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Athens Georgia updates for our meeting planner partners.
January, 2017



Athens CVB 2016 Partner of the Year: ABBY HICKS

Abby Hicks, Director of Sales for the [Hotel Indigo-Athens](#), is a true all-star partner, not only to the Athens CVB but to her hotel's clients and guests as well. Abby is a long-time Athenian, who is an invaluable source of ideas that produce inspired gatherings.

Q: What do you enjoy most about representing Hotel Indigo-Athens?



Abby Hicks

A: Our design and LEED Gold designation make us stand out. We care about our environment and the community that we were built in - from the materials that support our structure to the local artists who cover our walls and our menus. I value how connected we are to our local community and its people, and our guests experience that connection when they stay with us.

Q: What innovative use of spaces are you seeing by your clients?

A: We have multiple non-traditional meeting spaces, including our Art Gallery, Presidential Suites, and The Rialto Club. Suites with features such as a billiard table and baby grand piano can be used for fun, interactive gathering spaces and make your VIPs feel pampered.

Q: You're our CVB's Partner of the Year. What other partnerships have you forged that benefit your clients and guests?

A: First, our sales team has over 40 years in the industry and we definitely work together as partners. We welcome the opportunity to put together team-building activities and creating "Only in Athens" experiences. In addition to the fabulous menus that our chefs have created, we regularly partner with local vendors to give clients the option of using some of the great caterers and restaurants that have made Athens a culinary hub in the Southeast. We are known for creating our own "Taste of Athens" events.

Q: What other advice can you give to meeting planners?

A: Provide a few possible date ranges when you request a CVB proposal for meeting space and hotel room blocks. As with any travel purchase, sometimes just a slight shift in date can have a large impact on rates, incentives, and concessions, due to availability. Being a bit flexible can reap great rewards. Speaking of rewards, don't forget to ask your sales manager what rewards programs - like IHG Business Rewards - will earn you additional points based on the events that you are planning.

CVB TIP: check out the VisitAthensGA.com [Planner Incentives Page](#) for current incentives offered by local hotel partners!

Athens Scores With Planners:

Missy Brandt Wilson & Elizabeth J. Hovell Take Home GSAE Awards

Missy Brandt Wilson, Athens CVB Director of Sales, earned the Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Chair's Award in recognition of her role in hosting their 2016 Annual Meeting.



GSAE Chair David Ellis praised Missy, stating, "Missy problem-solved and was proactive in ways that made GSAE look amazing to our attendees. We could not have pulled off such a complex event without her professionalism and expertise."

Pictured (L to R): CVB Director Chuck Jones, Missy Brandt Wilson and Classic Center Executive Director Paul Cramer

Watch the award video, highlighting Missy's service to GSAE planners.



Athens took home a second award when **Elizabeth J. Hovell**, Department Head, Sales, of the [UGA Center for Continuing Education and Hotel](#), was named the Peggy Seigler Corporate Member of the Year for her outstanding and continuous service to GSAE.

Our Athens professionals are the Top in Class and are ready to help your event shine!

Hyatt Place Celebrates 'Topping-Out'

On Thursday, December 14, the Hyatt Place Athens hosted their "Topping-Out Celebration," in recognition of the milestone of the last beam placed atop the new connecting hotel to [The Classic Center](#).



Hyatt Place Athens General Manager Angela Smith explains interior plans to visitors.

Credit to and more event photos at: [Online Athens](#)

The celebration proved to be a great opportunity to bring meeting planners to Athens to see developments in this new product. The new Hyatt Place Athens is an integral part of the new hotel growth that will bring over 500 new rooms to downtown Athens within the next few years.

Hardhat Tours are expected to begin in the last half of February. Please contact [Missy Brandt Wilson](#) to schedule a site inspection of this exciting new property!

Good Advice: **WHAT CAN A CVB DO FOR YOU?**

5 Ways CVBs Help Meeting Planners Balance the Demands of Their Meeting

Time-savers. Meeting and destination experts. Problem-solvers.

Note to Planners: Why CVB First?

Leverage in-market relationships. It's free-- REALLY!

**Make the most of our CVB skills and services.
Check out this webinar.**

Schedule an Athens Site Inspection Today

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