



**Travel Industry
Association of Kansas**

THE VOICE OF THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY IN KANSAS

November 2015

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TIAK TIMES

IN CASE YOU MISSED THEM . . .

Did you miss out on some of the 2015 Kansas Tourism Conference presentations? Or would you like to have a copy to refresh your knowledge? We've added a few of the speakers' presentations to the website and hope to add more. Be sure to check out the presentations available at <https://tiak.org/events/kansas-tourism-conference/>. And while you're reminiscing about the conference, preview the photos submitted to [#KTC15 here](#). ■



TIAK DAY ON THE HILL



That's right . . . now that the 2015 Kansas Tourism Conference is behind us, it's time to prepare for the 2016 TIAK Day on the Hill on Wednesday, February 10, 2016.

Plan to join us in Topeka, Kan. as we speak to our Kansas legislators with a unified voice, advocating for the travel industry in the state of Kansas. Your voice matters! Registration is now open on the TIAK website at <https://tiak.org/events/day-on-the-hill/>.

In addition, for those interested in an opportunity to receive special recognition and support, several sponsorship levels are being offered. Sponsorships are vital to making this event possible and we appreciate your consideration. The varying sponsorship levels are located on the website, as well as detailed on Page 3. We hope to see you at the TIAK Day on the Hill event in February, as we seek to advance the influence of Kansas' tourism professionals like you! Questions? Contact [Amy Billquist](#) from the TIAK Office. ■



**Travel Industry
Association of Kansas**

DAY ON THE HILL

FEBRUARY 10, 2016



EVENTS:

All activities—registration, office visits, lunch and guest speakers—will take place at the Statehouse this year.

The evening event will remain at the Ramada.

WWW.TIAK.ORG

Join the Travel Industry Association of Kansas as we celebrate the Power of Travel Kansas and speak to our Kansas legislators with a unified voice. Help us advocate for the travel industry in the state of Kansas.

**PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING THIS IMPORTANT EVENT.
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SPONSORSHIP LEVELS,
CONTACT AMY BILLQUIST AT BILLQUISTA@GMAIL.COM.**

Sponsorship Levels:

Event sponsor \$600
Day on the Hill sponsor \$300
Legislative Evening sponsor \$400

Attendee Levels:

Day on the Hill attendee \$35
Legislative Reception attendee \$50

www.tiak.org/events/day-on-the-hill

TIAK DAY ON THE HILL SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsorship rates are as follows:

All sponsorships include recognition in the TIAK Times newsletter. In addition, benefits also include:

Event Sponsor (\$600)

- Two admissions to the day events
- Admittance for up to 5 attendees at evening event
- Logo placement on various event materials, including materials provided to elected officials
- Logo signage at the evening event and on all event promo materials
- Community banner displayed at evening event

Day on the Hill Sponsor (\$300)

- Two admissions to the day events
- Logo placement on various event materials, including materials provided to elected officials

Legislative Evening Sponsor (\$400)

- Admittance for up to 5 attendees at evening event
- Recognition of sponsorship in invitation to elected officials
- Logo on signage on evening event promo materials



Either way, just plan to

Join Us!

Single attendee rates are as follows:

Day on the Hill Attendee Level (\$35)

- Entrance to networking and luncheon
- Participation in Day on the Hill events

Legislative Reception Evening Attendee Level (\$50)

- Admittance to evening legislative reception

TIAK MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL

It's that time of year again. Please watch for your dues renewal notice arriving in your e-mail in December. TIAK is constantly striving to raise the value of your membership with an emphasis on advocacy, education, networking and communication, as well as providing services most pertinent to both urban and rural tourism professionals. Don't miss out on all that a TIAK membership has to offer you. Watch your e-mail next month and be sure to renew your membership in the umbrella organization for all sectors of Kansas tourism! ■



TAX INTERIM RE-CAP

From Natalie Bright

The Special Committee on Tax met in early November to discuss income tax credits, sales tax exemptions and economic development incentives. The committee received lots of information from the legislative research department, legislative post audit, Kansas Department of Revenue, Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas Department of Insurance. TIAK entered written testimony (see attached) supporting sales tax exemptions, economic development incentives and funding mechanisms, as well as expressed concerns with sales taxes on services. There were approximately 40 groups that entered written testimony and 6 groups that gave oral testimony, ranging from education to agricultural to nonprofits.

There was brief discussion on sales tax on services; what is currently taxed and what is not taxed. It was noted the first service Kansas taxed was hotel stays. They also discussed several states that have enacted a sales tax on services. There was not much discussion by the committee on whether there is interest in pursuing sales tax on services.

Star bonds were reviewed and noted to be a useful tool in rural Kansas. Some legislators criticized the program for picking winners and losers, yet many recognized there has been great success through the program. Concern was raised by legislators that the program has different threshold qualifications for urban vs. rural areas.

Finally, post audit staff reviewed results of a recent audit of incentive programs, Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK) and High Performance Incentive Program (HPIP). PEAK was reported to have a 57-to-1 ROI while HPIP data was not readily available because of how the program is tracked. HPIP was reported as not being a high leverage investment tool as PEAK.

The committee will meet again in December and discuss their recommendations and determine if they will recommend a bill to the legislature. There is discussion about a bill to repeal or sunset many sales tax exemptions that are not required by federal law or not component parts. We will keep you updated as the committee continues to meet and make recommendations. ■

KANSAS NAMED FIFTH MOST BUSINESS-FRIENDLY STATE

From The Wichita Eagle

Kansas has repeated as the fifth most business-friendly state in the nation in a survey by Pollina Corporate Real Estate, an influential site selection firm.

The study ranks states based on 32 factors controlled by state government. The state has ranked in the top 10 since 2008 and was ranked fifth in 2014.

Kansas scored well on: high school and college completion rates, low business inventory and individual income tax rates, its pro-business regulation, unemployment rate and transportation infrastructure. It scored poorly on: average teacher compensation and college funding per student, as well as in most tax categories such as corporate tax, sales and gross receipt tax and property tax. Kansas has room for improvement for its cost of electricity and crime rate.



(continued on page 10)

HERITAGE TOURISM: USING TRAVEL TO EXPLORE ROOTS AND CULTURE

From the [*Associated Press*](#)

Luong La's family fled the communist regime in Vietnam in 1979. Now a father of three living in Santa Barbara, California, he and his wife decided they wanted to spend one of their family vacations bringing the kids back to his native country to learn about it. So they spent a month on a heritage tourism trip to the Southeast Asian country to visit not just traditional tourist sites but also the places where he had grown up in the Mekong Delta.

"My husband thought that by seeing the places he had grown up in, the kids would have a better understanding of him," said Luong's wife, Michelle Robin La. "My husband's extended family keeps their heritage alive in America with food, language and celebrations like the Lunar New Year. By traveling in Vietnam for a month we immersed the kids in the place these traditions came from."

Their family trip to Vietnam is an example of heritage tourism, which The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines as traveling to experience a place, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.

Heritage tourism sites can be as varied as a revitalized downtown or a Civil War trail. "For a number of years, the idea was to build interstates and get people to where they're going and then people gradually began to realize they were missing out on something - authentic experiences," said Carolyn Brackett with The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Cultural Heritage Program. "And that's a word that we hear over and over that people want a feeling of authenticity, meaning they want a sense of place."

As travelers became more interested in authentic experiences, communities and officials are taking notice, asking what they can do to share their story, Brackett said. A 2013 national survey conducted by Mandala Research showed that 76 percent of all leisure travelers in the U.S. will take part in some sort of cultural or heritage activity while they are traveling, Brackett said. That translates to 130 million people.

Tourism boards and sites are taking note. In Oklahoma, the state's Tourism and Recreation Department has released a guide and web portal about the state's African-American history and heritage sites. The Texas Historical Commission has released a free 100-page guide showcasing the state's Hispanic heritage sites.

Aside from well-known destinations like the Alamo, the Texas guide, which is organized by geographic regions and was released in May, includes off-the-beaten path sites as well, said Chris Florance, spokesman for the Texas Historical Commission.

"The Hispanic cultures have left their imprint on the state for 500 years, and it has impacted almost every aspect of Texas culture — certainly our history, architecture, music. It's just such a vital and important part of our history and where we are today and where we're going as a state," he said.

The commission has also released a mobile app so visitors can access thematic tours, including one focused on African-American heritage sites in Texas. "There's an enormous interest in heritage tourism. It's a really important part of Texas' tourist economy," he said, adding that an economic impact study found that about 10 percent of travel in Texas is related to cultural heritage.

(Continued on page 6)

HERITAGE TOURISM (CONT.)

(Continued from page 5)

Maresa Thompson has taken several trips based around cultural heritage, most notably a trip to Ireland and England to see stone formations and other ancient sites. Thompson's ancestors were Queen Victoria's Irish bodyguards, she said, and she describes herself as being more interested in museums, history and culture than in other types of sightseeing. Thompson's grandfather emigrated from Czechoslovakia and she next hopes to take a trip to the region to learn more about that part of her family's heritage.

"All travel enriches your life, but the contrived travel — the Vegas and the Disneyland and all of that — just doesn't appeal to me as much as it does really thinking I have ancestors or people in my lineage who came and possibly could have stayed here before," said Thompson, who lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and is the creative director for Heritage Hotels & Resorts, a group of hotels that showcase New Mexico's history, art and culture. "I think it's just a deeper, holistic experience for travel." ■

TRAVEL INDUSTRY ADAPTING TO BOOMERS' CHANGING TRAVEL TASTES

From [*The Globe and Mail*](#)



Boomers (born between 1946 and 1965) are travelers who experts predict will take over the travel sector of the economy. It is a perfect storm of time and money—and just as boomers made backpacking through Europe a rite of passage, so, too, will they shake up the rules of retirement and the travel economy.

"It is about freedom," Paul Marshman, a retired Toronto newspaperman who began his blog, the Travelling Boomer, in 2013, says, "For once in your life you have the opportunity to travel; suddenly you don't have to be back to work on Monday morning. It's like being let out of school."

Boomers "have this insatiable desire to keep learning, travelling, seeing new things and meeting people," says Lina Ko, branding specialist and author of Boomerwatch.ca. "They want to keep moving."

But is the travel industry ready for them?

By and large, the boomer set is booking non-traditional, "bucket list" destinations—moving away from the typical sun-soaked getaways. High-end custom travel companies are changing to meet the need. Boomers are the No. 1 market for travel company Butterfield & Robinson. Manager Katie Marshall says the company has already begun modifying trips, such as introducing "easier travel, flatter biking routes and regions," for active older travelers.

Another small but significant change was introducing a fleet of electric bikes. The battery-operated rides assist cyclists on hillier routes and regions. The demand for cycling tours in general is increasing, becoming more popular than golf. Voluntourism, a hybrid of volunteering and tourism, is also on the rise. Hobby, travel and personal engagement are aligned.

Increasingly, one part of the market to chase will be solo travelers, those exploring on their own because of a later-life divorce or death, or simply because a partner does not want to venture so far afield. "I call them the Now Generation," Christiane Germain of Groupe Germain Hotels says with a laugh. "If they want to do something, they're not waiting any more. They're doing it." ■

FACE-TO-FACE TIME DRIVES DESTINATION DECISIONS

From *Travel Market Report*



When choosing a destination, meeting planners are most influenced by fam trips and face-time communication with CVBs and suppliers, according to a new survey by Development Counselors International (DCI). Other marketing methods—including social media, text messaging, advertising, and printed promotional materials—are far less influential in driving site selection, reported *A View from Meeting Planners: Winning Strategies in Destination Marketing*, a survey of 212 corporate and association planners who select meeting sites in domestic and overseas locations.

“What really stood out is that human interaction is king,” Daniella Middleton, director of business events for DCI, a destination marketing company, told *Travel Market Report*. “The meeting industry has long been promoting the significance of face-to-face meetings. As it turns out, destination marketers need to realize that face-to-face communication is also important to meeting planners themselves.”

The planners in the survey, which was conducted in mid-2015, ranked face meetings with CVBs and suppliers, whether at trade shows or hosted receptions, as the most effective means of influence in selecting a new destination. A huge majority of respondents (88%) said they consider fam trips important or very important in influencing their perception of destinations.

DMOs and CVBs ranked highest as the leading sources of information for planners (67%), but a majority of respondents said they also were highly influenced by personal or business travel (63%) and dialogue with industry peers (63%).

“The survey underscored the importance of the CVB and the DMO, with more than half of planners saying they work with these sources,” Middleton said. “Although corporate planners are more likely than association planners to work only with hotels, about half of them also work with CVBs—and that was a surprise.”

When it comes to communicating with CVBs outside of in-person events, the majority (55%) selected e-mail as their preferred way to receive information, slightly ahead of e-mail combined with phone calls. Social media, advertising, destination e-newsletters, and online webinars all ranked among the least effective forms of communication. ■

VISIT TOPEKA, INC. HIRING TWO POSITIONS



Visit Topeka, Inc. (VTI), is currently seeking a Sales Manager to promote and sell Topeka as a preferred destination for conventions, meetings, sporting events, and tourism groups. The Sales Manager is responsible for identifying sales prospects and maintaining a database of qualifying leads through referrals, direct mail, face-to-face, cold calling, email contacts, and networking. Required qualifications include a Bachelor’s degree in business or a related field, or four (4) years’ work experience in sales.

VTI is also seeking a Director of Marketing and Communications to plan, manage and implement all marketing communications and public relations activities regarding the image of the community, sales segments, staff and business partners on behalf of VTI. The Director of Marketing and Communications manages the marketing team and assists in staffing and hiring decisions within the marketing department. Required qualifications include two years of management experience, with a Bachelor’s degree in communications or marketing and five years of related work experience, or eight years of relevant work experience. A successful candidate must be knowledgeable in a variety of software programs which include Wordpress, Constant Contact, social media sources and Google analytics. For more information, visit www.cbsks.com and click on “Apply Now!” under “Jobs.” ■



POST-CONFERENCE Q&A WITH GRACE STANFIELD

Grace Stanfield was the recipient of the 2015 TIAK Scholarship Fund. She provided some student perspective of her experience and wanted to share it with all of you.

Please tell TIAK members your overall perception of the conference.

“Coming into the conference, I had no idea what to expect. Honestly, I was afraid it would be formal and a little stuffy, so I was excited and relieved to find out how laid back and welcoming everyone was! I had no idea being the scholarship winner was such a big deal, so it was nice to quickly have so many people reaching out to me and introducing themselves. Everyone I met was warm and friendly and very inviting—exactly how we should be in the hospitality industry, I suppose!”

The layout of the conference was also really cool. I enjoyed having one full day of general sessions, then one full day of breakouts. That is so different from anything I’ve experienced before!”

As a student, did you feel this conference provided you with opportunities for networking, extended education and a continuing desire to pursue a career in this industry?

“YES, YES, and YES. As a college student, I often attend events where we as the student are expected to initiate conversation for networking. I’m not very good at that, so I spent almost a week before the conference practicing good conversation starters (true confession!), but I was so surprised at how many people were eager to talk to me and learn more about my story. That was very humbling! I met so many awesome people and was even able to send some business cards and resumes home with them.

I also learned more than I ever could have imagined! To me, it is so important to learn in action! I am a visual and kinesthetic learner, so when I have the opportunity to learn from practice or real-life example, I take away so much more! There are just some things you can’t learn from a textbook. During KTC, I fell in love with hospitality and tourism all over again. I know that sounds horribly cheesy, but it’s true! The whole conference was just affirmation that I’ve invested five years and thousands of dollars on the right degree! Hospitality is truly my passion!”

What was your favorite take-away from conference speakers?

“Before KTC, I had never really thought about how much of tourism really is marketing and branding! These are two things I love, but they aren’t my strengths. It was cool to hear about how important branding is and even got me thinking about how I can “market” my hometown, even just as a resident.”

Do you have any suggestions for students considering this scholarship opportunity in 2016?

“If I was encouraging a student to apply for this scholarship, I would tell them to go for it! I would also encourage them to keep an open mind, because tourism is always more than people think it is. It is important to try new things and to branch out of your comfort zone. Tourism is one of the more overlooked and under taught aspects of hospitality, and a conference like KTC could help someone realize their unrealized love of tourism!” ■

SPREAD SOME SCHOLARSHIP CHEER

Ho, Ho, Ho—spread the holiday cheer by donating to the TIAK Scholarship Fund! Now is the time to extend your holiday gift list to include a donation toward the 2016 TIAK Scholarship Fund. As of today, we have about \$50 banked to bring a deserving college student to the 2016 Tourism Conference in Olathe, but we need your help to cover the remaining \$550 needed. Spread the holiday cheer and click [here](#) to donate today! Happy holidays from the TIAK Education Committee!.

SAVE THE DATES

Do you want to reach the meeting planner? Maybe the leisure traveler? How about motor coach groups? Knowing who you are targeting will allow you to create strategies to effectively hit your marketing bullseye. This session will give you practical tips for defining segments, an understanding of how to create your plan and divvy up your marketing dollars.

Be sure to join us on Friday, December 11, 2015 at Prairie Band Casino & Resort. Reserve your spot today by registering on the TIAK website at: <https://tiak.org/event/bullseye-marketing-strategies/>. ■

Bullseye Marketing...

Aim for the most effective strategies to target your market segments

Do you want to reach the meeting planner? Maybe the leisure traveler? How about motor coach groups? Knowing who you are targeting will allow you to create strategies to effectively hit your marketing bullseye. This session will give you practical tips for defining segments, an understanding of how to create your plan, and, how to divvy up your marketing dollars.

Friday, December 11

**Prairie Band
Casino & Resort**

\$35.00 per person

**Presented by:
Alan Carr
CARR STRATEGIES**

Click here to register!

WHITE PAPERS



There's a new addition to the Resources Section of the TIAK website: White Papers.

Our Education Committee has researched and collected white papers on various topics. Current White Paper listings include:

- The State of the American Traveler
- EppersonDest Product Development: A Review and Analysis of the Role of CVBs in Destination Product Development
- Destination Brand Building
- Five Destination Branding Principles to Boost Economic Recovery
- Toll Advocacy: It's Not Just For a Crisis
- Amadeus: Shaping the Future of Travel—Macro trends driving industry growth over the next decade

All of these white papers can be found on the TIAK website at: www.tiak.org/resources/white-papers-reports. Be sure to check them out!



**DESTINATION
CAPITOL HILL TRAVEL'S PREMIER
LEGISLATIVE FLY-IN**

MARCH 16-17, 2016 • WASHINGTON, D.C.

Destination Capitol Hill is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for you to learn about upcoming legislation that impacts travel, network with industry colleagues and meet with Members of Congress to stress the importance of travel as an economic driver.

Join us—and hundreds of your colleagues from around the country—at The Mayflower Hotel, from March 16-17, 2016. U.S. Travel will provide you with everything needed to go into your meetings with confidence. We'll host educational webinars prior to the event, coordinate your meetings and provide a personalized schedule.



REGISTRATION OPENS DECEMBER 7TH

Stay tuned for more details!

BUSINESS-FRIENDLY STATE (CONT.)

(Continued from page 4)

In terms of the state's incentives and economic development effort, it scored very well for incentives and fairly well for its marketing and responsiveness to new and existing companies.

Read more [here](#). ■

NEW COMMERCE SECRETARY NAMED



Appointed by Governor Sam Brownback, Antonio J. Soave of Overland Park is the Acting Secretary of Commerce.

Soave is the current chairman and CEO of Capistrano Global Advisory Services (CGA). In a career spanning more than 20 years, he has helped numerous entrepreneurs and businesses to expand and grow. He previously served as an adjunct professor of international economics and finance at the Walsh College of Business in Troy, Mich. and was an intern in the White House Office of Public Liaison's Department of Foreign Policy and Defense under President Ronald Reagan.

"Antonio's experience working with businesses in a wide range of industries including rail, construction, oil and gas, biotech and manufacturing gives him an excellent understanding of industry needs and how Kansas can help those companies grow and create jobs," said Governor Brownback. "He brings both enthusiasm for entrepreneurship and solid business experience that will benefit all Kansans."

His wife, Ann, is a native of Ft. Scott. They have four children, Francesco, 6; Maria Bernadette, 3; Gianpaolo, 2; and Anna Maria Faustina, 3 months.

Soave is active in a number of boards and organizations. He is an International Advisory Council member of the United States Institute of Peace and served as the Executive Director of the School of Business at Benedictine College. He has a Bachelor's degree in international studies from The American University in Washington, D.C., a Juris Doctor from the Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University and a Masters of Law in International Law from the University of San Diego.

Soave will join Commerce in December. He replaces Pat George who retired at the end of July. This appointment will require confirmation by the Kansas Senate. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(CLICK ON EACH LINK FOR
MORE INFORMATION):

December 9, 2015

[Executive Committee Mtng](#)
TIAK Offices, Topeka, Kan.

December 10, 2015

[December Board Meeting](#)
Visit Topeka, Topeka, Kan.

December 11, 2015

[Seminar: Bullseye Marketing Strategies](#)

January 11, 2016

First Day of the 2016
Legislative Session

January 13, 2006

Governor Brownback's State
of the State Address

January 29, 2016

Kansas Day

February 10, 2016

[TIAK Day on the Hill](#)
State Capital, Topeka, Kan.

March 16-17, 2016

[Destination: Capitol Hill](#)
Washington, D.C.

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