

POSITION OVERVIEW

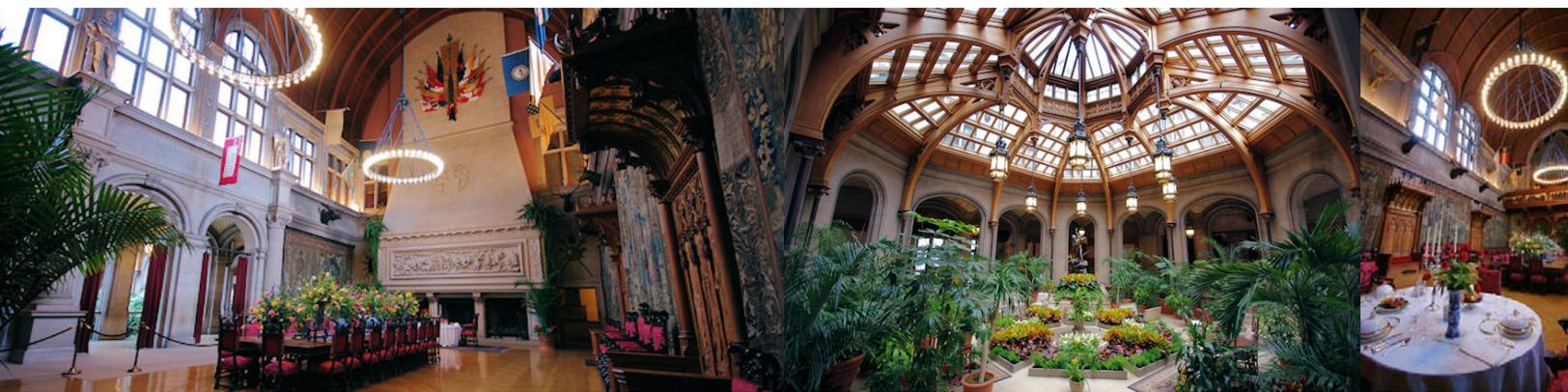
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASHEVILLE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU (ASHEVILLE, NC)



ABOUT THE DESTINATION

Asheville, NC—a destination with a style and rhythm all its own—is the largest city in Western North Carolina. Nestled in the mountains where the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains meet, Asheville was famous as a resort town long before its native son Thomas Wolfe wrote about the city in his novel, *Look Homeward, Angel* or George Vanderbilt thought about creating America’s largest home here, the 250-room Biltmore House. Initially, the region emerged as a health and healing retreat, giving rise to a hospitality trade that dates back to the late 1700s. Today, Asheville is home to more than 83,000 city residents and is the county seat for Buncombe County (population 238,318), which also includes the tourism communities of Black Mountain and Weaverville.

One of the South’s most desirable destinations, with an average occupancy and ADR that rivals Charleston, SC, Asheville is situated near the intersection of Interstates 40 and 26, making it a strong leisure drive market. Asheville Regional Airport has non-stop flights with service to 8 major US cities. The area has 7000+ hotel rooms and meeting options ranging from 2,500 to 83,000 square feet. The mountain scenery and attractions such as Biltmore Estate, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the historic, vibrant downtown are primary destination drivers. Accommodations range from the historic Grove Park Inn Resort and Spa to major hotel brands, from cabins and vacation rentals to a large cluster of bed & breakfast inns. The city’s rich architectural legacy, with its mix of Art Deco, Beaux Arts and Neoclassical styles, is the perfect backdrop to the energy that emanates from the locally owned-shops and galleries, distinctive restaurants and exciting entertainment venues.



Surprises wait around every corner, whether it's a spontaneous drum circle, avant-garde theater, brew pubs and chocolate lounges, an array of outdoor activities or a rich art community that inspires the soul. It's this unscripted and unexpected dimension of Asheville that is at the core of the area's underlying brand platform and speaks to the ability of this destination to inspire and enrich.

More recently, the Asheville area is becoming more well-known for its unique food culture, an unexpected delight for many visitors and the proverbial icing on the cake. More than creative restaurants or talented chefs, it's a combination of experiential and experimental, inspiring and organic, farm-to-table and twists on the traditional. You'll find nearly 250 independent restaurants, where chefs take inspiration from local farmers' and tailgate markets and slow food is a regular on area menus. In short, it's gaining solid reputation as an up-and-coming culinary destination.

Some [recent accolades](#) awarded to Asheville include:

- “Most beautiful places in America” as designated by ABC’s Good Morning America.
- “#1 place to view fall foliage” by TripAdvisor.com.
- “Top 10 Undiscovered Local Food Cities” designated by Huffington Post.
- “#1 Top Small City Arts Destinations,” in annual reader’s poll by AmericanStyle magazine.
- “21 Places We’re Going in 2011” by Fodors.com.
- Named in 2007 by Frommer’s travel guides as one of the 12 must-see travel destinations in the world.
- “One of 10 “Best Places for Second Homes,” according to Barron's.
- “One of 10 Most Surprising Vibrant Food Cities” by Livability.com.
- “#6 Among U.S. cities as a Place to Do Business” by Forbes.com.

In short, the Asheville area's prime location in the spectacular mountains of Western North Carolina and the high quality of life enjoyed here make it attractive as a place where lifestyle complements business opportunity. The area's consistent and steady growth is the result of the collaborative vision of economic development organizations and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. Tourism is a vital piece of the area's economic engine and contributes greatly to the local economy.



VISITOR RESEARCH, DATA & STATISTICS

Overnight leisure visitation in Buncombe County now accounts for an economic impact of approximately \$2.1 billion each year. The Asheville area welcomes approximately 3.13 million overnight leisure travelers and .53 million overnight business travelers each year. The Visitor Center welcomed 197,941 visitors to Asheville in 2010 and hotel sales that same year in Buncombe County totaled approximately \$164.5 million.

To find out more on these specifics and more visit the following links.

- [*Visitation Statistics, Economic Impact & Hotel Occupancy*](#)
- [*2010 Monthly Hotel Sales & Seasonal Occupancy Chart*](#)
- Asheville Area [*Visitor Survey*](#) Data
- Current and Historic [*Visitor's Index*](#) Reports

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

Each year, the [*sales staff*](#) at the Convention & Visitors Bureau, through its outreach, generates approximately 45,000 trackable group room nights, approximately 3 percent of the total room nights consumed in Buncombe County each year. This does not include the very rough estimate of an additional 175,000+ group room nights contracted or booked directly through the hotels. While there is not a convention center in the area, the [*Asheville Civic Center*](#) has 83,000 square feet of total available meeting space which is inclusive of a 45,000 square foot arena, 25,000+ square foot exhibition hall and a banquet hall of approximately 5,000 square feet. Renovations to the facility began in September of 2011. Substantial progress has been made over the past several months in anticipation of the Southern Conference Basketball Tournament in March of 2012. Additionally, the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, which is part of the facility, seats more than 2,300 people.

At the south end of Buncombe County, the [*Western North Carolina Agricultural Center*](#) serves as another multi-use facility. The Ag Center, as it is known, encompasses a total of more than 77,000 square feet including the 45,000 square foot Davis Event Center, the 27,750 square foot Expo Building and 5,000 square feet of exhibit space in the Boone Building. The new [*Wilma Sherrill Center*](#), is a multi-purpose facility of the University of North Carolina—Asheville. That facility encompasses 133,500 square feet which includes a variety of meeting spaces as well as the Kimmel Arena. There are also a variety of unique off-site venues that range from Biltmore's Lioncrest to

Taylor Ranch in the southern part of the county and Claxton Farms in the north. The community's largest accommodations property is the historic Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa, with 512 rooms and 55,000+ square feet of meeting space which includes two ballrooms, multiple breakout rooms and adjacent facilities. Other significant meeting space includes the Crowne Plaza Resort with 34,000 square feet of total meeting space, the Renaissance Asheville Hotel with 21,000 square feet of total available space and a variety of facilities on Biltmore Estate.

A SAMPLING OF MEDIA COVERAGE

To get more insight on the Asheville area, take a look at the following articles:

- [*36 Hours in Asheville \(New York Times\)*](#)
- [*Top 25 in Asheville \(Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel\)*](#)
- [*Bohemia and the Biltmore \(Houston Chronicle\)*](#)
- [*Asheville: From Field to Fork \(Charleston Magazine\)*](#)
- [*President Obama Vacations In Asheville*](#)

To learn more about Asheville please visit the following websites:

<http://www.exploreasheville.com>

<http://www.ashevillechamber.org>

<http://www.ashevillenc.gov>

<http://bctda.org>

<http://www.blueridgeheritage.com>



ABOUT THE ASHEVILLE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU, CHAMBER AND BCTDA

Budget: 2011-2012 -- \$5.5 million marketing/sales budget; \$2.1 million for product development

Size of Staff: 21 FTEs: 18 paid by BCTDA; 2.5 paid by Chamber

The Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau (Asheville CVB), a department of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, is a contract agent for the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA). The Asheville CVB promotes the destination through out-of-market advertising and other marketing and sales initiatives, resulting in approximately 3.66 million overnight visitors each year. The Asheville CVB is made up of four departments: Executive Office, Marketing and Public Relations, Group Sales and Services, and Visitor Services.

The BCTDA is a quasi-governmental entity that oversees tourism marketing, sales and product development efforts utilizing the county's 4% occupancy tax revenues. The board is comprised of seven hotel and tourism industry members as well as two non-voting ex-officio members representing Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commission. The board contracts with the CVB as well as several advertising agencies and outside vendors to implement its program of work and marketing and sales strategies.

In July 2011, the Asheville CVB was awarded official accreditation from the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP). The Asheville CVB joined the ranks of 130 distinguished destination marketing organizations in the U.S., Canada and Europe in achieving the destination marketing industry's most prestigious organizational recognition.

- Learn more about the Asheville CVB at <http://www.ashevillecvb.com>.
- The Annual Plan of the BCTDA outlines the Asheville CVB's program of work for the 11-12 fiscal year. [Click here](#) to download a copy.
- [Click here](#) to view a recent Chamber of Commerce presentation that includes information about the BCTDA, the BCTDA/Chamber relationship, and the Asheville CVB's role, as well as tourism economic impact figures and visitor research highlights.
- [Click here](#) to download a copy of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority's plan for tourism product development.
- View the [2011/2012 Official Asheville Tour Guide](#).



SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Senior Vice President oversees and directs all aspects of the Convention & Visitors Bureau. Serves as the Executive Director for the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA).

Reports To: Works under the direction of the President, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and BCTDA Chairperson. Typically only unusual or non-routine situations will be referred to the President.

Extent of Supervision: Supervises, motivates, evaluates and determines work priorities for assigned personnel. Responsible for recommending discipline, termination and hiring of subordinates to the President. Coordinates and oversees the work of twenty-one full-time employees, and a various number of part-time employees and volunteers.

Contact with Others: Has frequent internal contact with Department managers, Chamber Board of Directors, BCTDA Board, subordinates and the President. External contacts include community leaders, State, City, and County officials, Chamber members, clients and the general public. All contacts are for the purpose of selling the Buncombe County area as a travel destination, exchanging or providing information and require tact, courtesy and professional decorum.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES (INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO)

- Oversees and directs the Bureau's operations, personnel and programs.
- Formulates policies, objectives and goals for the effective operation of the Bureau, and submits recommendations to the Chamber President and BCTDA board for approval.
- Develops and administers the Bureau's annual operating budget.
- Oversees, trains, motivates and evaluates the work performance of Bureau personnel.
- Develops salary schedules for Bureau personnel and submits it to the Chamber President for approval.
- Represents the tourism industry and its position locally, statewide and nationally, by serving on various committees, boards and associations related to travel and tourism.
- Promotes and participates in the Bureau's sales and solicitation efforts.
- Approves all advertisements, collateral and public relations efforts.
- Directs, oversees and administers all financial and administrative operations of the BCTDA.
- Produces and oversees the program of work for the BCTDA.

- Maintains and updates all BCTDA policies, procedures and files according to the BCTDA board's direction.
- Oversees BCTDA contracts with the Chamber, advertising agencies, and other applicable entities.
- Serves as a spokesperson to industry and community leaders, the media and general public regarding Bureau and BCTDA activities, and the travel and tourism industry.
- Performs duties according to established guidelines and procedures. Creativity is used to develop marketing materials. Initiative and resourcefulness are required to handle a variety of projects simultaneously and to complete work in a timely, accurate fashion.
- Responsible for the accuracy of work performed by subordinates. Some errors may be detected through proofing and editing procedures. Consequences of undetected errors range in severity from slight to far reaching.
- Has access to marketing and sales information, business sales plans, financial reports, subordinates' personnel files and management correspondence; all of which are confidential.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

BACKGROUND, EDUCATION, TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE AND/OR EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- Previous hospitality/travel/tourism industry experience is mandatory, DMO experience preferred.
- Previous experience and thorough command in developing targeted and ongoing marketing, branding, digital and social media programs and practices is necessary.
- Extensive knowledge of the meetings and tourism industry, its distribution channels, its customer base and the key channels that drive business is required.
- Completion of a bachelor's degree in Marketing/Communications, Business or equivalent combination of education, related experience or training is required for this position.
- Prior work experience of at least six years in an executive/management position is required for this position.
- Volunteer or direct experience with Boards of not-for-profit membership organizations that utilize public funds.
- Strong ability to build alliances and advocates for the organization utilizing stakeholders and board members to communicate key messages to civic leadership.
- Must possess long term strategic planning ability, able to plan and direct beyond day-to-day operations.
- Working knowledge of business sales and marketing principles is required. Knowledge of the Chamber's policies and procedures regarding Bureau operations, local and state hospitality industries and area demographics is essential.
- Requires knowledge of Chamber members, organizational structure and sources for information.
- Must possess management and organizational skills to coordinate the work of subordinates, maintain files and logs, and compile data to generate reports.
- Requires excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, and the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with co-workers, subordinates and the general public.

OTHER

Environment: Works in a normal office environment with business travel and exposure to traffic.

Mental/Physical/Visual Efforts: The degree of concentration ranges from slight to intense based on the work being performed. Position is subject to frequent interruptions which require varied responses. While performing duties of the job, incumbent is routinely required to stand, walk, reach with hands and arms, talk and hear. Requires visual acuity, manual dexterity and good eye/hand/foot coordination.

Work Environment: The employee is regularly working in an office environment, requires outdoor weather conditions and traveling, occasionally working on weekends. The noise in his/her work environment is moderate.

CORE COMPETENCIES AND CHARACTERISTICS NEEDED

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| <i>*Politically savvy</i> | <i>*Good listener</i> | <i>*Visionary</i> |
| <i>*Genuine and warm</i> | <i>*Collaborative</i> | <i>*Sincere and charismatic</i> |
| <i>*Dynamic</i> | <i>*Diplomatic</i> | <i>*Interest and willingness to</i> |
| <i>*Exceptional communicator</i> | <i>*Strong work ethic</i> | <i>"live the brand"</i> |

KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE FIRST 12-18 MONTHS

- 1) Develop strong and meaningful relationships with all stakeholders/constituents, such as, staff, board, hoteliers, business leaders, city, county and state elected officials and maintain effective on-going communication.
- 2) During this "listening tour" phase, complete a comprehensive SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and report back to the board and chamber President.
- 3) Immediately engage, collaborate and strategize with economic development to establish a joint plan that will enable the region to capitalize on business opportunities.
- 4) Engage in the sales process immediately at all levels to understand and evaluate strengths and weaknesses. Utilize experience to quickly identify areas of improvement to drive incremental group business.

NOTE: The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this job. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of responsibilities, duties and skills required of personnel so classified.

If you are interested in this position, please respond via e-mail with cover letter, resume, and compensation information to the following SearchWide™ Executive:

Mike Gamble, President/CEO, SearchWide™
Email: gamble@searchwide.com or Phone: 888-386-6390