



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF VENUE MANAGERS REGION 5 NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Hello Region 5,

Summer is around the corner! For some venue managers & allies, our busiest event season is concluding, and we're welcoming a more relaxed pace over the summer. For others, our season is gearing up and primed for an active summer.

Whichever transition you find yourself in, it's important to recognize that we, as individuals, give so much to others around us in both our personal lives and professional lives. If you're running low on energy - or even completely on empty - I encourage you to find (& put in to action) daily practices that support your mental, physical, and emotional needs and tap in to a source that always keeps your tank on Full. It's important to create strong boundaries & treat ourselves and others with loving-kindness. It's a skillset - so we have to practice. Sometimes we'll get it right & there may be times we might not. When that happens, give yourself grace then

keep listening, learning, and developing. We inherently take better care of others when we take better care of our self.

On behalf of Region 5, I want to express gratitude to the members of our region who worked throughout the year on the Super Regional 2023 Conference Planning Committee. Special recognition to Region 5 Assistant Director Tim Hemphill, CVP who helped with the steering committee. This year's opportunity to gain valuable insights by asking colleagues "what do you do in your venue?", to learn from excellent presenters, and to relax & connect with both first-time and long-time attendees was highly valuable. Kansas City was superb example of what our combined Super Regional offers to IAVM members - especially those in Regions 1, 2, 3 and 5.

Region 5 also appreciates all of our Allied Partnerships. These valuable relationships benefit all IAVM members every day. Supporting a vision to create more opportunities for development, the Allied partners who participate in the Super Regional specifically support the conference by keeping barriers to entry as low as possible for students, smaller venues, allied organizations, and all venue types -- inclusive of those without large travel or professional development budgets. The price point of registration, hotel, and travel is also a conscious effort by the Planning & Host Committees to encourage venues to send anyone in the organization -- entry-level team members, mid-level managers/directors, and C-suite executives -- to a geographically localized, high ROI, professional development opportunity.

Another goal of a successful conference is the funding all of Region 5's numerous scholarships for schools, conferences, Young Professional memberships, and CVP application fees -- which are exclusive

offerings to develop members of Region 5. We encourage you to check the Region 5 webpage, social media, and newsletter regularly for those announcements throughout the year.

We work in a demanding and wonderful industry that creates experiences that have the power to impact attendees for a life time. Let's agree to take intentional actions to be a little less stressed, to revel in the best parts of our work, and to have (a lot) more fun doing it every day!

I look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh for VenueConnect 2023.

Kathryn Carlson, CVP
Director, Region 5

P.S. Two years from now, Region 5 is hosting the 2025 Super Regional. Remember to set aside professional develop resources in your department budgets now! If you are eager to be the 2025 host city/venue, email iavmr5@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REGION 5 IS LOOKING FOR A FLORIDA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Region 5 is looking for a Florida IAVM member to serve a two-year term as state representative of Florida. The state representative serves on the Region 5 Board of Directors and brings any pertinent industry issues from within their State to the Board of Directors. In addition, the state representative also tries to get venues within the State to host chapter meetings.

If you are interested in serving, please contact Carol Moore at carol@newnancentre.com.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Region 5 is looking for volunteers to serve on various committees. If you are interested, please email IAVMR5@gmail.com for more information.

INTERESTED IN HOSTING A CHAPTER MEETING?

Chapter meetings are a great way to network with industry peers in your local area as well as provide beneficial education opportunities. Chapter meetings can be as small as a luncheon or networking after-hours social to a full day of sessions.

Never planned a chapter meeting? No worries, your Region 5 Chapter Meeting Committee is here to help you through the process and provide resources to help you plan a successful meeting.

If you want to get started please reach out to your Region 5 Chapter Committee Chair, Bryan Miller, at bryan.miller@crva.com

REGION 5 REPRESENTS AT IAVM'S SENIOR EXECUTIVE SYMPOSIUM

Region 5 was well represented in both attendance and with leadership at the recently concluded return of **IAVM's Senior Executive Symposium (SES)** held April 23-26, 2023 in Washington DC hosted by *Georgetown University*.

The return of the program was a great success at Georgetown and plans are already being made for next spring- dates TBA. Leading the efforts were Chair of the SES Board of Governors Elaine Williams from New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, and Vice Chair was Jennifer LeMaster with the GWCC in Atlanta- both of Region 5. Thank



you to all the Region 5 members who attended this renewed program! As you contemplate your own professional development next year, senior leaders should certainly consider SES (either again, or for the first time) and getting involved with this program.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

DIRECTOR OF FOOD & BEVERAGE

PEACE CENTER
GREENVILLE, SC

APPLY NOW

VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

TENNESSEE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
NASHVILLE, TN

APPLY NOW

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

PEACE CENTER
GREENVILLE, SC

APPLY NOW

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FACILITY SERVICES

TAMPA SPORTS AUTHORITY
TAMPA, FL

APPLY NOW

RP FUNDING CENTER DIRECTOR

CITY OF LAKELAND
LAKELAND, FL

ACCOUNT SALES MANAGER

CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER
CHARLOTTE, NC

APPLY NOW

APPLY NOW

NEWS & VENUE UPDATES



Florida



GRAND OPENING OF RUM ROOM AND VENU AT THE MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

MIAMI BEACH The Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC) is pleased to announce the grand opening of the highly anticipated restaurant and event space: Rum Room and Venu, to the public on Saturday, April 22, 2023. Jointly managed and operated by hospitality partner Sodexo Live! and leading full-service

venue management company OVG360, these exciting Miami hotspots are sure to impress guests and event planners with their historic location, modern twist on Florida and Miami cuisine, custom menus, best-in-class service, and Collins Canal views.

The prized jewel of MBCC dining, Rum Room is a combined indoor and outdoor 80-seat restaurant with Old World and tropical 1920s Florida decor and an upscale menu that draws on Florida's history and Miami's Haitian, Latin, and Central American influences. Led by Sodexo Live!'s Executive Chef Samantha Cruz – who has 12 years of experience in fine dining and sports entertainment hospitality – dishes are made with indigenous Florida ingredients like local corn, Florida River Gold potatoes, and other produce or spices found in Redlands farms and farmers markets, as well as typical Spanish ingredients like beans and sofrito, a byproduct of Spaniards passing through Miami Beach in the early 20th century. Also drawing on history, cocktails will feature classic rum cocktails with modern tastes, a large selection of local and imported rums, and many other favorite spirits.

Guests can pair those rum cocktails with inspired menu highlights like jamón Serrano croquetas and black truffle corn tamales that are cut and plated tableside. "This next chapter of the MBCC and its amazing campus reimagination will further enhance the guest experience of dining and events in Miami Beach," says Freddie Peterson, General Manager of the Miami Beach Convention Center. "This fantastic restaurant and private event spaces will allow flexibility in our food and beverage offerings to the neighborhood, our clients, and the public. We have already built a strong reputation for unique, exquisite, and dynamic food and drink offerings. However, matching that to these historic Miami Beach buildings takes us to a whole new level. We are constantly building upon memorable experiences for our guests and clients. Congrats to our teams, but especially our wonderful partner Sodexo Live!."

Rum Room will be open for lunch and dinner and launch a Sunday brunch in spring 2023. It is poised to be the new power lunch restaurant in Miami Beach due to its proximity to the Chamber of Commerce and Central City Official buildings and an excellent spot for a festive happy hour or a romantic date night. Parking and valet are available onsite.

“We’re thrilled to take our longstanding partnership with the Miami Beach Convention Center to new heights with the opening of Rum Room and Venu,” said Danny Medina, Regional Vice President, Sodexo Live!. “As the experts in creating unforgettable moments, we’re looking forward to helping guests make everything from a business lunch to life’s biggest celebrations memorable in a unique new way.”

Venu occupying what was formerly the 1916-built Miami Beach Municipal Golf Course Clubhouse, Venu is an intimate event space and bar designed to be a favored destination for elegant private events and upscale VIP events as part of the MBCC’s convention offerings, cocktail parties, business meetings, weddings, bat or bar mitzvahs, and more. Erected just one year after the City of Miami Beach was incorporated, this legendary building is one of the oldest public buildings in Miami Beach. The City of Miami Beach purchased it in 1983, approved an over \$3.2 million interior and exterior renovation in 2018, and has now turned the historic landmark into a sophisticated haunt with custom menus that include handcrafted rum cocktails, flavorful tapas and family-style plates of whole fish, steak, chicken and specially-created sides. Able to host a flexible indoor-outdoor configuration of up to 200 guests, Venu was designed in the spirit of the 1920s and 1930s, an ode to the days of Al Capone and speakeasies on Miami Beach. Guests of MBCC events will enjoy world-class cuisine served on vintage plates in dim lighting, with direct views of Collins Canal. When not used by the MBCC, the general public can indulge in a Sunday brunch on holidays like Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Easter, New Year’s Eve, and more. “When visitors dine at Rum Room or Venu, I want them to know that Miami is the place to be and something to see and taste,” says Cruz, a prior Chef de Cuisine at PLANTA in Miami Beach and leading chef at events like Super Bowl LIV, Miami Open, and Art Basel Miami Beach. “There’s so much diversity, influence, and flavor here, and we’ve created menus that allow guests to experience it with every bite.”



UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA ANNOUNCES NEW MASTER'S PROGRAM

PENSACOLA –The University of West Florida has launched a new online master’s degree in sport analytics. We are very excited about this new specialization within the Masters’ of Science Administration (MSA) program that has been around for over 20 years and is ranked as one of the top MSA programs in the nation. The current focus has been our award-winning public administration degree, but this fall we launch the MSA with a specialization in sport analytics.

The hallmark of the MSA degree are the College of Business classes that anchor the degree. This is not just another master’s degree in sport management. This degree is focused on sport analytics and leveraging numbers to help sport organizations grow and thrive. The completely online degree is designed with flexibility in mind along with teaching the critical skills needed to not just get a job in the sport industry, but to get a good job where someone can show their ability to gather, analyze, interpret, and act upon data.

The program utilizes some exciting business foundation courses such as: two Financial Management classes, a course in e-Business Systems, a Marketing Management course, and a foundation course in Business Analytics. These courses are designed to give students the tools to understand and act upon data even if they have never taken a stats or business analytics class in the past. The sport analytics core is anchored by two classes taught in the statistics department focused of data fluence and data awareness. These courses were custom built for those who have never been exposed to analytics and teaches the value of data, how to gather appropriate data, how to analyze it, and how to present it in a meaningful way upon which executives can take meaningful action. The program then leverages some basic sport administration classes along with a sport analytics class and a choice of an internship or an in-depth sport analytics project using our athletic department or some partner organizations. The last six credits in the program are electives and students can choose from various exciting courses such as sport betting, esports management, and sport sustainability. These courses help leverage our faculty’s focus on the future of sport and technology. We are one of the only sport management degrees focused on sport analytics and in fact, student receive not just the MSA degree, but a certificate in sport analytics as well based on five analytics-based courses.

The courses will be taught by our award winning and national known faculty. We have a faculty with significant industry experience and connections. They are there to guide students through the learning and career process. Dr. Charlie Song has a focus on international sport, sport governance, and will be

teaching the esports class along with the basic sport management course. Dr. Jamee Pelcher will be teaching the basic sport marketing course and sport sustainability. Her passion focuses on sport sustainability. Lastly, Prof. Gil Fried will teach various courses in the program, but have written textbooks on sport facility management, sport analytics, esports management, and is currently writing a textbook associated with sport betting. Professor Fried has been an active IAVM member for many years and developed this degree with the idea that it could help train the next generation of venue managers.

For more information about the program feel free to reach out to Gil Fried at gfried@uwf.edu.



JENNIFER D'HOLLANDER JOINS ORLANDO VENUES AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HARRY P. LEU GARDENS

ORLANDO -Orlando Venues is proud to announce the appointment of Jennifer D'hollander, a dynamic veteran of public gardens and museums throughout Florida, as the new executive director of Harry P. Leu Gardens. In this role, D'hollander will oversee the daily operations and lead the horticultural, education and events staff. Prior to joining Orlando's prized cultural gem, she served in executive roles at several non-profit cultural institutions including Bok Tower Gardens, the Lake Wales History Museum, the Sample-McDougald House Museum and the Young at Art Museum.

D'hollander has a passion for preservation and is active with several professional organizations including the Polk Arts & Culture Alliance where she serves as president of the board of directors, the Junior League of Winter Haven, the

Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce and the American Association of Museums. She is a graduate of the University of Central Florida where she received a bachelor's degree in English Literature.

"With her broad professional experience, multiple previous leadership roles and expertise working in the non-profit cultural sector, Jennifer is ideally suited to lead Leu Gardens into a new era of growth through strategic planning, expanded public programming and increased memberships," said Orlando Venues Chief Venues Officer Allen Johnson. "We're excited to have her join the Venues team and hit the garden pathways running."

"I am thrilled and honored to be selected for this position," said D'hollander. "Leu Gardens has accomplished great things and I look forward to continuing that success working on new endeavors and future projects."

Harry P. Leu Gardens is a 50-acre botanical oasis featuring over 40 diverse temperate and tropical plant collections, majestic camellias, an outdoor butterfly garden, miles of pathways and a canopy of over 300-year-old Southern Oaks. Situated on Lake Rowena, just minutes from downtown Orlando, the gardens welcome over 265,000 visitors annually and host numerous educational classes, workshops and special events year-round.

Orlando Venues is the City of Orlando department that manages five public venues including Amway Center, Camping World Stadium, Tinker Field, Mennello Museum of American Art and Harry P. Leu Gardens.



**HOME DEPOT BACKYARD BRINGS
HOME LOCAL ALLIE AWARDS**



ATLANTA –On Sunday, March 12, The Home Depot Backyard (HDBY) brought home a pair of honors during the 33rd annual Allie Awards at the Hyatt Regency in Downtown Atlanta. Established in 1991, the Allie Awards celebrate excellence in Georgia's live event industry in the areas of design, planning and production.

Led by Senior Director Sarah Meyers, The HDBY won two awards, in the categories of 'Best Public Event' and 'Best Event with a Social Responsibility/Inclusivity Component', for its Juneteenth event this past summer.

With more than 12,000 tickets claimed, the 'sold out' 2022 Juneteenth celebration at The Home Depot Backyard was an ode to Black excellence and positioned to promote prosperity throughout the local African American community. The event included activations by Black Music & Entertainment Walk of Fame, outdoor movie screenings, kids' zone, fireworks, and Juneteenth

inspired flag decorating stations, photo ops, muralists, and giveaways.

Additionally, the event achieved the goal of promoting economic equity by working with majority black-owned businesses, including artists, creators, producers, market vendors, and food trucks, that circulated nearly \$100,000 into local businesses while continuing to develop impactful programming that is free for the community to attend, which aligns with the HDBY's overall mission.

In addition to Meyers' leadership, this recognition is not possible without the efforts of the HDBY staff - Erika Arms (Event Manager), Britt Davis, Shawn Watwood, Ahmed Johnson, Ben Baxter, Carrie Gwin, Dani Fricke, Sara Hattis, Karis King, Jasmine Castaneda, and former seasonals: Tianna Rivers, Rami El Shammas, and Laine Hartman, along with a host of partners, supporters, and internal Blank Family of Business departments.



**THE HOME DEPOT BACKYARD
HONORED AS GOLD STEVIE®
AWARD WINNER IN 2023
AMERICAN BUSINESS AWARDS®**

ATLANTA –The Home Depot Backyard was recently named the winner of three Gold Stevie® Awards in the categories of Brand & Experiences



- Interactive Outdoor Event, Art, Entertainment & Public - Celebration Event, and Art, Entertainment & Public - Festival in the 21st Annual American Business Awards®.

The American Business Awards are the U.S.A.'s premier business awards program. All organizations operating in the U.S.A. are eligible to submit nominations – public and private, for-profit, and non-profit, large, and small.

Nicknamed the Stevies for the Greek word meaning “crowned,” the awards will be presented to winners at a gala ceremony at the

Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York on Tuesday, June 13. Tickets are now on sale.

More than 3,700 nominations from organizations of all sizes and in virtually every industry were submitted this year for consideration in a wide range of categories, including Startup of the Year, Executive of the Year, Best New Product or Service of the Year, Marketing Campaign of the Year, Thought Leader of the Year, and App of the Year, among others. The Home Depot Backyard was nominated in the categories of Brand & Experiences - Interactive Outdoor Event for REI GreATL Campout & Backyard Festival, Art, Entertainment & Public - Celebration Event for Juneteenth: A Celebration of Black Excellence, and Art, Entertainment, & Public - Festival for Fall-O-Ween Festival.

Sarah Meyers, Senior Director for The Home Depot Backyard stated, “We’re humbled and honored to be recognized by the American Business Awards for three of our signature events. This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our organization, staff, and partners as well as the continued support from the greater Atlanta community.”

More than 230 professionals worldwide participated in the judging process to select this year’s Stevie Award winners.

“It is very gratifying for us to be able to recognize the achievements of such a wide variety of organizations, teams, and individuals in the 21st ABAs, and we look forward to bringing them together in New York on June 13 to celebrate with them,” said Maggie Miller, president of the Stevie Awards.

Details about The American Business Awards and the list of 2023 Stevie winners are available at www.StevieAwards.com/ABA.

This is the second honor this award season for The Home Depot Backyard, which received a pair of Allie Awards – celebrating excellence in Georgia's live event industry in the areas of design, planning and production - back in March.

THE CLASSIC CENTER AWARDS EMPLOYEES WITH SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

ATHENS- Four employees of The Classic Center were recently awarded scholarships to further pursue their career goals in the hospitality industry. The Classic Center has long been a driving force in workforce development. The addition of the Paul M. Cramer Hospitality Scholarship Fund, established in 2019, is another illustration of this initiative.

Recipients for The Paul M. Cramer Hospitality Scholarship Fund are Scott Dodd, Air Conditioning Electrical Technician certificate from Athens Technical College; Shannon Dominy, Travel Marketing Professional certification from Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College; Juanita Shipley, Lanier Technical College, finishing classes needed to apply for BA in Accounting; and Melanie Taylor, Athens Technical College for Business and Human Resources Management degree.

“I am so proud to have so many leaders within our company,” said Paul Cramer, President/CEO of The Classic Center. “Our staff makes The Classic Center special, and Scott, Shannon, Juanita, and Melanie perfectly exemplify our core values of hospitality, teamwork, and servant-style leadership.”

- The Paul M. Cramer Hospitality Scholarship Fund was established in 2019 in celebration of Paul Cramer's 25th anniversary as President/CEO of The Classic Center.
- Mr. Cramer has championed workforce development efforts in the hospitality industry, with the creation of programs such as Bread for Life and the Hospitality Careers Academy, as well as his direct influence in the establishment of hospitality degree programs at many local continuing education establishments including the Athens Community Career Academy, Athens Technical College, Piedmont University, and the University of Georgia.
- Mr. Cramer has repeatedly proven that the hospitality industry drives local workforce development and economic growth.
- Mr. Cramer and his wife, Stacey, are incredibly grateful to the private donors who made this fund possible.



LARGEST ROOFTOP SOLAR DISPLAY BEGINS AT THE CLASSIC CENTER

ATHENS- The first phase of the 1,600 solar panels that will be placed on the rooftops of The Classic Center's buildings is underway. The Classic Center is partnering with Cherry Street Energy to build *Georgia's largest municipal rooftop solar energy system.*

The solar panels are projected to provide approximately 36% of The Classic Center facility's annual electricity use. During this first phase, 952 solar panels will be installed during an estimated 8-week process. The second phase will include an installation of 648 solar panels on the rooftop of The Classic Center Arena, providing an additional 12.5% of the projected annual electricity use for the arena.

- The solar energy system is being built by Cherry Street Energy and provided at no upfront cost to The Classic Center Authority. Instead, The Classic Center and The Classic Center Arena will purchase electricity generated from the solar array at a fixed rate competitive with existing power costs.
- In May 2019, Athens Mayor Kelly Girtz and ACC Commission passed a resolution supporting ACCG's transition to 100% renewable energy, with a mission to complete this goal by 2035.
- Athens-Clarke County Commission unanimously approved an agreement to allow The Classic Center Authority to contract with Cherry Street Energy in November 2022, as a means of assisting the ACC Commission with meeting this goal to transition to 100% renewable energy by 2035.

**LARGEST METROPOLITAN
FIREWORKS SHOW IN
AMERICA RETURNS TO**

CENTENNIAL OLYMPIC PARK



ATLANTA– Georgia World Congress Center Authority announced the return of Look Up Atlanta, America’s largest metropolitan fireworks celebration, on Saturday, July 1 at Centennial Olympic Park in downtown Atlanta.

Headlining this year’s patriotic celebration is the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, which will open its 79th season in October of this year. The program will consist of familiar

patriotic music, beloved by audiences everywhere, with fireworks to follow.

“The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra is one of the most creative and innovative musical experiences in North America and is the perfect complement to our patriotic celebration,” shared GWCCA executive director Frank Poe. “We have put together an event that celebrates everything that makes Atlanta, and Georgia, a great place to call home.”

“We are honored to be a part of this important community celebration,” said ASO Executive Director Jennifer Barlament. “The team at the Georgia World Congress Center Authority have done a tremendous job building this event into one of the largest in the country, and we are grateful to be able to work together to make it exciting and accessible to all Atlantans.”



NEWNAN CENTRE ANNOUNCES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RETIREMENT AND SUCCESSION PLAN

NEWNAN– Newnan Centre Board Chair Parks Avery announced today that Carol Moore, Executive Director, plans to retire on June 30th. The Board of Directors has appointed Peyton Shelnett to succeed Moore as Executive Director on July 1, 2023.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff, we want to thank Carol for her leadership and impact over the last eleven years with the Centre,” said Parks Avery, Newnan Centre Chair. “Carol was hired during the construction phase of the Newnan Centre and played a significant role in opening the Newnan Centre and ensuring its ten years of success. The Board is sincerely grateful to Carol for her dedication to the Newnan Centre and wishes her nothing but the best in her retirement journey.”

Peyton Shelnett’s selection as Moore’s replacement is the culmination of leadership development and succession planning by the Board. Shelnett joined the Newnan Centre in 2018 as the sales and events manager and was promoted to assistant director in 2020.

“I want to thank the Board for its confidence in me as I step into this role,” said Shelnett. “I am honored and excited to have the opportunity to work with our talented staff to continue the Newnan Centre’s success into the future.”



Louisiana



NEW ORLEANS ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER CREATES CAMPUS OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT, NAMES DEPARTMENT LEADERS

NEW ORLEANS – In an effort to streamline many of the interior and exterior functions of its facility and to better align with its mission, the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center announced the creation of a new "Campus Operations" department which will combine the current functions of Public Safety, Safety and Emergency Management, Campus Logistics, Guest Services, Grounds Maintenance and Asset Management. Brett Slocum has been named Senior Director of Campus Operations, and Wendell Findley as Director of Security.

The decision to establish a Campus Operations department followed a thorough analysis of the operations of the Safety and Logistics departments. The analysis revealed that the Convention Center's more than 1.1 million square feet of exhibit space, coupled with an additional seventy acres of land outside the facility that includes a pedestrian park and transportation center, presented unique opportunities and efficiencies that required a specialized team to address.

"The scope and scale to ensure a facility as wide-reaching as ours continues to operate at maximum efficiency requires specialized knowledge and commitment as well as familiarity with our history and operation," said Adam J. Straight, Vice President of Operations. "Fortunately, Brett and Wendell are existing highly skilled members of our team and their unique skillsets will ensure that our Convention Center continues to be a safe, exceptional destination for premiere event experiences."

Brett Slocum, Senior Director of Campus Operations, has been with the Convention Center since 2016 where he started as Assistant Director of Public Safety. He was promoted to Director of Safety and Emergency Management in 2021. Before joining the Convention Center, Slocum began his 20-year career in public safety as a Disaster Coordinator with the United Way in Lee County, FL before serving the State of Florida for ten years as a Regional Coordinator and a Regional Emergency Response Advisor.

Wendell Findley, Director of Security at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, has been with the facility since 2021 and brings more than 20 years of experience to his new role. Before joining the Convention Center, Findley served as the Director of Security for the Astor Crowne Plaza New Orleans, as well as the Security Director for InterContinental Hotels Group. Findley is also a Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) Certified police officer in the Reserve Division of the Gretna Police Department.

"As we continue with our five-year \$557M Capital Improvement Plan, it is key and critical that we continue to value safety as our highest priority," said Convention Center President, Michael J. Sawaya. "The creation of a Campus Operations Department, as well as naming Brett and Wendell to new leadership positions, is the continuation of our pledge to ensure a safe, secure, and hospitable environment for both our external and internal customers."

REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING: RECENT EVENTS DEMONSTRATE NEW ORLEANS ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION

CENTER'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

NEW ORLEANS The New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center (NOENMCC) is leading the way to make New Orleans one of the most sustainable destinations in America. Just since March, the NOENMCC has served a 4,000-guest meal, free of garbage cans; served a gourmet lunch in a dumpster using leftover foods; and plated its largest banquet since the COVID-19 pandemic using over 10,000 pieces of China.

“We have worked closely with our internal and external partners to create event experiences that reduce environmental impacts, emphasize sustainability, and promote social responsibility,” said Michael J. Sawaya, Convention Center President. “These practices are vital to the well-being of our environment, and these values align with our mission to be a leading-edge organization known for innovative delivery of exceptional event experiences in a world-class destination,” Sawaya concluded.

“Our team knows no limits when it comes to making New Orleans a more sustainable destination,” said Adam J. Straight, Vice President of Operations. “Our Director of Sustainability Linda Baynham brings 20 years of experience and innovation to the venue. So, no matter what kind of green project a client dreams up, our team always aims to deliver.”

Applying the “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” hierarchy, NOENMCC makes events greener and with lower impact.

Recycle: Landfill-less Lunch

The Ellucian “Net Zero” luncheons on March 27 and 28 set a high bar – all serving ware and food items could be recycled or composted. In order to avoid confusion by the attendees on which items could go in which bins, all garbage cans were removed.

As a result, the “Net Zero” lunch pilot program delivered over one ton of compostable materials to Schmelly's Dirt Farm that will become fertile soil for New Orleans area gardens. Any unserved meals were donated to Bethel Colony in New Orleans, an addiction treatment nonprofit serving locals in need. In addition, by using NOENMCC water bottle refilling stations, Ellucian guests saved 4,000 plastic bottles from landfills.

Reduce: Zero Waste Meal

Inspired to make use of trash-bound ingredients, Brandon Felder, Executive Chef for the Convention Center's food and beverage partner Sodexo Live!, created a gourmet “Zero Waste” meal on May 2 during WasteExpo out of surplus foods, including leftover coffee. The meal was served in a clean dumpster at NOENMCC as an immersive experience in eliminating excess waste.

The “Zero Waste” menu started with a spring salad featuring strawberries leftover from breakfast. The entree combined surplus seafood to create crab claw salad, and a crawfish and crab cheesecake finished with a BBQ sauce made from unused Abita Amber beer from Sodexo Live!'s bar stock. Chef Felder used surplus po-boy loaves and coffee leftover from breakfast to craft a bread pudding dessert with chicory coffee caramel sauce.

NOENMCC worked to meet WasteExpo's best-in-class waste diversion goals, by bringing in Glass Half Full, a new glass recycling vendor.

WasteExpo is a regular visitor to New Orleans, convening here approximately every three years using over 600,000 gross square feet of exhibit space and attracting nearly 11,000 waste management professionals.

Reuse: China-plated private event

On April 15, the NOENMCC hosted 8,000 guests for its largest plated meal service since the COVID-19 pandemic. Guests enjoyed their meal on over 10,000 pieces of reusable China.

Expanding green options at NOENMCC

These food waste programs are part of an initiative to reduce impacts but also provide more green options for clients. Plastic-free and biodegradable serving ware are used at NOENMCC events and Net Zero meal options are available from Sodexo Live!.

The NOENMCC will continue to embrace green ideas and expand energy-saving and waste-reducing initiatives. Recent NOENMCC events prove there are no limits on green ideas, only opportunities.



NEW ORLEANS CITYBUSINESS NAMES CONVENTION CENTER DIRECTOR TO MONEY MAKERS LIST

NEW ORLEANS –New Orleans CityBusiness, a weekly business newspaper, has named Chris Bundick, the Director of Financial Planning and Reporting at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, as a **CityBusiness Money Maker**. This special distinction is given to local financial professionals for achievements in their respective industries and their community involvement. The Money Makers list is comprised of 50 professionals whose fiscal work has set the pace for their company and the region.

Bundick joined the Convention Center in 2022 and is responsible for providing strategic leadership in managing of financial planning, budgeting, analytics, and the comprehensive reporting process for the Convention Center.

Bundick brings more than 24 years of experience in financial planning and reporting to his role at the Convention Center. He began his career as an auditor for the Office of the Louisiana Legislative Auditor in Monroe. He continued on his career path, sharpening his skills as the Controller for the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary where he oversaw all of their financial accounting processes for its multi-million dollar budget, financial audits, post office operations, investments, and more.

Before joining the Convention Center, Bundick served as the Vice President of Finance and Operations (CFO), of the University of Holy Cross in New Orleans. There, he managed a multi-million dollar budget and emphasized a culture of unity and transparency. Bundick managed a team of more than 20 staff members with expertise in various fields from accounting to facilities operations to technology and beyond. As he did in his prior positions, Bundick was able to establish a culture and system of accountability that proved to be successful, leading his former organization through ten consecutive annual audits without any material weakness findings.

“It is a great honor for one of our Directors to be listed among the 50 most effective financial professionals in New Orleans,” said Michael J. Sawaya, Convention Center President. “Chris has made an impact on our financial operations in his short time here. He is an expert in his field and is absolutely deserving of this honor.”

“As an expert in financial planning, Chris assists our organization in staying financially efficient, and ensuring our financial goals are met as we continue to expand our offerings as a leader in our industry. Chris is a team-oriented, results-driven professional and we are proud that he is being recognized,” said Alita Caparotta, Convention Center Vice President of Finance and Administration.

A special publication of New Orleans CityBusiness profiled those named to the Money Makers list and was published in the May 19, 2023 issue of CityBusiness magazine. A virtual event was held the same day to honor Bundick and the rest of the Money Maker honorees.



NEW ORLEANS ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER'S DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABILITY RECOGNIZED AS NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK CHAMPION

NEW ORLEANS— New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Director of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility Linda Baynham was recently recognized as one of five local Travel and

Tourism Week (NTTW) Champions by New Orleans and Company, the city's destination marketing organization. Honored during the weeklong celebration, NTTW champions are individuals in the industry who are passionate about their chosen field and create positive impacts in the community. Each of the five champions represents a different sector of the hospitality and tourism industry.

As Director of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility, Baynham establishes company-wide sustainability and corporate social responsibility goals for the Convention Center. She reaches these goals through the Center's recycling programs and its energy and water reduction initiatives, and she works closely with internal and external partners to implement sustainability programs.

In 2022, Baynham led the Convention Center team through its first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification, the first convention center in the world to achieve this standard under the latest guidelines. Under the current leadership, the Convention Center has diverted more than 250,000 pounds from landfills, donated over 110,000 pounds of food to local organizations and installed 5,000 LED light fixtures to reduce energy by 10-15%.

This spring, Baynham expanded green options for visitors and clients through zero waste meal options, plastic-free and biodegradable serving ware and landfill-less lunches. She doubled the footprint of the recycling program, adding several new recycling streams, such as plastic and glass. She also initiated installation of EV chargers and facilitated bringing in over \$500,000 in utility incentives for energy upgrades.

"The Convention Center recognizes the importance of having the best people lead, and Linda is a testament to that standard," said Michael J. Sawaya, Convention Center President. "She is a proven asset for the New Orleans tourism industry and the Convention Center, and her leadership was the driving force behind our earning LEED gold certification in 2022. We are thrilled to see Linda receive this recognition for her tremendous impact on the industry, and I am confident she will continue to enact change here and in the surrounding community."

"Linda has worked across departments to coordinate programs, reduce impacts and increase options for events to 'go green,'" said Adam J. Straight, Vice President of Operations. "She has also taken a leading role in encouraging other facilities, by regularly conducting tours for industry colleagues highlighting energy upgrades, waste initiatives and LEED certification. She also continuously educates herself on the latest processes so that we are always on the forefront of this increasingly vital aspect of our industry."

Baynham holds an M.B.A. in finance from Tulane University, an M.S. in energy policy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a B.A. in physics from Colorado College. Baynham is a LEED Accredited Professional, a Certified Energy Manager and a GPRO Green Building Operations Trainer. She has more than 20 years of experience in the environmental, energy and utility sectors.

“It is an honor to be recognized alongside my peers working to elevate the New Orleans tourism industry,” said Baynham. “I look forward to delivering more Convention Center events and experiences that prioritize sustainability and recycling. And my team and I will continue to pursue new initiatives to help reduce the environmental impacts of our facility.”

Tennessee



THE FISHER CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS AT BELMONT UNIVERSITY RECOGNIZED FOR ITS VERSATILITY

NASHVILLE – When the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Belmont University was conceived, it would be the latest in a series of venues to support Belmont University’s skyrocketing performing arts and music business programs which have gained international acclaim. Since its opening in

September of 2021, The Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Belmont University is now recognized as Nashville’s most versatile home for live entertainment

The 1700-seat Fisher Center is the centerpiece for Belmont University’s performing arts district, not only as an academic building for the university, but it has become the city’s newest community performance space. The venue hosts Belmont’s theatrical and musical productions, including the annual Christmas at Belmont special televised nationally on PBS, and community events such as Das Rheingold by the Nashville Opera, and the Nashville Ballet at Belmont. Other events held in the space since its opening include concerts by award winning artists such as Josh Turner and Michael W. Smith, the nationally televised special CMT Giants: Vince Gill, and most recently, A Night of Joy Celebrating the Covenant School, an all-star event honoring the Covenant School, the location of the tragic Nashville school shooting in March 2023. Future events include the Nashville Dance Festival celebrating the art of dance by dancers from around the country and the Cece Winans “Believe For It Tour!”

In addition to its main hall, the Fisher Center also has two recital halls, one designed specifically for acoustic performances and one with variable acoustics for both amplified and natural acoustic performances, a grand lobby and rehearsal space. These spaces allow for various activities to be held in the building and showcase its flexibility as not only a performance space, but as a teaching space, as well.

“With the collection of spaces we have within our facility, each equipped with A/V technology and supported with an expansive network of cable passes, trays and troughs, we have the versatility and capability to host a wide variety of events – from theatrical productions to small recitals or lectures- the lobby can even function as a banquet room for up to 900.” said Chaz Corzine, Executive Director of The Fisher Center for the Performing Arts.

In addition to national publications featuring The Fisher Center such as the September/October 2022 edition of Venue Professional, the Fisher Center was recently recognized with a 2023 Palladio Award for New Design and Construction. Other recent honors include Engineering News-Record’s “Best of the Best” Projects designation in the Higher Education/Research category and the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) National Excellence in Construction Pyramid Award.



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