC in May 2019. The \$900,000 City of Vicksburg funded project began December 2018 and was a much need enhancement to the bustling VCC. We are excited to announce that in 2019-2020 we will begin to phase in new carpet and tile.

NORTH CAROLINA

Please submit your news to iavmr5@gmail.com

PUERTO RICO

SAN JUAN - Troy Thorn Pays Visit to Puerto Rico Convention Center



Troy Thorn, Foundation Board of Trustee and Executive Director of Chesapeake Conference Center, benefited from a site visit and meeting with Puerto Rico Convention Center General Manager Jorge Perez and colleagues. "One of my favorite aspects of IAVM membership is the vast diverse network of venue executives I have access to." Hurricanes Irma and Maria had devastating impacts on the island, but according to Thorn, "Puerto Rico is back with an awesome product! With the addition of an Aloft Hotel supplementing the Sheraton and expansive entertainment district under construction they are a level above their comp set."

SOUTH CAROLINA

Please submit your news to iavmr5@gmail.com

TENNESSEE

Please submit your news to iavmr5@gmail.com

VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA BEACH - Amanda Pratt Hired as New Catering Sales Manager at the Virginia Beach Convention Center



Centerplate recently hired Amanda Pratt as the new Catering Sales Manager at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

A Virginia Beach Native, Amanda served four years in the Navy before starting her hospitality career at Busch Gardens Williamsburg Entertainment. She has recently spent the past two years as the Private Events Coordinator at the Waterside District in Norfolk. She is currently pursuing a degree in business, as well as earning her yoga instructor certification.

Amanda has already demonstrated a passion for the industry and the VBCC is excited to have her join the team!

Allied News

Venue Solutions Group Announces Partnership With Town of Cary, NC



Venue Solutions Group is pleased to announce a new contract with the Town of Cary, NC. VSG will be providing a facility condition assessment of Koka Booth Amphitheatre, a 7,000-seat outdoor venue that opened in 2000. The scope includes a review of the finishes, food service equipment, mechanical, electrical & plumbing systems, and structural

elements; the scope will also include a 20-year capital expense matrix that will assist the Town in long term expense planning.

VenueOps Shortlisted for EventTech Awards



VenueOps, a venue management software platform developed by EventBooking, has been shortlisted by EventTech Awards in the Best Venue Booking Solution category. This category recognizes the most useful and innovative venue booking solutions in the global event industry. Steve Mackenzie, President of EventBooking, commented on

the awards: “We’re immensely grateful for this recognition. It’s always nice to have our teams’ hard work acknowledged, especially when it comes from your peers in the industry. I would also like to thank our clients for their support—even a nomination for an award would fall flat without their continued trust in us.”

This is EventBooking’s fourth milestone in recent months, which includes reaching a client-base of 1,000 venues and celebrating their 20th year in business.

The Event Technology Awards annually recognize the achievements of companies delivering digital and technological solutions to the events industry. Winners will be announced at the Event Technology Awards ceremony and gala dinner - taking place on the first evening of Event Tech Live – Wednesday, November 6 at the fabulous Troxy, London.



Venue Trivia

In this new segment, we'll ask one trivia question pertaining to Region 5 venues, venue managers, events, and more! So without further ado...

**Who was the first Director of IAVM Region 5?
BONUS QUESTION: What year were they appointed Director?**

Check out the November newsletter for the answers!

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