

NEWS RELEASE

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Contacts:

Lindsay Fruchtl
Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau
Vice President of Marketing and Sales
(706) 823-6606
Lindsay@VisitAugusta.com



Augusta, GA Rallies in Support of Travel and Tourism Industry

Community Leaders Gather to Endorse Travel's Economic Benefits During National Travel and Tourism Week

Augusta, GA — The Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB) will lead Augusta's travel and tourism community in celebrating the value of tourism to Augusta. On Wednesday, May 10, Augusta's Mayor Hardie Davis, Jr. will make a proclamation at 11 a.m., inside the Augusta Canal Discovery Center, declaring May 7-13, 2017 as National Travel and Tourism Week in Augusta.

The event is part of the 34th annual National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW), which unites communities across the country to celebrate what travel means to American jobs, economic growth and personal well-being.

"Just look at the numbers. Travel supports one in nine American jobs, including 4,615 right here in Augusta," said Barry White, President and CEO of the ACVB. "This week, we are celebrating what travel means to our community, and we call on everyone—from elected officials to local residents—to join us in saluting this important industry."

The theme of this year's NTTW, "Faces of Travel," shines a spotlight on the people who make up America's travel industry. Across Augusta, travel employs a prosperous and diverse workforce, from airline and hotel employees to restaurant, attraction and retail workers. Each year, the ACVB recognizes nominees for the [Masters of Hospitality](#) program. This service recognition program honors front-line hotel and attraction staff who have been nominated by a guest for providing exceptional customer service. Last year, over 120 employees received nominations.

The economic impact of travel in Augusta is compelling. Some of the numbers:

- 4,615 jobs are supported by travel and tourism in Augusta.
- Travel and tourism generates \$14 million in local tax revenue for Augusta.
- Last year, the Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau worked with 237 groups, which generated \$77,001,451 in estimated economic impact.

These local figures are an important part of travel's economic importance nationwide.

- Travel is a \$2.3 trillion industry in the U.S., with \$990.3 billion in direct travel-related spending in the U.S. by domestic and international visitors in 2016.
- These visitors support 15.3 million American jobs—roughly 8.6 million direct travel jobs, and 6.7 million indirect and induced jobs.
- Travel-related spending generated \$157.8 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues in 2016.

“I am fortunate to have worked in the travel industry for almost 20 years in Augusta, first with the Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau and then with the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area,” said Rebecca Rogers, the Canal's Director of Marketing and Public Relations. “It's been a privilege to welcome thousands of visitors to our community from all around the world. I know travel has helped Augusta immensely because of the tax revenue it generates, not to mention the countless businesses and jobs that are supported by our visitors. That's why I'm proud to support travel during National Travel and Tourism Week and every day.”

In addition to its benefits for the local economy, travel can also have a positive effect on personal well-being for residents and visitors of Augusta. Numerous [research studies](#) have confirmed the positive health effects of travel and time off, from reducing the risk of heart disease to decreasing depression. Using time off to travel with family is good for everyone, especially our children—kids who travel with their families are more likely to attend college and earn more as adults.

“Our industry is one that relies on human interaction,” said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association, the umbrella organization representing the U.S. travel industry. “Whether it's the front desk concierge at a hotel, the tour guide in a city's historic district, or the CEO of a destination marketing organization, our people are what make America a great place to visit, and keep our economy strong. This National Travel and Tourism Week, we're saluting the people behind the travel industry, and calling on our nation's leaders to prioritize travel-friendly legislation, for the sake of millions of American workers.”

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