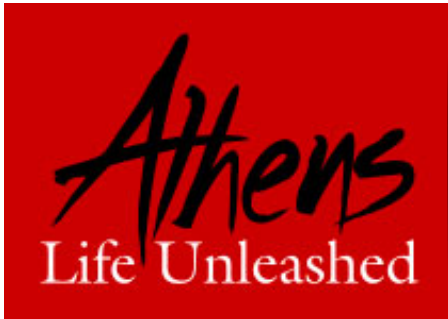


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Athens Now:

Newsletter of the Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau

May 2016



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SAVE THE DATE

Hotel Extranet

Training

May 18

[More info](#)

Georgia Chamber of Commerce

Georgia 2030 Session

June 16

[More info](#)

Shaping the Future of Downtown Athens

Kicking off National Small Business Week and hosted by the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce and HW Creative Marketing, **Shaping the Future of Downtown Athens** was attended on May 2 by a sizable group of people who had an interest in the future of downtown. Attended by CVB Director **Chuck Jones** and Classic Center Executive Director **Paul Cramer**, this panel discussion tackled a variety of issues impacting downtown, ranging from diversity in businesses and clientele to public space. Panelists included Pamela Thompson of the Athens Downtown Development Authority; Jennifer Zwirn of Downtown Athens Business Association and Athens First Bank & Trust; Mike Hamby, ACC District 10 Commissioner; and Blaine Williams, ACC Manager.



Georgia Restaurant

Week

July 18-24

[More info](#)



IN THE NEWS

"The Best Places to Retire in 2016"

[Forbes](#)

April 4, 2016

"Best Southern College Town: Final Four"

[Garden & Gun](#)

March 29, 2016

"Best New Cities for Beer Lovers"

So Many VIP Visits, So Little Time

Throughout April and May, the CVB hosted three separate press visits.

- From April 20-22, the CVB, in partnership with the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Graduate Athens, and other local community members, showed eight journalists around town. This group of journalists were immersed in the Athens culture, particularly music, from sunrise to well past midnight.
- A journalist from Germany made his way to Athens on May 6 to enjoy the Welcome Center's music history walking tour.
- The Explore Georgia's #GeorgiaMusicBackstagePass contest winner spent May 11-13 on a VIP tour of Athens, stopping at local Athens favorites and sharing her travels on social media.



[Fortune](#)

March 2, 2016

"9 Bike-Friendly Cities in Georgia"

[Georgia Trend Magazine](#)

February 2016

"8 Great Small Towns to Visit in 2016"

[Visit South](#)

December 6, 2015

"Athens, GA: Creative Culture"

[Georgia Trend](#)

October 1, 2015

"5 Fabulous Reasons to Visit Athens, GA"

[LLWorldTour](#)

September 23, 2015

"A Road Trip Through Georgia"

[www.Examiner.com](#)

September 3, 2015

"America's Best College Football Towns"

[Travel + Leisure](#)

September 3, 2015

"5 Artsy Southern Towns"

[Deep South Magazine](#)

September 2, 2015

"Restaurant Roundup: Athens, Ga."

[PasteMagazine.com](#)

September 1, 2015

"20 College Towns We Love to Visit"

[Fodors.com](#)

August 28, 2015

"The 16 Best Places to Live in America 2015"

[Outside Magazine](#)

August 18, 2015

"My Town: Susan Hable's Athens, Georgia"

[ExploreGeorgia.org](#)

August 18, 2015

"South Georgia's Four 'A' Trail"

[Philadelphia](#)

[Sunday Sun](#)

June 27, 2015

Hospitality Newsmakers

Paul Cramer, Classic Center executive director, was selected as one of *Facilities & Destinations* magazine's "**F&D 2015 Elite Convention Center Executives.**" The magazine highlighted Cramer's success in overseeing the workforce development program that includes Bread for Life, the Hospitality Careers Academy, and the Athens Tech Hospitality Program.

Brad Davis (pictured left with past General Manager, Brian Cotter on right), Country Inn & Suites director of sales, and the Athens **Country Inn & Suites** were recognized at the Hospitality Ventures Management Group (HVMG) 2015 awards dinner. Davis was presented with the **Director of Sales award for 2015**. The hotel received awards for Top Hotel Rev Par, Top Hotel Guest Services Score, and Circle of Excellence for being in the Top 10 of all HVMG properties.



Classic Center Outside Sales Manager **Marvin Nunnally** won two awards in the past month. Marvin received the **Alumnus of the Year Award** from the Black Male Leadership Society and the **Extra Mile Youth Service Award** from the Athens Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Finer Womanhood Program.

The **Georgia Museum of Art** at the University of Georgia received the **Excellence in Preservation Service** award from The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation for the museum's Henry D. Green Center for the Study of the Decorative Arts and Symposium. The Green Center was specifically recognized for promoting the preservation and study of material culture in Georgia and the South.



The Athens-Clarke County Economic Development Department hosted their Industry Appreciation Dinner & Awards on April 18. CVB Advisory Board Chair Emeritus **Johnny Fowler** (left), CVB Director **Chuck Jones** (right), and Classic Center Executive Director **Paul Cramer** (not pictured) attended the event held at the Cotton Press.

[Partner Extranet](#)

[Athens Events Calendar](#)



Upcoming M&C calendars are available to local partners via our [Extranet](#)

or from the CVB Sales Team:
[Rita Lowery](#)
[Missy Brandt](#)
[Ben Ray](#)



Athens Community Career Academy



CVB Director **Chuck Jones** attended the April 18 governance board meeting of the Athens Community Career Academy. As a board member, he represents the hospitality-tourism industry. The academy continues to garner increased student interest and attendance; there are already 171 students registered for next fall. For the Youth Work Readiness Summer Program, there are 34 students registered, and these students will be paid over a two-week period. The career academy is in sync with local industry needs and is committed to providing a well-trained

workforce for our community's employers.

State marketing resources & industry stats are available at www.MarketGeorgia.org



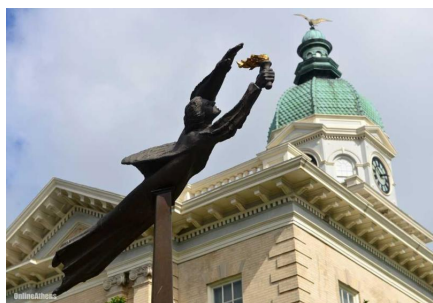
Strengthening International Relations

On April 28, **In Dong Cho**, the vice mayor of the Seodaemun District of Seoul, SK, came to Athens to strengthen the relationship between Athens and his district since a collaborative MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was signed last year. He also met with **Mayor Nancy Denson** and ACC Manager **Blaine Williams** to discuss future exchange between those two cities. The prior day, CVB Director Chuck Jones met with a 14-member delegation from the Governor's Association of Korea about the CVB's tourism program and discussed the city's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to tourism. Classic Center Executive

Director Paul Cramer conducted an informative tour of The Classic Center.



Tackling Panhandling



The Panhandling Roundtable met May 3, with participants including CVB Director **Chuck Jones** and other community representatives from ACC Police, the county commission, and downtown business owners. The group continues to address how to mitigate the situation, taking into account legal ramifications as well as business, resident, and visitor interests.

Moving forward, the group identified five initiatives:

- 1) more UGA outreach;
- 2) update of resource card indicating area resources and how best to donate to panhandlers, to be widely distributed to residents and visitors;
- 3) additional outreach on downtown streets;
- 4) more interaction with police to aid in the situation; and
- 5) increased visibility of meters, where people can make donations instead of giving directly to panhandlers.

Downtown Athens is a major attractor for visitors, and the CVB, as well as others, would like to ensure that it is as inviting and welcoming as possible to visitors.

Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau, 300 N. Thomas St., Athens, GA 30601

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