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NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS AT MICHIGAN CVB GROUP



Michigan Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus' (MACVB) officers for 2022 have been announced. Heading the group as president is **Trevor Tkach**, president and CEO of Traverse City Tourism. "I am excited to serve as president of MACVB," Tkach says. "The association represents dozens of destination organizations around the state, which deliver important economic development activities and tools to their communities. MACVB encourages best practices in sustainable, responsible tourism."

He adds, "We will continue to help produce the Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism, the major convening of the hospitality industry in our state, which will be in Traverse City this April. MACVB also plays a strong advocacy role for Michigan's tourism industry. I look forward to the year ahead as we continue to advance the good work of our members."

Joining Tkach in leadership roles at MACVB are **Mary Robinson**, vice president (Livingston County); **Julie Pingston**, secretary (Lansing); **Amanda Wilkin**, treasurer (Charlevoix); **Janet Kron**, past president (Grand Rapids); and **Susan Estler** (Marquette) and **Bob Lukens** (Muskegon), directors-at-large.



Becky Bixby is the new assistant general manager at Detroit's convention center, Huntington Place. She is certified in exhibition management, brings 29 years of event experience leading teams in customer service training and new technology implementations, and is

STATEWIDE TOURISM BOARD NAMES OFFICERS

The Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM) has named its 2022 officers. They include president **Chad Wiebesick**, Destination Ann Arbor; vice president **Kim Corcoran**, Meetings Michigan; treasurer **Dan McCole**, Ph.D., Michigan State University; secretary **Holly Schonert**, MLive Media Group; and directors-at-large **Darren Ing** of Michigan Association of Recreational Vehicles and Campgrounds, **Jada Paisley** of MI Golf Course Association, and **Kristin Phillips** of Michigan Department of Natural Resources.



Chad Wiebesick

"It's an immense honor to be elected as president of TICOM, a statewide association that has been serving as a unified voice for Michigan's travel industry for over 30 years," says Wiebesick. "And it's a privilege to be a part of the most representative and diverse association whose dozens of members help contribute to Michigan's \$18 billion visitor economy. Now more than ever, TICOM's advocacy, education and collaboration are vital to supporting Michigan's travel industry and rebuilding our economy from the adverse impact of the pandemic."

responsible for all day-to-day operational aspects of the venue, ensuring that all clients' needs are understood and met. In addition, Bixby is taking the lead role in working toward Platinum LEED certification and managing all sustainability initiatives that cross over multiple departments. Previously, Bixby served as senior manager of client services for Informa Markets, a company that delivers large-scale exhibitions, virtual events, online marketplaces, specialist

content and data services to the global event industry.

"Becky brings a 360-degree perspective to her new role as AGM," says Karen Totaro, general manager of Huntington Place. "She has worked in venues, she has been the general services contractor building the show, and she has been the actual show manager," Totaro explains. "We are lucky to have her joining the team to ensure we exceed the customer experience from every angle."

Hotels //

AHLA REPORT: HOTELS MOVING TOWARD RECOVERY

The hotel industry will continue its path to recovery this year, but it won't be without some speed bumps, and full recovery is still several years in the future. Those are the conclusions of the 2022 State of the Hotel Industry Report by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA).

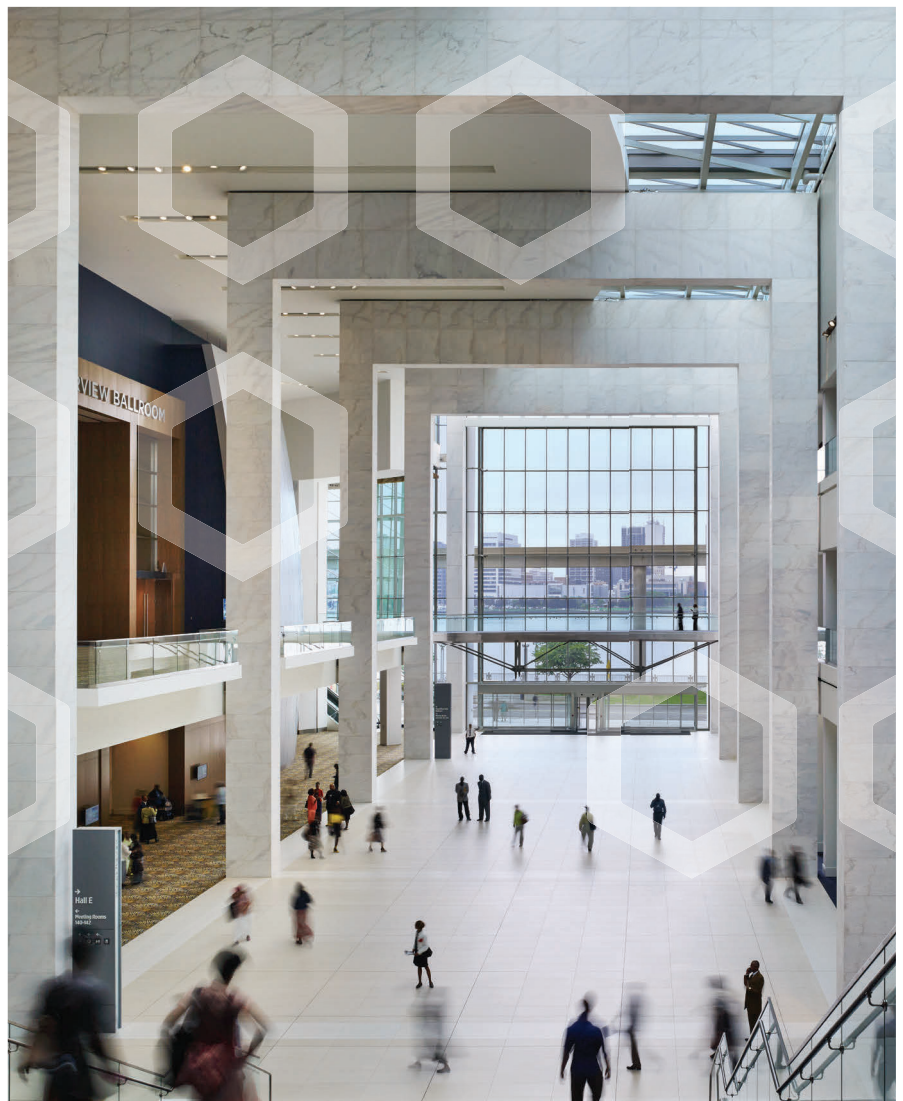
Here are some of the top findings of the report, which was conducted with analysis by Oxford Economics.

- » Hotel room revenues are projected to approach 2019 levels this year, reaching \$168 billion.
- » Occupancy levels are expected to hit 63.4%, nearing the 66% rate achieved in 2019 and far above the 44% and 57.6% rates of 2020 and 2021.
- » The outlook for ancillary revenue, which includes food and beverage and meeting space, is less optimistic. Industry experts project that only a little over half of meetings and events will return in 2022.
- » Leisure travelers will continue to drive recovery. In 2019, business travelers made up 52.5% of industry room revenue, while in 2022 they are projected to represent just 43.6%

» While a full recovery in business travel isn't expected until 2024, global business travel is projected to increase by 14% in 2022, with the U.S. and China seeing the largest upswing. Both are projected to grow by 20%.

» Changing traveler segments, including the rapid rise of bleisure travelers (those who blend business and leisure travel), are affecting how hotels operate. One study of global business travelers found 89% wanted to add a private holiday to their business trips in the next 12 months.

"Hotels have faced enormous challenges over the past two years, and we are still a long way from full recovery," says Chip Rogers, president and CEO of AHLA. "The uncertainty about the omicron variant suggests just how difficult it will be to predict travel readiness in 2022, adding to the challenges hotels are already facing." **m+**



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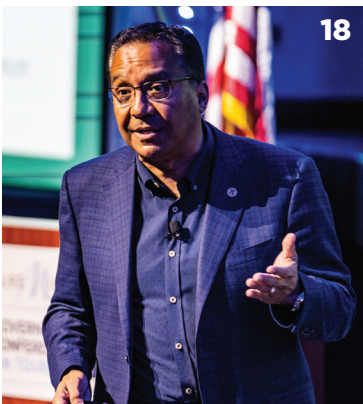
Meet you in Detroit™



SNAPSHOTS Visit Detroit Annual Partnership Meeting + Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism



PHOTOS: 2022 VISIT DETROIT ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP MEETING; (OPPOSITE) MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



MotorCity Meet-Ups

Detroit's MotorCity Casino Hotel was the location for two lively industry gatherings. The **Visit Detroit Annual Partnership Meeting** convened at the venue in February, with a presentation by President and CEO Claude Molinari and a keynote speech by Mel Tucker, Michigan State University's head football coach. **1.** After 26 years with Visit Detroit, Renee Monforton, vice president of marketing and communications, retired. **2.** Lauren Sanders **3.** Elaine Moulder, Jennifer Ollinger **4.** Samuel Donald, Jennifer McDonnell **5.** Claude Molinari, Mel Tucker **6.** Austin Arksey, John Borgan **7.** Janell Wade, Nicole Piach **8.** Tina Jackson, Renee Monforton, Sonya Robinson **9.** Brittany Artz, Yana Walker **10.** Panel discussion on the Sound Board stage **11.** Antoine Garibaldi **12.** Stefanie Ross, Dana Zolynsky **13.** Verlonda Thompson, Ashley Lulek, Melissa Morang, Billye Thompson

Last November, the hotel hosted the **2021 Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism**. The event featured two-and-a-half days of speakers, workshops and meetings for Michigan tourism industry leaders. **14.** Dave Lorenz, Travel Michigan, and Tori Emerson Barnes, U.S. Travel Association **15.** Zoe Moore, Grow with Zomo **16.** Adam Sacks, Tourism Economics **17.** Annie Kelley, Linda Freybler, Dave Lorenz **18.** Michael Dominguez, Associated Luxury Hotels International **19.** An enthusiastic crowd in the Sound Board Theater **20.** Nick Bykerk, CFO of GR Aseptic **21.** Tori Emerson Barnes. **m+e**



To have your meeting or event photos featured, contact slevitt@greenspring.com.



Convention Reinvention

Karen Totaro returns to the Midwest to run Detroit's Huntington Place. **BY SHELLEY LEVITT**

» **KAREN TOTARO KNOWS** a few things about running a convention center. Over her 30-year career, she has held senior positions at Oregon Convention Center, Duke Energy Convention Center Cincinnati, Atlantic City Convention Center, and she was the chief operating officer at San Diego Convention Center from 2016 to 2020. Last year, Totaro moved to Detroit to become general manager of the newly renamed Huntington Place, the 16th largest convention center in the U.S.

M+E: What led you to leave sunny San Diego to become GM of Huntington Place?

KT: I grew up in Chicago and always knew I would end up back in the Midwest. I just love old industrial cities and am excited about the opportunity to be a part of the continuing evolution in Detroit. The venue itself is huge, flexible, sustainable and offers breathtaking views of the Detroit River and Canada. There is a unique passion and sense of being part of something bigger here. Detroit has a special sense of community like no other.

M+E: Can you share a moment or two that has made you feel moving here was the right decision?

KT: Being part of reopening the venue when the governor gave the go-ahead back in July was a tremendous sense of accomplishment for our entire team. It made me excited for our future as our venue has a huge economic impact on this community.

It was a big goal to get the North American International Auto Show back in the venue and contracted for this year.

Finally, I would say there has been enormous satisfaction in ensuring we are giving back to the community. Watching thousands drive through the vaccination site in the Atwater Garage or watching our most vulnerable population being served hot meals at the Pope Francis location in the venue makes me so proud to be part of this team.

M+E: What would you like meeting planners to know about Huntington Place?

KT: I would like all planners to know that Detroit and Huntington Place really have your back. Our team will go above and beyond to ensure your event is not only successful, but that you and your team feel that success as well. We do not force square pegs in round holes; we work with each client to find the magic combination of needs, price and service and then exceed those expectations. **m+e**

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