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ACVB Partner Connect December 8, 2016

Greetings Partners!

The holiday season is upon us! We enjoyed seeing many of you at our holiday party - thanks for coming out to celebrate 2016, and we look forward to the new year. The party would not be possible, or nearly as much fun, without the support of our generous partners – the Renaissance Asheville Hotel and US Foods. We also thank our beverage sponsors - the Asheville Brewers Alliance, Biltmore, and The Omni Grove Park Inn. And, a huge thanks for your wonderful support of the Toys for Tots toy drive - together, we donated \$220 and 133 toys! Check out pictures from the event on our [Facebook page](#), and also from the [TapSnap booth](#).

I am so pleased to finally be able to share that Lonely Planet, the popular travel guide and opinion leader, has named Asheville the “**#1 Best in the US Destination for 2017.**” The marketing team has worked with Lonely Planet for many weeks to prepare for the launch, and to develop strategies to optimize the designation. Read more about this exciting news [here](#).

The entire CVB team wishes you a most joyous holiday season, and best wishes for a happy and fruitful new year!



See you soon!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie".

Stephanie Pace Brown
Executive Director

Upcoming Events

CVB 101 Open Door Session

Friday, December 9, 2016, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Asheville Chamber, Wells Fargo Meeting Room

The CVB is kicking off the first of a new monthly "open door session" series this Friday. Whether you're a new business in the community or already familiar with the CVB, drop in to learn more about marketing and promotion initiatives, group sales efforts and meeting services, Extranet troubleshooting support including listings and event calendar management, and answers to any other questions you may have!

January Partner Forum - January 19

Hospitality Outlook - February 23

Check the calendar on www.AshevilleCVB.com for details!

Bureau Buzz

Lonely Planet Names Asheville Best in the U.S.

Big news! Travel media company Lonely Planet has named Asheville as the #1 destination in the US to visit in 2017. The CVB PR team hosted managing editor Rebecca Warren earlier in the year and worked with the Lonely Planet editorial team ahead of this announcement. Supporting content also included significant editorial, a video and an Asheville getaway contest. Now in its 7th edition, Lonely Planet's *Best in the US* is a highly anticipated list of cities, regions and states worth traveling to in the year ahead, selected and ranked by Lonely Planet's US destination editors, writers and travel community. Share this fantastic Asheville news with your fans and customers.

SHARE LINK: <https://www.facebook.com/Asheville/posts/10157885657805224>

Help Strengthen Hospitality & Tourism Industry Recruitment Efforts

The Hospitality & Tourism industry in our region is growing but how will we provide the workforce needed by employers? The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB) needs your input at their [Hospitality and Tourism Career Pathways planning meeting on Thursday, December 15](#), at Western Carolina University's Biltmore Park instructional site, 28 Schenck Parkway, Suite 102. The development of H&T career pathways will provide opportunities for employers to demonstrate the many different career paths in this industry to potential job seekers. Career pathways will also help job seekers better

understand the many career opportunities available to them in our region's H&T industry. Please RSVP to Nathan Ramsey at nathan@landofsky.org.

The CVB has been staffing a Workforce Development Steering Committee for over a year. The committee recently partnered with MAWDB for a \$30,000 planning grant that will be used to develop a marketing campaign and an industry booth for job fairs and other opportunities. The committee is now working with MAWDB on a \$150,000 implementation grant that will better align job seekers to our industry through awareness, education and training. *Our H&T Industry offers more than jobs, we offer careers!*

Meet the 2016 CVB Superstars

Each year, the CVB recognizes tourism industry partners for their Superstar contributions to CVB initiatives, and the destination in general.

Robert Foster (pictured top left), General Manager at the Doubletree by Hilton Asheville – Biltmore, has worked with the CVB on several initiatives through the years - most recently as Chair of the TPDF Committee, and initiating the creation of the Workforce Development Committee. Robert's leadership has helped to elevate these programs.



Sherry Masters (pictured top right), owner of Asheville Art Connections tour company, is a respected expert on Asheville's craft culture. Her long-time leadership in American Craft Week helped grow Western North Carolina as a national highlight, and her work with the CVB team has resulted in major national news coverage of the region's art scene and craft history, as well as editorial content that is educating and inspiring travelers on Explore Asheville channels.



Josh Blake (pictured bottom left), of A.C.M.E. and IamAVL, has played an integral role in the CVB's music initiative. Josh approached the CVB years ago with an open hand for a mutually beneficial partnership. Josh was proactive in offering up opportunities to expand the music presence on ExploreAsheville.com with IamAVL live streams and Echo Mountain recording sessions.

Leslie Brewer (pictured bottom right), Tour and Travel Sales Manager at Biltmore, has partnered with the CVB sales team on dozens of tradeshow events catering to the group tour and international markets, as well as AAA markets. Leslie was instrumental in helping the CVB secure our host city spot for the 2016 3rd Spotlight on the South, and is known industry-wide for always offering a helping hand.

Much gratitude to all our CVB Superstars!

Notable Clips

The PR team has generated more than 500 significant stories about Asheville in national news outlets. A few of the most recent include:

US News & World Report | [No Spas Here: 10 Best Active Girlfriend Getaways](#)

Raleigh Magazine | [Epic Escape: Asheville](#)

Conde Nast Traveler | [Exploring Asheville Beyond its Famous Food Scene](#)

Dallas News | [Go whole-hog in the barbecue debate at these NC hot spots](#)

Lake Norman Magazine | [The State of Beer](#)

The Atlanta Journal Constitution | [Christmas in Asheville: Biltmore Estate, Arboretum, LaZoom & more](#)

Our State Magazine | [Keepers of the Flame](#)

Meridian | [Making Artisanal Chocolate in Asheville, NC](#)

Sales Department Highlights

Tina Porter attended Smart Meetings in Plano, Texas. As an event sponsor, the ACVB had the opportunity to introduce 80 planners to Asheville as a meeting destination at the event. Shawn Boone and Carla McGlynn traveled to Washington D.C. for sales calls. Molly Nelson exhibited at the TNSAE Annual Trade Show in Nashville along with industry partners, including Crowne Plaza, Renaissance Asheville Hotel, Biltmore Farms Hotels and special musical guest, Abby the Spoon Lady. The theme of this year's tradeshow was "Music: Move to Your Own Beat," and Team Asheville was awarded the "Best Harmony" award.



Sales & Services Coordinator, Leann Swims, who serves as the CVB's AAA liaison, traveled to Concord, NC, for AAA Carolina's Superbowl of Knowledge with Ashley Jenkins, Partnership Sales Manager for Biltmore. More than 200 AAA agents stopped by the booth during the tradeshow to learn more about Asheville and Biltmore as destinations for their clients. Leann and Ashley also participated in training sessions and attended the closing dinner.

The sales team hosted its 48-Hour Meeting Planner Experience November 15-18th. Seven third-party-meeting planners from across the U.S. attended. As

always, we thank our participating industry partners for their support and partnership. We have already received wonderful feedback from the planners about their time in Asheville experiencing hotels, activities and dining.

"I am in awe of Asheville and can't wait to bring some groups there!" - Andrea Kinney, HelmsBriscoe

"THANK YOU for a WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE! I will definitely loop you in AND hopefully bring a group sooner rather than later! ...You all did a splendid job." - Sue Gordon, CMP, EPIC Meetings & Events



Who's In Town?

The CVB sales team worked with 11 meetings and 5 weddings groups that met in November, resulting in 2,217 contracted rooms!

- NCYSA Girls State Cup
- Bureau of Digital Owner Camp Asheville
- Crew Rooms International
- Greater Summerville 2016 Inter-City Visit
- Mountain Area Workforce Development Board Youth LEADS Meeting
- 2016 NCBCA Coaches vs. Cancer Shootout
- NC Assn. of Nurse Anesthetists 2016 Annual Meeting
- NC State and Local Law Enforcement DWI Taskforce Teams
- Salsarita's Annual Franchise Meeting
- The American Assn. of Retirement Communities 2016 AARC Annual Meeting
- Wits' End Productions IHG Finance Meeting

In the Community

Black Mountain in the Running for Prettiest Small Town

Black Mountain has been nominated by TripAdvisor as one of the prettiest small towns in America. **You can help Black Mountain reach the top spot!** Click [here](#) to vote now!

Chamber's 11th Annual Homecoming Career Fair, January 18

The Chamber's 11th Annual Homecoming Career Fair will be held on January 18, 2017 at the WNC Ag Center. As the region's largest annual career fair, the event attracts thousands of qualified job seekers and brings together the area's top companies with career opportunities in key growth industries, like hospitality, advanced manufacturing, health care, tech, and professional services. Join in for the top recruiting event of the year! More details [here](#).



City of Asheville Launches Monthly Open Office Hours

Interested in downtown Asheville? Have ideas about how to make it better? Curious about upcoming plans? Whether you work in it, live in it, shop in it or just love it, the City of Asheville is making it even easier to grab the ear of City staff members to discuss downtown.

Please join us for [Downtown Open Office Hours](#), held between 2 and 5 p.m. the third Thursday of every month at the Pavilion in Pack Square Park. There, you can talk with City staff about all-things-downtown — it's a dedicated time for community members to ask questions, offer feedback, share ideas and get involved.



Dana Frankel, the City's Downtown Development Specialist, who serves as a point of contact for stakeholders and coordinator across City departments, will be on site, along with rotating staff from various departments.

Western Carolina University Spring Career Fair

Western Carolina University would like to invite you to participate in their spring career fair. The earlier date will allow for on-campus interviews to take place sooner, which will help you fill your vacancies earlier! Contact WCU soon to secure your space in one of their new on-campus interview rooms. Furthermore, WCU welcomes employers who are seeking summer and seasonal employment for WCU students at all levels and degree programs. Reserve your space today to join WCU for their largest campus-wide career event ever!

Western Carolina University's "Catamount Career & Networking Day"

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Ramsey Center – WCU Cullowhee Campus

For more information and to register, please visit <http://bit.ly/2g6qBJX>.

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