

CONNECT | CREATE | COLLABORATE IN

CHEYENNE



#Contact23

CONTACT

Cheyenne, Wyoming

March 29–April 1, 2023



COME FOR THE
Wild West
STAY
FOR THE *Modern Twist*



When the promise of rustic adventures lures you to Cheyenne, Wyoming, you'll find some surprises that will make you want to stop and stay awhile. This is where the Wild West lifestyle you yearn for meets a sophisticated thriving city. So, wander the streets that wranglers and outlaws once roamed and create your new western adventures.

Live the legend in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Start planning today.

VISIT
CHEYENNE
WYOMING

cheyenne.org

WELCOME TO THE WEST!

Contact '23 in Cheyenne will be a roundup of everything we look forward to in an NTA event: new connections and renewed partnerships, lively events and interactions with friends, meaningful seminars and roundtables, and enjoyable engagement with a fascinating destination.

Use this program to get familiar with the seminars, activities, and colleagues you'll find here at Contact, but don't stop there. New to our spring event is an app you can access on your phone or pad, and it contains much of the information found here—plus a social wall to expand your reach. See more about the app on page 7.

And here in Cheyenne, we've got lots to reach for. This is where the Western spirit of adventure meets the NTA energy of enterprise. It's where "Howdy, partner" is more than a greeting; it's a working relationship.

So take your hat off and settle in for a few days of learning and laughter, seminars and sightseeing, and business and beauty.



Jerry Varner, CTP
NTA Chair



Catherine Prather, CTP
NTA President



WELCOME TO CHEYENNE

On behalf of the entire community of Cheyenne and the state of Wyoming, I want to welcome you to NTA Contact.

Located only 90 minutes north of Denver, Cheyenne is where the great state of Wyoming begins. We offer a truly authentic Western destination, full of history, adventure, culture, and fun.

Rodeo and Western culture is the heartbeat of our community. Every July, we host Cheyenne Frontier Days, the world's largest outdoor rodeo and celebration of Western heritage, culture, and life. It truly is the "Daddy of 'Em All." Visit the Cheyenne Frontier Days Old West Museum to learn the 124-year history of this event. If you can't make it during the final week of July, make time to attend one of our Hell on Wheels Rodeos and Chuck Wagon Dinners. This fast-growing open rodeo happens over six Friday nights in the summer.

Cheyenne is also the home of the women's suffrage movement. Wyoming was the first U.S. state or territory to guarantee women the right to vote and hold public office—50 years before the 19th Amendment was ratified by the rest of the United States. Today, you can visit our state capitol building and stand in the very room where Wyoming's suffrage bill was signed. You can explore the city and see where the first female vote was cast as well as stand in the spot where the original bill was passed.

Our Western history is legendary, but did you know that the whole reason Cheyenne is here is because of the Transcontinental Railroad? Cheyenne was the base for traversing the Rocky Mountains when the railroad was built. In later years, giant steam-powered locomotives were based here to pull freight and passengers over the Rockies. Learn that history at the Cheyenne Depot Museum downtown, one of the few remaining grand train depots on the original Transcontinental Railroad.

We hope you have a chance to explore our great city. Check out our dining scene and dig into a 32-ounce bison rib eye at Wyoming's Rib and Chop House, or enjoy the sophisticated atmosphere of the Metropolitan Downtown. With four breweries, a distillery, and several other cocktail lounges and bars, your Cheyenne experience will be one to remember.

Enjoy your time here in the Magic City of the Plains. We hope you book a lot of business and make a lot of friends. And we hope to see you back here soon!



Domenic Bravo
President and CEO, Visit Cheyenne

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PORTLAND



Lan Su Chinese Garden



International Rose Test Garden



Portland Spirit

Feel the Wonder

TRAVELPORTLAND.COM/TRAVEL-PROFESSIONALS

EXPLORE SAMPLE
ITINERARIES →



SPONSORS (as of 3.15.23)

HOST DESTINATION



Visit Cheyenne
Transportation, Icebreaker,
Sightseeing Tours,
Educational Outings,
Closing Event

HOST CITY PARTNER



**Carbon County
Visitors Council**
Host City Partner

PLATINUM



**Affinity Insurance
Services Inc.**
Corporate Partner and
Contact program



Explore Charleston
Tour Operator Networking
Dinner co-sponsor



**Fort Sumter Tours/
SpiritLine Cruises**
Tour Operator Networking
Dinner co-sponsor



Louisiana Office of Tourism
Saturday Luncheon
co-sponsor



**Lowcountry Hotels
of Charleston**
Tour Operator Networking
Dinner co-sponsor



Norwegian Cruise Line
Thursday Luncheon



**Patriots Point Naval &
Maritime Museum**
Tour Operator Networking
Dinner co-sponsor



**Shreveport-Bossier
Convention & Tourist Bureau**
Saturday Luncheon
co-sponsor



Wyoming Office of Tourism
Saturday Breakfast, Hotel
key cards, Tour operator
gift, Pre-fam co-host

GOLD



Delta Air Lines
Official Airline Partner
and Seminar



**Grapevine Convention
& Visitors Bureau**
Friday Breakfast
co-sponsor



**Las Vegas Convention
and Visitors Authority**
Thursday Breakfast
co-sponsor



Maverick Helicopters
Thursday Breakfast
co-sponsor



**Oklahoma Tourism &
Recreation Department**
Friday Breakfast
co-sponsor



**Visit Beaufort-
Port Royal CVB**
Friday Breakfast
co-sponsor



Visit Clarksville
Friday Breakfast
co-sponsor

SILVER



Button Systems LLC
BizNet



CroisiEurope Cruises
Contact program



Deadwood Chamber
of Commerce &
Visitors Bureau
Contact program



Destination St. John's
NightCap



Dutchman
Hospitality

Dutchman Hospitality/
Ohio Star Theatre
Tour Operator Reception



Graceland & Guest
House at Graceland
Notebooks



Group Travel Odyssey
All-attendee Power Hour



GroupCollect
Convenience Station



Huntsville/Madison
County Convention
& Visitors Bureau
Opening General Session



Memphis Tourism
Name badges



Motor Coach Family
of Brands
Thursday Networking
Reception



Ottawa Tourism
Morning coffee and tea



Tour Colorado
Pre-fam co-host



Travel Oregon
Seminar co-sponsor



Travel Portland
Contact program



Visit Anchorage
Wednesday Happy Hour



Visit Tuolumne County
Seminar



WeTravel
Seminar



Willamette Valley
Visitors Authority
Seminar co-sponsor

BRONZE



A Closer Look Tours
Thursday afternoon
refreshments



Ed-Ventures
Seminar



Making Memories Tours
NTA Board of
Directors Luncheon



Sports Travel and Tours
Event pens



Visit Hershey & Harrisburg
Contact program



Wells Gray Tours
NTA Board of
Directors Breakfast



TOP REASONS

why Aon is right for you.

Aon is in the business of better decisions.

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ENGAGED AGAIN!

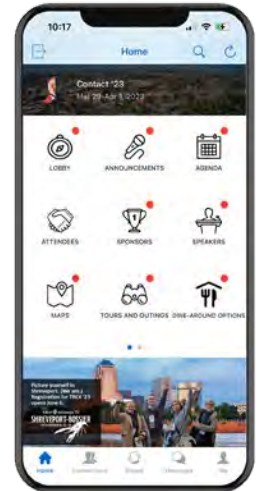
NTA is more engaging than ever. Our online community, Engage, is migrating to a new platform—and the switch will be seamless. After you've logged in to NTA Online, you'll find Engage as its own header on the top-right navigation bar, sandwiched between Education and News & Publications. The "new" Engage will have a different look—dressed like NTA Online—but it will be the same community platform you've enjoyed since it was implemented in 2018.

When you click Engage after logging in, you'll stay within NTA's website and have automatic access to your communities in the new platform. Our new platform is a significant cost-savings to the association, and it's a smooth, effective way (still with a single sign-on process!) to keep you connected to your colleagues while staying within NTA Online.

The new Engage will go live in early April. Email headquarters@ntastaff.com if you have questions!

THE CONTACT APP

Our events app is loaded with useful info about this year's Contact, including a full schedule, announcements, and lists of sponsors and delegates (and ways to connect with them!). We first launched the app for Travel Exchange in Reno, and we've recently rebranded it as NTA events, which will house both Travel Exchange *and* Contact events. If you have not yet put the app on your device, go to the App Store, search for the NTA events app, and hit download. You can sign in with your registration email address and a password you create. If you downloaded the app for Travel Exchange last fall, just hit the back arrow on the top left corner in the app. You'll find yourself back on the home screen, where you can choose the Contact event! If you're on your laptop or tablet during Contact, go here for the web app: app.socio.events/MjE1Mzk%3D. If you have questions, see NTA's Abbie Dykes on-site, or email Kendall Fletcher at kendall.fletcher@ntastaff.com.



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SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29

Airport shuttle service

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

11:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m.

From Denver International Airport

2:30 p.m.

From Cheyenne Regional Airport

8 A.M.–4:30 P.M.

Sponsor Exhibitor set-up

8:30 A.M.–3:45 P.M.

NTA Executive Committee meeting

NTA Board of Directors meeting & working lunch

2–4:45 P.M.

Registration & NTA information desk open

4:45–5:45 P.M.

Happy Hour

Sponsored by Visit Anchorage

BALLROOM PRE-FUNCTION AREA

5:45–6:15 P.M.

Transportation to Icebreaker

Shuttles will leave from the east lobby, near the meeting space.

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

6–9 P.M.

Icebreaker at The Lincoln Theatre

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

7:30–8:15 P.M.

Shuttle service from Icebreaker to Little America

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

8:15–11 P.M.

Shuttle service available to and from downtown Cheyenne and Little America

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

THURSDAY, MARCH 30

8 A.M.–NOON

Morning coffee & tea

Sponsored by Ottawa Tourism

8 A.M.–5 P.M.

Registration & NTA information desk open

Exhibits open

8:30–9:30 A.M.

Breakfast

Sponsored by Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and Maverick Helicopters

GRAND BALLROOM B

9:45–10:45 A.M.

Opening General Session: Reframing Accessibility

Sponsored by Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Speaker: Kristy Durso, *Incredible Memories Travel*

GRAND BALLROOM A

11:00 A.M.–NOON

Creating a Healthy Workplace Culture

Sponsored by Delta Air Lines

Speaker: Heather Davis, *Music Travel Consultants*

GRAND BALLROOM A

Maximize Your Digital Marketing

Speaker: Mathias Jung, *RMI*

WYOMING C

12:15–1:15 P.M.

Luncheon

Sponsored by Norwegian Cruise Line

GRAND BALLROOM B

1:30–2:30 P.M.

‘But You Don’t Look Disabled’

Sponsored by WeTravel

Speaker: Kristy Durso, *Incredible Memories Travel*

GRAND BALLROOM A

How to Market Your Sustainability Journey

Sponsored by Travel Oregon and Willamette Valley Visitors Association

Speaker: John Sutherland, *Tourism Cares*

WYOMING C

2:30–5 P.M.

Afternoon refreshments

Sponsored by A Closer Look Tours

2:45–3:45 P.M.

Goodbye Brick and Mortar—Hello Remote Staff

Speaker: Lisa Curtin, *Caldwell CPAs*

GRAND BALLROOM A

The Future of Digital Marketing

Speaker: Mathias Jung, *RMI*

WYOMING C

4–5 P.M.

How to Make *Your* Main Event *Their* Main Event

Speakers: Amy Larsen, *Wyoming Office of Tourism*; and Frances Manzitto, *Visit Clarksville*

WYOMING C

Losing Sleep Over Suppliers

Speaker: Jeff Ment, *The Ment Law Group*

GRAND BALLROOM A

5–5:45 P.M.

Networking Reception

Sponsored by Motor Coach Family of Brands

BALLROOM PRE-FUNCTION AREA

6 P.M.

Dine-around

*Shuttles will run from Little America to downtown Cheyenne and back from 6 to 9 p.m.

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

8-11 A.M.

Exhibits open

8:15 -9:15 A.M.

Breakfast

Sponsored by Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau, Visit Beaufort-Port Royal CVB, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, and Visit Clarksville

GRAND BALLROOM B

9:15-11 A.M.

Morning coffee & tea

Sponsored by Ottawa Tourism

9:30 -10:30 A.M.

BizNet

Sponsored by Button Systems

Moderator: Jerry Varner, CTP, Making Memories Tours

WYOMING A

11 A.M.- 4:30 P.M.

Sightseeing Tours

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

5:45 P.M.-6:30 P.M.

Tour Operator Reception

*Sponsored by Dutchman Hospitality Group/
Ohio Star Theatre*

GRAND BALLROOM FOYER

6:30-8 P.M.

Tour Operator Networking Dinner

Sponsored by Explore Charleston, Lowcountry Hotels of Charleston, Fort Sumter Tours/SpiritLine Cruises, and Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

GRAND BALLROOM B

Tour Supplier/DMO Dine-around

*Shuttles will run from Little America to downtown Cheyenne and back from 6 to 9 p.m.

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

8:30-10 P.M.

NightCap

*Sponsored by Destination St. John's
(Host of Contact '24)*

WYOMING A

CHARLESTON

SOUTH CAROLINA



Come, let this special destination enliven your senses.

Explore *Charleston*

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SATURDAY, APRIL 1

8 A.M.–NOON

Morning coffee & tea

Sponsored by Ottawa Tourism

8 A.M.–1 P.M.

Exhibits open

8:30 A.M.–9:30 A.M.

Breakfast

Sponsored by Wyoming Office of Tourism

GRAND BALLROOM B

9:45 A.M.–10:45 A.M.

A New Perspective on Intentional Faith Travel

Sponsored by Ed-Ventures

Speaker: Amy Colón, *Big Story Living*

WYOMING C

This Year's Travel Trends

Sponsored by Visit Tuolumne County

Speaker: Eileen Gutierrez, *WeTravel*

GRAND BALLROOM A

11 A.M.–NOON

Spotlight Session: All-attendee Power Hour

Sponsored by Group Travel Odyssey

Moderator: Todd Probus, CTP, NTA

GRAND BALLROOM A

12:15–1:15 P.M.

Luncheon

Sponsored by Louisiana Office of Tourism and Shreveport-Bossier Convention & Tourist Bureau

GRAND BALLROOM B

2–5 P.M.

Educational Outings (All attendees)

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

6 P.M.

Shuttles depart from main lobby for Closing Event

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

6:30–9 P.M.

Closing Event at the Cheyenne Depot

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

SUNDAY, APRIL 2

Airport shuttle service

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

4:30 a.m. and 8 a.m.

To Denver International Airport

4:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

To Cheyenne Regional Airport

NTA CODE OF CONDUCT

NTA is committed to providing a safe environment at its events so that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and where harassment, discrimination, violence, and illegal activity are not tolerated. This code of conduct applies to all attendees and to anyone associated with the event and its activities.

Harassment of any type is strictly prohibited. Harassment includes bullying or personal harassment as well as discriminatory and sexual harassment. It includes the following:

- Inappropriate conduct or comments
- Any objectionable act, communication, or display that demeans or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment
- Any act of intimidation or threat
- Unwelcome or inappropriate conduct or comments that are related to sex, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, color, or marital or family status

- Sustained disruption of talks or other events
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcome sexual attention

If a participant engages in harassment, NTA may take any action it deems appropriate, including issuing a warning or expelling the offender from the event with no refund.

Please note that illegal or illicit behavior, such as drug use or excessive alcohol consumption, will not be tolerated at the event. Participants who appear to be overly intoxicated or disruptive may, at NTA's sole discretion, be asked to leave the event with no refund.

If you are being harassed, see a person harassing someone else, or observe inappropriate behavior, you can report it to an NTA staff member, who will help you contact security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise provide assistance so you feel safe for the duration of the conference.

We value your participation at NTA events and want to help you maximize your experience.

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KEEP CLIMBING



Wi-Fi Terms of Use Apply. SkyMiles membership required for complimentary Wi-Fi access. Available on most domestic flights.

EVENTS

HAPPY HOUR

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29 • 4:45–5:45 P.M.
BALLROOM PRE-FUNCTION AREA

Sponsored by Visit Anchorage

Consider Happy Hour a way to break the ice before the Icebreaker. All attendees can gather at the hotel for conversation and cocktails before heading out for the opening event at The Lincoln Theatre.



NETWORKING RECEPTION

THURSDAY, MARCH 30 • 5–5:45 P.M.
BALLROOM PRE-FUNCTION AREA

Sponsored by Motor Coach Family of Brands

Sharing ideas, stories, and a drink: This reception will be the spot to unwind after a day of learning—and before you hit up the food scene in Cheyenne for Dine-around.



ICEBREAKER

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29 • 6–9 P.M.
THE LINCOLN THEATRE

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

The Icebreaker, Contact's opening event, will be at the historic Lincoln Theatre in downtown Cheyenne. We'll enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres, an open bar, and the music of Bri Bagwell, a country music singer named Texas Female Artist of the Decade. The Lincoln, renovated and reopened for live music in 2020, has been a Cheyenne institution since 1929, hosting in its heyday movie stars that included Jimmy Stewart, Jane Wyman, and Ronald Reagan. After a night of great live music and networking, you can extend the fun and explore downtown Cheyenne. Shuttle service back to the hotel will be available until 11 p.m.



DINE-AROUND

THURSDAY, MARCH 30 FOR ALL ATTENDEES
FRIDAY, MARCH 31 FOR ALL SELLERS

You can think of Dine-around as a free night to have dinner at a local restaurant, but it's also an opportunity to make more connections!



You can organize a dinner of your own with friends, colleagues, and current and prospective clients on Dine-around nights on Thursday, March 30, and on Friday, March 31. NTA board members Jerry Varner and Monique van Dijk-Seppola will host a table Thursday night at 6:30. They invite anyone who wants to join them to sign up at registration. Visit Cheyenne will run transportation from Little America to downtown from 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursday and from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday.

Here are a few spots around town our friends at Visit Cheyenne suggest:

**Napoli's | Sanford's Grub & Pub | Little Bear Inn |
The Albany | The Metropolitan | Two Doors Down**

The staff at Visit Cheyenne's table at Contact can help with other recommendations and questions.

TOUR OPERATOR RECEPTION

FRIDAY, MARCH 31 • 5:45–6:15 P.M.

GRAND BALLROOM FOYER

Sponsored by Dutchman Hospitality Group

This early evening reception is the time to chat with your colleagues and catch up on what's ahead for 2023. And if you can't complete that last conversation, carry it with you to your table in the ballroom!



NORMAND HUBERDEAU

TOUR OPERATOR NETWORKING DINNER

FRIDAY, MARCH 31 • 6:30–8 P.M.

GRAND BALLROOM B

Sponsored by Explore Charleston, Lowcountry Hotels of Charleston, Fort Sumter Tours/SpiritLine Cruises, and Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

Buyers will gather in the ballroom for an evening of connecting with colleagues in a relaxed setting over a delicious meal with entertainment from mentalist, magician, and speaker Daniel Jaspersen. His passion for mentalism—lifting thoughts from a spectator's mind, identifying objects while blindfolded, or defying physics by bending metal—has earned Daniel standing ovations everywhere from festivals in Japan and Brazil to Fortune 500 companies and major universities in North America. For our audience of travel professionals, Daniel will speak about experience building and how to make memories stick.



NORMAND HUBERDEAU

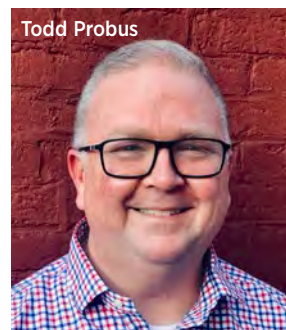
NIGHTCAP

FRIDAY, MARCH 31 • 8:30 P.M.

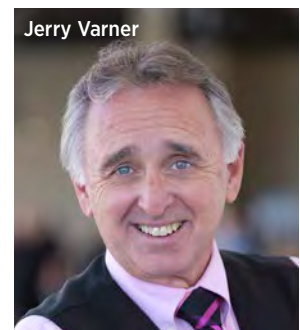
WYOMING A

Sponsored by Destination St. John's (Host of Contact '24)

The NightCap event will feature an act that took years of arm-twisting: Stand-up comedy from Todd Probus, NTA's director of member solutions and education. All Contact attendees are invited to gather at the hotel for drinks and dessert at NightCap, then the entertainment starts. And to make it even more appealing, we've lined up another performer for the comedy show: Jerry Varner, NTA chair, will open for Todd.



Todd Probus



Jerry Varner

CLOSING EVENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 1 • 6:30–9 P.M.

THE CHEYENNE DEPOT

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

The historic Cheyenne Depot will be the site for the closing event, with music, great food, and fun. The Depot, located in the heart of downtown, is one of the last historical train stations left on the original Transcontinental Railroad and is full of history and lore, harkening back to the Gilded Age, when cattle barons ruled the city and Cheyenne was known as the Paris of the West for its vast wealth. You can tour the museum with a cocktail in hand, and then enjoy a feast with brisket and all of the fixings.



VISIT CHEYENNE

SIGHTSEEING TOURS

FRIDAY, MARCH 31 • 11 A.M.–4:30 P.M.

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

After a morning of seminars, Friday becomes sightseeing day! The following tours are open to all Contact attendees:

THE COWBOYS AND THE CAPITAL CITY

As a bastion of the Old West, Cheyenne is alive with history and culture. In this tour of the Magic City on the Plains, you'll get to see the heart of it all. We'll start with a delicious BBQ lunch. From there, we'll go to the Cheyenne Old West Museum, giving you a taste of one of the most famous attractions in town, Cheyenne Frontier Days. Next, we'll head downtown, where we'll explore the Wyoming Capitol building—one of the most beautiful state capitols in the country—along with the historic governor's mansion. From there, we'll take a tour of the Wyoming State Museum, where you can explore the rich history of the Equality State.



KIT LEONG/ADOBE STOCK

PARKS AND PRISONERS

From its culture and history to its treasures of outdoor destinations and its unique ability to function as a wheel-and-spoke destination, Cheyenne has so much to offer. In this tour, we'll send you to lunch at the one and only Bunkhouse before moving on to Curt Gowdy State Park. Here, you'll be surrounded by beauty and splendor in the foothills of the Laramie



Wyoming Territorial Prison

KIT LEONG/ADOBE STOCK

Range. From there, we'll head further west to the city of Laramie and explore the Wyoming Territorial Prison, which held the likes of many a Western outlaw, including Butch Cassidy.

COLD BREWS AND HOT VODKA

Cheyenne's beer and distilling scene is an active, fun experience, and you get to see it for yourself! Throughout this tour, you'll have the chance to see and sample Cheyenne's four breweries along with Chronicles

Distilling. From the astounding ales, pleasant pilsners, and lovely lagers—not to mention a spicy watermelon habanero vodka—you'll see how it's all done, and you'll get to taste the unique brews and spirits of Cheyenne.

Black Tooth Brewing Company



VISIT CHEYENNE

TRAINS, TROLLIES, AND BISON

This tour will take attendees to the Terry Bison Ranch, just south of Cheyenne. At this unique destination, you'll board custom-built train cars and be carried off into the middle of a bison herd! When the train stops, you'll get the chance to hand-feed these majestic, massive beasts. After the train ride, we'll enjoy a cookout lunch with a choice of beef or bison burgers at the Dirty Dan Magee Burger Fry. Following lunch (and a chance to hit the gift shop), we'll load up for the second half of this Old West tour and head for the historic Cheyenne Depot and the popular Street Railway Trolley Tour, where you'll learn the fascinating and entertaining Wild West history of Cheyenne.



KASSIA LAWRENCE PHOTOGRAPHY

EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS

SATURDAY, APRIL 1 • 2-5 P.M.

Sponsored by Visit Cheyenne

Set aside Saturday afternoon for Educational Outings! These excursions, open to all attendees, give participants an idea of how the attractions can be incorporated into group itineraries:

LIVE THE LEGEND: SEPIA EDITION

The Old West comes to life during this fun tour in downtown Cheyenne. It starts with a visit to The Nelson Museum of the West. Your guide will be the museum founder himself, Bob Nelson, who'll take participants through the museum and its massive collection of more than 14,000 artifacts that cover everything from cowboys and Native Americans to Old West military, hunters, trappers, and much more! After the tour, we'll head down Capitol Avenue to Emma's Old Fashioned Photos where, while your mind is still back in the Old West, you'll get the chance to look the part and take an old-fashioned photo, which you can take home!



THE NELSON MUSEUM OF THE WEST



EMMA'S OLD FASHIONED PHOTOS

FARM TO FLASK

The small farming community of Pine Bluffs is home to one of the gems of Laramie County: Pine Bluffs Distilling. This is truly a Wyoming product, and even the malting process is all done in-house, making for a unique spirit. Pine Bluffs Distilling prides itself on sourcing all its grains—corn, wheat, barley, rye, and oats—from within a 30-mile radius of the distillery. On this tour, you'll experience how some of the most popular local whiskey and vodka in Wyoming are made from the ground up. This is a farm-to-flask, grain-to-glass, Wyoming original experience.



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ANDI JASPERSEN

SEMINARS

THURSDAY, MARCH 30

9:45–10:45 A.M.

Opening General Session: Reframing Accessibility

Sponsored by Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Speaker: Kristy Durso, *Incredible Memories Travel*

Accessibility is the most overlooked area of inclusion in the hospitality industry. Given that 19 to 26 percent of the population has a confirmed disability of some kind, it is not an area business owners can afford to overlook. People with disabilities span every age, group, race, income bracket, social class, and gender. Not only are we diverse in where we come from, but we are just as diverse in likes, dislikes, passions, ideas, hobbies, and opinions as any other group. We are not spectators, but full, active participants in life. I am going to help you reframe the way you think about disabilities and provide you the tools your business needs to become more accessible.

11 A.M.–NOON

Creating a Healthy Workplace Culture

Sponsored by Delta Air Lines

Speaker: Heather Davis, *Music Travel Consultants*

With more and more conversations about how to find and keep employees, it's never been more important to look at your workplace culture and the message it sends. In this session, we will explore what comprises workplace culture and how to assess its overall health. More important, whether you're an employee or an employer, you'll walk away with practical ideas to take back to your workplace for consideration.

Maximize Your Digital Marketing

Speaker: Mathias Jung, *RMI*

Take your digital marketing to the next level and boost your online presence. In this session, we'll explore how you can improve your digital marketing efforts to stand out online, create engaged audiences, and establish meaningful industry connections.

1:30–2:30 P.M.

'But You Don't Look Disabled'

Sponsored by WeTravel

Speaker: Kristy Durso, *Incredible Memories Travel*

Not all disabilities are visible. In fact, the largest percentage of them are ones we cannot see. This can be problematic when a person with a hidden disability seeks accommodations. In this presentation, we will discuss different kinds of hidden disabilities and ways to accommodate them, and we'll talk about appropriate language when addressing a person with a disability, including person-first language and acceptable terms. I will introduce you to several companies that have used technology to make traveling with a disability easier, and I'll guide you on how to correctly ask a person what accommodations they might need.

How to Market Your Sustainability Journey

Sponsored by Travel Oregon and Willamette Valley Visitors Association

Speaker: John Sutherland, *Tourism Cares*

With growing consumer demand and heightened industry focus on sustainable travel, more and more travel organizations are finding it necessary to not only implement responsible travel programs, but also to integrate this work into their communications and marketing strategies. In this session, we will explore the challenges and opportunities related to marketing



NORMAND HUBERDEAU

sustainability and share best practices for successfully communicating these topics. This session is relevant to companies already tackling and marketing sustainability, as well as those just getting started on the journey.

2:45–3:45 P.M.

Goodbye Brick and Mortar— Hello Remote Staff

Speaker: Lisa Curtin, *Caldwell CPAs*

The world has really changed since the pandemic, and leaders at many companies find themselves having a hard time hiring in-office staff. And staff that were previously in the office want to continue as remote. Employing remote staff can be cost-effective, but it brings with it considerations that need to be addressed. In this session, you'll walk away with ways to protect your risks with remote staff. Topics include remote staff employment agreements, handbook updates, payroll registrations, a look at employment laws that are state-specific, understanding how remote staff are reported for workman's compensation, and ideas on how to keep remote staff feeling engaged and connected. We'll leave plenty of time for Q&A.

The Future of Digital Marketing

Speaker: Mathias Jung, *RMI*

If you feel like you can't ... keep ... up ... with the speed of the ever-evolving digital space, you're not alone. In this session, we'll hone in on the existing trends you should be integrating into your digital marketing now, and we'll highlight emerging trends you can embrace to be better prepared for the future.

4–5 P.M.

How to Make *Your* Main Event Their Main Event

Speakers: Amy Larsen, *Wyoming Office of Tourism*; and Frances Manzitto, *Visit Clarksville*

This session will cover everything that goes into planning a successful event, including the steps between idea and fruition, promoting the event, working with local suppliers, helping operators bring groups, and more. Led by two members well-versed in event planning—but from different perspectives—this session will check off the list of to-do's from A to Z.

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Losing Sleep Over Suppliers

Speaker: Jeff Ment, *Ment Law Group*

In this session, attorney and travel specialist Jeff Ment will offer suggestions for tour operators who encounter issues and problems when negotiating with suppliers. Some of these stumbling blocks are unique, while others pop up all the time. You can come prepared for this session by bringing specific concerns you'd like to talk about—including troublesome or confusing clauses and contract terms.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

9:30 -10:30 A.M.

BizNet

Sponsored by Button Systems

Moderator: Jerry Varner, CTP, *Making Memories Tours*

Make the most of our time together and join with your colleagues in this all-attendee, interactive, thought-provoking session. Led by NTA Chair Jerry Varner, participants will share information and solutions, discuss industry trends, and create new ventures. You'll leave this session with ideas for new projects and potential partnerships that you can work on as soon as you get home—and you'll have plenty of contacts to help you.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

9:45-10:45 A.M.

A New Perspective on Intentional Faith Travel

Sponsored by Ed-Ventures

Speaker: Amy Colón, *Big Story Living*

Faith travel can be so much more than a pilgrimage to the Holy Land or a hike along the Camino.

The intrinsic value of faith travel can be intentionally added to the vacation of your dreams, making destinations like Prague, the Grand Canyon, Nantucket, or Mexico City holy ground. Let's talk about how to turn a typical vacation into an inspiring journey of delight, wonder, and personal growth.

This Year's Travel Trends

Sponsored by Visit Tuolumne County

Speaker: Eileen Gutierrez, *WeTravel*

Drawing on its recent Travel Trends Report, the WeTravel team will discuss what important themes—especially those related to bookings and payments—travel businesses must stay on top of as our industry moves into a post-COVID space. Account Executive Eileen Gutierrez will share insights from this report that might ultimately help your travel business strengthen its booking and payment collection processes.

11 A.M.-NOON

Spotlight Session:

All-attendee Power Hour

Sponsored by Group Travel Odyssey

Moderator: Todd Probus, CTP, *NTA*

Wrap up your time at Contact by joining your NTA colleagues for an open forum you can use to expand on any of the questions, ideas, and conversations raised during our conference in Cheyenne. This is also the time to share your key takeaways and expectations as Contact '23 draws to a close. Think of it as one final opportunity to give or get help from your colleagues during this event.

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Travel Exchange '23 | Nov. 12–15



SPEAKERS



Amy Colón

Big Story Living

Amy is the creator of Big Story Living, a heart project that focuses on making world travel affordable while inspiring wonder and faith as partners in the journey. Amy curates a space on

social media and guides groups of women through the experience of planning an affordable adventure to Europe. This curated journey pairs adventure and bravery with personal faith as groups travel with one eye on the world and the other eye on what is deep within. Amy is a wife and mom of four daughters and lives in Superior, Colorado.



Lisa Curtin

Caldwell CPAs

Lisa has 20-plus years of experience in the tourism industry, particularly in senior management roles in operations and sales. During her tenure with ET-Educational Tours

and Brightspark Travel US, Lisa and her team were responsible for the operations of all tours, including contracting with suppliers. She managed client communication and business operations through 9/11 and other geopolitical incidents that affected the tourism industry. In 2016, Lisa changed the course of her career, joining Caldwell CPAs as chief operations officer. There, Lisa combined her knowledge of the tour industry with the firm's expertise in taxation to serve the tourism industry as a consultant and as a presenter at industry conferences.



Heather Davis

Music Travel Consultants

Heather is a board-certified art therapist and licensed mental health counselor based in Indianapolis. In addition to her small private practice and teaching at IUPUI, she serves as the

workplace culture consultant for Music Travel Consultants. In this role, she is leveraging her years of mental health and leadership expertise to support MTC's vision of bringing mental health

awareness and work/life balance into both the workplace and student travel.



Kristy Durso

Incredible Memories Travel

Kristy is the founder and owner of Incredible Memories Travel, an agency focused on providing world-class travel experiences specially crafted to provide a lifetime of memories. She also co-

founded and authored the award-winning Spectrum of Accessibility training program, which teaches on mobility, hearing, visual, cognitive/intellectual, and hidden disabilities, as well as neurodivergencies and dietary accessibility. In addition to being an entrepreneur, she is a requested speaker, disability consultant, and a recognized expert on accessible travel, and she sits on multiple advisory boards throughout the travel industry. An Army veteran, Air Force wife, and biological and adoptive mother, Kristy encourages those around her to live a full and engaging life, regardless of the obstacles in their path.

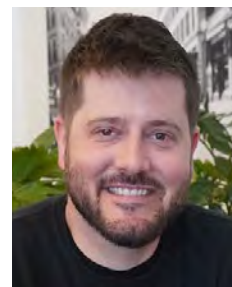


Eileen Gutierrez

WeTravel

Eileen Gutierrez is an experienced account executive with WeTravel. Prior to her current role, Eileen spent more than 20 years in tourism development working with organizations

such as the United States Agency for International Development and Conservation International. Eileen's work took her to amazing destinations in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, and Latin America while working on tourism planning, product development, and marketing. She is passionate about supporting travel businesses and their growth.



Mathias Jung

RMI

Mathias is the owner and CEO of RMI, a destination marketing company founded in 1990. Hailing from Torrington, Wyoming, he's a true entrepreneur and jack-of-all-trades. With

more than 17 years of experience within the travel industry, Mathias is well-versed in working with state governments and tourism suppliers, and understands the ins and outs of global markets and travelers. He now administers more than 25 client programs across 18 countries, honing expertise in cooperative partnerships, tourism research, sales, and international inbound travel marketing.



Amy Larsen

Wyoming Office of Tourism

Amy is the industry relations manager with the Wyoming Office of Tourism. She serves as the main point of contact for the Wyoming tourism industry outreach, works extensively

with the domestic travel trade, and is the main contact for Team Wyoming. Amy is the fourth generation in her family to call Wyoming home and the third generation to graduate from the University of Wyoming, where she obtained a degree in recreation and park management. She also holds a master's degree in tourism management and a graduate certificate in adventure travel from Colorado State University (Wyoming's biggest rival). Amy serves on the NTA Board of Directors and is part of the Wyoming Outdoor Recreation, Tourism and Hospitality Initiative with the University of Wyoming. Amy is a volunteer on the Cheyenne Frontiers Day PR Committee and on the Wyoming Brewers Festival Committee. She can often be found hiking, kayaking, taking road trips, cheering on the Wyoming Cowboys, capturing pictures, and just enjoying life.



Frances Manzitto

Visit Clarksville

Frances is a veteran sales director with more than 30 years in the tourism industry, 23 of which have been with Visit Clarksville. (And she's only 39!) She loves creating unique and

fun experiences for travelers. Having visited 44 of the 50 states, Frances has a wealth of personal travel experiences to pull from. In fact, she was in an airplane—in the air—as the tragic events of 9/11 unfolded. Frances attended Trevecca Nazarene University and has served on the National Tour

Association board of directors. She's had lots of adventures with group tours. Once, she helped a motorcoach back up when a fallen tree blocked the road in a torrential downpour after doing a 3-point turn on a bridge! She went from being an only child to the oldest of six overnight! (It's a story!) She never met a paintbrush she didn't like. Nearest and dearest to her heart is that she's a mom of three fabulous girls and married to an Italian stud.



Jeff Ment

Ment Law Group

Jeff is the founder of The Ment Law Group, an NTA Corporate Partner. With 30 years of experience representing travel companies, he is able to best represent the many facets of the travel

industry, including tour operators, vendors, DMCs, travel agents, transportation companies, and trade associations. Jeff counsels clients on our industry's best practices, including contract terms, compliance with government regulations, risk assessment, crisis response, and employment issues. Jeff also represents travel companies in litigation throughout the country. His background in the travel industry includes working as a travel agent, a tour guide, and a sales manager for two airlines.



John Sutherland

Tourism Cares

John Sutherland (he/him) is the director of community impact at Tourism Cares.

He started his career in the travel industry 10 years ago working for tour operators and has spent the last five

years working on impact and social responsibility.

NTA'S NEXT BIG EVENT

Get ready for this year's Travel Exchange in Shreveport, Louisiana, Nov. 12-15.

Registration for Travel Exchange '23 will open June 6, and we hope you've marked your calendar and set your budget! The early-bird rate—\$1,495—gives tour suppliers, DMOs, associates, and corporate partners a \$255 savings over the regular rate of \$1,750. (Include that in your calendar notes!) Your NTA staff is hard at work, developing more innovations that meet member needs. And our good friends in Shreveport are fine-tuning sightseeing tours as well as evening events like the Icebreaker, which will be held at the Shreveport Aquarium. They (and we!) are excited for TREX attendees to experience this sweet Southern destination and all there is to do and see. Attractions include the East Bank District, the American Rose Center, and the world-famous Elvis Presley statue. Visitors can pet baby alligators at Gators and Friends and eat a Monster Croc at The Chocolate Crocodile. (Don't worry—it's just a *big* caramel apple!)

Watch NTA communications for more details.



NTA'S NEW SALES DIRECTOR

NTA welcomes Brooke Coulter, pictured right, as the association's newest director of sales. Brooke has worked alongside Beth Engel, outgoing director of sales, all month long on providing members with opportunities to shine through sponsorships—on NTA websites and at in-person events—and recruiting new members to partner with you. And Brooke is no stranger to NTA. You might know her from the past two Travel Exchange events, where she worked 14-hour days as a volunteer. Brooke is a former high school counselor and small-business owner, and, now in her sixth term as a city council member in her Kentucky hometown, she serves as liaison to the local tourism commission. This new hello means we must bid Beth farewell, though, as she retires after more than a decade with NTA. Her last day is April 3; be sure to wish her well here in Cheyenne. NTA has been lucky to have her.



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JOURNEY TO A MISSION STATEMENT

BY BOB ROUSE

“Change is good—you go first.”

It’s a line that Dawnielle Tehama says is too often the prevailing sentiment regarding organizations catching up with shifts in public values. But when Tehama, executive director of the Willamette Valley (Oregon) Visitors Association, and 11 other NTA members assembled as the association’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Group, they not only embraced change ... they ran with it.

NTA launched its DEI Advisory Group in early 2021, pulling together a broad cross-section of the membership: representatives from tour companies, tour suppliers, and destinations who volunteered to serve.

The purpose of the group is to advise the association’s staff and leaders in three areas, says NTA President Catherine Prather. “The main goals are cultivating a culture of inclusion, expanding the diversity of the NTA membership, and providing opportunities for deeper learning about DEI so it can be integrated into the packaged travel landscape.”

In September 2021, the group recommended to the NTA Board of Directors that NTA sign on to the Travel Industry Association DEI Pledge, which has been championed by Travel Unity, a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing diversity in the world of travel. The board agreed to sign on, and they further charged the DEI Advisory Group with using the guiding principles of the pledge to review NTA’s mission statement and operating principles and recommend updates.

To help the DEI Advisory Group with the work, Prather enlisted the help of Roni Weiss, executive director of Travel Unity, who explained to the group the reason for updating the association’s operating principles.



Dawnielle Tehama, 2023 chair of NTA’s DEI Advisory Group

“By having clarity on an organization’s mission and values, you can better make sure that everything you do links to that mission—and you’re better able to retain the members who align with that vision and find others who share that philosophy,” Weiss says.

In monthly meetings, the DEI group worked to uphold the ideals and business focus of NTA while also reviewing NTA’s principles through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Once the group was satisfied with the revised mission statement, they tackled the association’s core values. In October 2022, the DEI Advisory Group recommended the

Portia Conerly, 2022
chair of NTA's DEI
Advisory Group and
Catherine Prather,
NTA president



operating principles to the NTA Board. It's at ntaonline.com/mission-values.

Tehama is especially invested in the belief statement about the communities that travelers visit, and she suggests that tourism professionals take a deeper dive.

"We need to be better advocates for those voices that are the soul of the destination, ensuring that community stakeholders understand, prioritize, and support the value of the industry and can collaborate on ways to truly become more inclusive," she says.

The DEI group was satisfied with its work, but how did the NTA Board of Directors view the outcome? It was approved unanimously.

Although they achieved their goal, the DEI Advisory Group is not resting on its accomplishment. Codifying the mission and values of NTA leads to seeing that those principles are upheld—with intent and consistency—in all aspects of the association's actions, practices, and policies.

"This is no longer solely the DEI group's responsibility," Prather says. "It's now NTA's work."

Change is good—you go first. ... NTA, through its DEI Advisory Group, certainly wasn't the first organization to set forth principles that honor diversity, equity, and inclusion. But now that the group has stepped forward, they all agree that the change is good.

See more photos and details on the Courier website: www.ntacourier.com/node/1374.




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