



Schedule of Events

Monday, October 26, 2009

Pre-Conference Tour (optional)

Music, Miracles & More

6:00 Reception & Dinner
Alabama Music Hall of Fame

Sponsored by:

**Colbert County Tourism & Convention Bureau
Colbert County Extension System**

Tuesday, October 27, 2008

8:00 Registration

8:30 Welcome –

8:45 Keynote General Session #1
Alabama Scenic River Trail
Grey Brennan, Alabama Tourism Department

9:45 Session #2
Mississippi's Cultural Cornerstone Program
Sarah McCullough, Mississippi Development Authority, Division of Tourism

10:30 Break

Sponsored by:

Holiday Inn, Sheffield, Alabama

10:45 Session #3
BBQ Festivals and Their Impact
Panel featuring **Stacy Pair** Haywood
"Doc" Mayton and Others

11:30 Session #4
Drive Growth – and Measure It – Using the Internet
Chris Muldrow, Co-founder BBQhunt.com

Exhibitor Introductions

12:00 Luncheon

1:30 Session #5
Sustaining Your Organization
Stacy Pair, Mississippi Main Street Association, Southern District

2:30 Session #6
Creative & Budget Savvy Ways to Brand your Organization
Amber Patten, Webz Media
Collierville, Tennessee

3:15 Break

3:30 Session #7
40 Ideas in 40 Minutes
Robert Ratliff, Executive Director
Tuscaloosa, Alabama Convention & Visitors Bureau

4:15 Free Time

6:00 Reception – GAS Studio – Tuscumbia, Alabama

7:00 Dine Around

Wednesday, October 28, 2008

8:30 Welcome

8:45 **Geocaching**
Peter Bowden
Columbus, Georgia Convention & Visitors Bureau

9:45 Session #9
Farmer's Markets and Their Impact on Communities
Don Wambles, Alabama Farmer's Markets

10:30 Break

10:45 Session #10
Waterways
Nick Baggett
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Columbus, Mississippi

11:30 Session #11
Hospitality Training
Diana O'Toole
Mississippi Development Authority
Department of Tourism

12:00 Adjourn



Door Prizes Donated By:

**Cartney Hunt Bed & Breakfast
Columbus, Mississippi**

**Eden's Ranch, LLC (5)
Cherokee, Alabama**

**Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
Moulton, Alabama**

**Pickwick Belle
Pickwick Dam, Tennessee**

**Meridian/Lauderdale County Tourism Bureau
Meridian, Mississippi**

Butler County Extension System

**Tuscaloosa Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tuscaloosa, Alabama**

**Decatur/Morgan County Convention & Visitors
Bureau
Decatur, Alabama**

**Corinth Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Corinth, Mississippi**

**Ridgeland Tourism Commission
Ridgeland, Mississippi**

**Wetumpka Area Chamber of Commerce
Wetumpka, Alabama**

Nicholas Baggett

Duties: Management of all natural resources on US Army Corps of Engineers properties located within and/or adjacent to the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, management of real estate transactions involving the sale and/or lease of public property located along the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, management of wildlife mitigation properties located within the states of Alabama & Mississippi (180,000+ acres), and management of all Corps parks and campgrounds located along the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway.

US Army Corps of Engineers- 18 Years: -Federal Ranger at Lake Sidney Lanier, Atlanta, Georgia 1991-2001

-Project Manager, Regulatory Division, 2001-2006, 75 county area of North Georgia/City of Atlanta

-Project Manager, Regulatory Division, 2006-2008, 30 county area of North Mississippi/North Alabama

-Natural Resource Manager, Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, 2008- Present

Education:

University of Alabama, BS Park Administration

University of South Alabama, MS Park Administration

numerous marketing and sales activities until he was appointed President-CEO in May 2003.

His primary responsibility includes coordinating sales and marketing efforts of the Convention Bureau along with managing the brand promise on behalf of the Columbus Consolidated Government. He manages a staff of 9 and is responsible for a \$2.4 million budget.

Prior to coming to the Bureau, he worked in broadcasting and as a freelance consultant. Peter's background includes public relations, management, marketing, advertising, and communication.

He serves on several boards to include the Columbus Cultural Arts Alliance, President of the Presidential Pathways Travel Association, Immediate President of the Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Southeastern Tourism Society Advisory Board, GA Dept of Economic Development's Tourism Advisory Board, and others.

Peter is a lifelong resident of the tri-community area, married to Valerie (31 years).

Haywood "Doc" Mayton



My name is Haywood "Doc" Mayton. I am the current president of the Alabama BBQ Association. I also cook and compete on the Alabama BBQ Trail as Doc's Ribs. I am the Associate Dean of the College of Education at The University of West Alabama in Livingston. Most of my time is spent either with family, cooking bbq, or promoting bbq in the State of Alabama.

Sarah McCullough



Sarah McCullough manages Cultural and Heritage Development for the Division of Tourism with Mississippi Development Authority. She works with federal and state agencies, nonprofits, and local communities in identifying, preserving, and promoting the cultural and historic

Grey Brennan



Marketing Division Supervisor - Grey Brennan – A former broadcaster and lifelong resident of Alabama, Brennan has worked for the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel since 2001. His duties include Marketing Manager and Supervisor of the Marketing and Group Travel Division, International

Liaison and Regional Director for the Metropolitan Tourism region.

Peter Bowden



Peter has been with the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau since July 1995. Originally hired as the Bureau's Olympic Coordinator, Peter was re-assigned as Deputy Director shortly after coming to the Bureau where he oversaw

resources that are unique to Mississippi's heritage.

Her background includes experience in both historic preservation and economic development. She previously held positions with The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation; The Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation in Athens, Georgia; and Mississippi Development Authority's Global Business Division.

She holds a bachelor's degree in history from Agnes Scott and a master's degree in historic preservation from The University of Georgia. She graduated from the Economic Development Institute at The University of Oklahoma and studied international trade at The American University in Paris. She has participated in international cultural heritage programs in Brazil, Ghana, Croatia, Thailand, and Australia.

Chris Muldrow



Chris Muldrow has been at the vanguard of developing strong local news sites on the Internet since 1995. Muldrow served as the editor of Fredericksburg.com, the community portal owned by the Free Lance-Star newspaper in Fredericksburg, Virginia. At Fredricksburg.com, he launched one of the earliest online social communities for newspapers, as well as building a site that drove millions of page views every month.

Currently, Muldrow is vice president of Internet operations for one of the largest newspapers companies in the United States, Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc., where his network of websites serves more than 9 million unique users a month. He has also launched bbqhunt.com (a site dedicated to reviewing and sharing barbecue restaurants and recipes around the United States) and serves as a consultant for small businesses who want to maximize their presence online.

Stacy Pair



Stacy Pair is a seasoned economic development specialist and a Nationally Certified Main Street Manager. Stacy has a strong

background in management, retail recruiting, festival development and marketing. She has worked with such well known marketing teams as Domino's Pizza and Colonial Williamsburg. Stacy also has a proven track record in events creation and management, being the creative mind behind several award winning special events such as Philadelphia Mississippi's Ham Jam Arts Festival. She also worked in Corning, New York where she served as CEO and Executive Director of Corning's successful Gaffer District.

As a resident of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Pair served on the Governor's Commission for Recovery and Renewal following Hurricane Katrina. Stacy also serves on the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Heritage Trust as well as the Gulf Coast Business Council.

Stacy has been nominated as one of South Mississippi's Top 10 Under 40 Business Leaders as well as being honored with a nomination as one of the Top 50 Leading Business Women in Mississippi by the Mississippi Business Journal.

Stacy joined the Mississippi Main Street Association team in February 2006 as the Director of Program Services for the Southern District. Stacy continues to co consult with communities outside of Mississippi.

Amber Patten



Amber Kidd Patten began her design career as an administrative assistant for Mississippi State University's athletics broadcaster and fundraiser, Jim Ellis.

Developing sales presentations became a honed skill as Ellis used her work to pitch - and earn - large advertising contracts with corporations such as Coca-Cola, Bryan Foods, Burger King and countless others.

Shortly thereafter, Patten presented her work to a design firm in Starkville, Mississippi, Dux D'Lux Advertising, Inc., and was given a graphic design job

(even though her B.S. degree wasn't in the required Arts field). Career steps following that included Director of Electronic Publications at Mississippi State University's National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center and Web Development Director at Ayrix Technologies, Mississippi's largest internet service provider at that time. On October 31, 1999, Patten began Webz Media, a website development and creative design firm. Her client history includes Hancock Fabrics; Baptist Memorial Hospital; the National Trust for Historic Preservation; the Children Affected by AIDS Foundation; numerous tourism agencies, festivals and economic development organizations; countless real estate companies, and many others.

Amber holds a B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies with emphases in Architecture, Computer Engineering and Business (Marketing) from Mississippi State University. She has served as adjunct professor at Mississippi University for Women, the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science and Mississippi State University. She has presented at numerous marketing seminars and served on open discussion panels about various professional topics. She currently resides in Collierville, Tennessee with her two daughters, Ella and Isabelle.

Robert Ratliff



Robert has been in the travel and tourism industry since 1991 and was appointed Executive Director of the Greater Tuscaloosa Convention and Visitors Bureau in 1999.

His passion for promoting Tuscaloosa and its surrounding areas is evident in the programs he has implemented to expand tourism in the area.

Robert currently on the board of the Alabama Hospitality Association, the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Tourism Association, Board of Visitors for the University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies and many more.

A native of Columbus, Mississippi, he received his education from East Mississippi Community College and Mississippi State University. Robert and his wife Therese have one son, Nicholas.

Awards: National Civic League- All America City 2002

Alabama Hospitality & Restaurant Association -Tourism Promoter of the Year 2003
West Alabama Mayor's Association – Outstanding Achievement Award 2003
Alabama Tourism Department -Tourism Partnership of the Year 2007
Tuscaloosa Business & Professional Women's - Employer of the Year 2008

Brooke Thorington



Brooke Thorington is a native of Montgomery, Alabama but has lived in several different places since graduating from Auburn University Spring of 1991. Miss Thorington graduated with a degree in Radio/TV/Film and a double minor in Psychology and began her career

in television news as part-time associate producer at WTVM in Birmingham, Alabama. She then moved to Butte, Montana to be a full-time reporter and later to Jonesboro, Arkansas to be a morning anchor. Miss Thorington returned to Alabama to work in the Governor's Press Office and later move back into broadcasting working in radio and then television as an anchor and medical reporter for both the CBS and then the ABC stations in Montgomery, Alabama.

With her medical reporting background Miss Thorington, was hired to work with the Cancer Prevention Division of the State Health Department and then later with the Tobacco Control Division. Miss Thorington launched the Alabama Tobacco Quitline in the less than six months and in the first month of operation they received more than 2,000 calls. Currently Miss Thorington works for the Alabama Farmers Market Authority with the *Buy Fresh Buy Local* campaign. Her experience with the health department and medical reporting has given her insight on how to reach the general public about the importance of consuming local food and the health benefits of fresh produce.

Miss Thorington is the proud owner of a pug named Liberty Belle Blues, aka Libby. In her spare time Miss Thorington works at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, performs at the Wetumpka Depot Community Theatre and loves to travel as much as possible.



Sponsors/Exhibitors



Please visit the Exhibitors
in registration area.



