



Visit Savannah and the Savannah Convention Center hosted more than 40 meeting planners and association executives from the D.C. area at the Savannah Bananas baseball game at Nationals Park on July 13. The group enjoyed an evening of singing and dancing with Savannah Bananas players and executives, along with more than 42,000 fans at the stadium.

## Hyatt Regency Milwaukee Employees Fired Following Death of D'Vontaye Mitchell

By Jordan Bradley

Several employees at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee in Wisconsin have been fired for their involvement in the June 30 death of D'Vontaye Mitchell.

Mitchell, 43, died outside the hotel after he had been detained by security guards and was unresponsive when police arrived, and was pronounced dead on the scene, according to local authorities. Video footage of the incident has circulated online, showing three to four individuals holding Mitchell on the ground. It is as yet unclear what prompted hotel security and personnel to detain Mitchell.

Ben Crump, the attorney hired by Mitchell's family to ensure a thorough investigation into the incident is held, noted Mitchell's mother "believes he was suffering from a mental health episode." Crump's representatives provided his comments to *USAE*.

The Milwaukee Police Department  
*Please turn to page 2*

## Events Industry Council Hall of Leaders Honorees Announced

By Todd McElwee

Helping the Events Industry Council celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a quintet of sector luminaries have been inducted into the organization's Hall of Leaders. The 2024 class includes Cathy Breden, CMP Fellow, CAE, CEM, Former Executive Vice President and COO of IAEE; Greg O'Dell, Presi-

dent of Venue Management of Oak View Group; Julius Solaris, Founder of Boldpush; William Reed, FASAE, CMP, Chief Event Strategy Officer of American Society of Hematology; and Robin Lokerman, CMM, FASAE, Group President of MCI Group.

They will be honored along with other Global Awards recipients on October 7 at the Aria Resort and Casino

in Las Vegas.

"As we celebrate EIC's 75th Anniversary, we look forward to honoring this year's Hall of Leaders inductees for their broad impact and achievements," said EIC President and CEO Amy Calvert. "Each has offered inspiration and expertise beyond their role, modeling the way for others.

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## Destinations International, TravelAbility Unveils "Accessibility Playbook"

By Jonathan Trager

Destinations International (DI) and TravelAbility on July 17 unveiled the "Accessibility Playbook," a comprehensive guide that equips destinations and travel businesses to improve their accessibility and inclusion initiatives for travelers with disabilities.

"Accessibility is a critical and growing focus for our members," said Don Welsh, President & CEO of DI.

"It's important to visitors

as well as residents and a key component of a welcoming and thriving community. We're delighted to have TravelAbility as our trusted partner in developing this invaluable resource to help destination organizations and travel businesses worldwide advance accessibility in their local communities."

Now available online for purchase by DI members, the Accessibility Playbook contains technology recom-

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## Destinations International Launches Destination Effect Advocacy Awareness Campaign

By Jonathan Trager

Destinations International (DI) has launched the "Destination Effect Advocacy Awareness Campaign," a public-facing advocacy effort to foster better understanding of the important role and impact of destination organizations in their communities. The association announced the campaign on July 17 during the DI Annual Convention in Tampa.

DI said it developed the campaign as part of its ongoing work to "raise awareness and enhance understanding of the significant role of destination organizations that extends well beyond the immediate effect on the travel and hospitality industry." This includes the publication earlier this year of "Destination Promotion: A Catalyst for Community Vitality," a

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# NEWS

## Arthur C. Brooks Addresses DI Convention Attendees About Happiness

By Jonathan Trager

Arthur C. Brooks says he wants people to be happy.

The *New York Times* bestselling author of *Build the Life You Want: The Art and Science of Getting Happier*, co-authored with Oprah Winfrey, offered his altruistic advice to opening keynote session attendees at the Destinations International Annual Convention on July 17 in Tampa.

Brooks, who teaches courses on leadership and happiness at the Harvard Kennedy School, told the crowd that happiness is *not* a feeling.

“This is really good news because if you’re just looking for a feeling, it’s a vapor, it’s in the ether,” he said. “Happiness is not something you’ll be able to do anything about—it will just visit you from time to time and that’s no way to live.”

Brooks said there are three “macronutrients” of happiness: enjoyment, satisfaction, and meaning.

In terms of enjoyment, the key is doing things that create memories with people you love, Brooks said.

“The way to do that is not just to show the pleasurable experiences that people get with travel and tourism—

it’s to show the pleasure they get while they’re making memories with the people that they love,” said Brooks. “And that’s how people most like to travel.”

Your satisfaction in life equals all the things you have divided by all the things that you want, said Brooks, a former president of the American Enterprise Institute, a D.C. think tank.

“If you want your satisfaction to persist, it’s not good enough to have more—you also need to want less,” said Brooks. “And that’s hard to do, isn’t it? Have you managed your wants lately?”

Brooks said it’s important to know the “why of your life.” The top reason for the explosion of anxiety and depression among young adults today is a lack of a sense of their life’s meaning and the ability to articulate it, according to Brooks.

The meaning of life has three sub-parts: coherence (why do things happen the way they do?), purpose (what are my goals and direction and where am I going with my life?), and significance (why does it matter that I’m alive



Arthur C. Brooks speaks at the opening keynote session of the DI Annual Convention on July 17.

and what would it mean if I weren’t?).

Research shows that basic happiness level, Brooks said, comes from genetics (50% of mood), circumstances (25% of mood), and your habits (25% of mood).

“All that matters is your habits,”

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## Mitchell Death

continued from page 1

said that “felony murder charges with the underlying charge of battery were referred to the Milwaukee County District Attorney’s Office against four individuals” in a July 12 statement.

These charges were under review and pending the results of an autopsy report with the District Attorney (DA) at the time of press deadline.

“While this development cannot undo the pain and loss experienced by D’Vontaye’s family, it is a crucial part of the process to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice,” Crump said.

Mitchell’s family members and local community gathered to protest outside the home of Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm July 16 to protest the lack of charges against the individuals involved in Mitchell’s death, according to local reports.

A Hyatt spokesperson extended “heartfelt condolences” to Mitchell’s family, friends and the Milwaukee community, and echoes his family’s “calls for transparency, accountability, and justice for this senseless tragedy.”

Aimbridge Hospitality, the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee’s management company which oversees hotel employees, said in an emailed statement

to *USAE* that the conduct exhibited by several of the hotel’s associates during the incident “violated our policies and procedures, and does not reflect our values as an organization or the behaviors we expect from our associates.”

“Following review of their actions, their employment has been terminated,” the Aimbridge spokesperson said, but did not specify how many employees were fired. “We will continue our independent investigation and do everything we can to support law enforcement with their investigation into this tragic incident.”

Crump said that Aimbridge’s decision to fire the employees involved “highlights how unjustified D’Vontaye’s death truly was. After viewing the video from inside the hotel with the DA’s office, it is completely understandable and appropriate that these personnel have been fired for their assault, battery and excessive force on D’Vontaye, which led to his death.”

One of the employees involved in the incident – who was later fired by Aimbridge – spoke with local news outlet, FOXNews 6 Milwaukee, July 12 regarding Mitchell’s death. The former bellhop said that a manager had pulled him and a front desk associated into the incident. The man said he did not want to participate but was concerned about losing his job.

The former Hyatt Regency Milwaukee employee said that Aimbridge placed him on paid leave beginning July 1, the day following Mitchell’s death, and told him not to speak with media. He was fired July 10, he told FOXNews 6. At the time of the interview, July 12, he had not been contacted by the Milwaukee Police Department about potential charges.

## NCBMP “Deeply Concerned” with Death at Milwaukee Hotel

By Todd McElwee

A statement from Jason Dunn, CEO, National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP), shares his organization’s concern with the June 30 death of D’Vontaye Mitchell Death on June 30 at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee.

NCBMP called on city officials to conduct a comprehensive investigation regarding the tragedy.

“I greet you on behalf of Chairman Wiggins, Board of Directors and in the spirit of our Founders,” Dunn wrote on July 9. “Within the last 41 years, our organization has aimed to hold the hospitality industry accountable for achieving equitable and fair practices. It is counter to our creed to be quiet, when there are troubling occurrences brought to our attention.

“The National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP) is deeply concerned with the unfortunate incident involving Mr. D’Vontaye Mitchell and six employees at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee on June 30, 2024. The death of Mr. Mitchell is tragic, and we call on Milwaukee officials to conduct a comprehensive investigation regarding this incident.”

Dunn noted that the Hyatt Regency

Milwaukee is a franchise hotel, owned by a private investment company named Cambridge Landmark and operated by Aimbridge Hospitality. He said NCBMP has been in contact with its partners at Hyatt Hotels Corporation “who are equally concerned,” adding the company has been fully cooperative with law enforcement and issued a statement to the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*.

“We implore that Aimbridge Hospitality provide all resources necessary for a full and fair investigation,” Dunn said. “We will continue to monitor the situation and remain in conversation with our partners at Hyatt Hotels Corporation.”

The statement went on to say: “We represent a cohort of meeting professionals, many of whom have held meetings in the past or will hold future meetings in the Milwaukee metropolitan area. We have been in contact with the Milwaukee Convention and Visitors Bureau to assess the steps that will be put in place to ensure that ALL persons who enter any hotel properties within their jurisdiction are safe and able to avoid encounters that could lead to their death.

“We ask that you pray for all involved and that justice will prevail.”



Several employees at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee in Wisconsin have been fired for their involvement in the June 30 death of D’Vontaye Mitchell outside of the hotel.



# HOTS

*HOTS Heading to Chicago for DI in 2025... HOTS was interested to hear that Destinations International's Annual Convention in 2025 will take place in Chicago from July 9–11. The announcement was made at the closing ceremony of the 2024 Annual Convention, which took place in Tampa from July 16–18. Nearly 1,900 attendees from 34 countries and territories around the world participated in this year's event, according to DI. HOTS enjoyed Tampa a great deal this year as well as Dallas in 2023, but it was glad to see a northern destination with cooler weather get a shot at next year's convention. See you in the Windy City!*

✧ ✧ ✧ ✧ ✧

*HOTS Irishman on a Unicycle... It sounds like the beginning of a bad (and likely inappropriate) joke, but HOTS can assure you this is real life. An Irishman rode his unicycle across the length of Ireland, earning his second Guinness World Record title. The ride spans 308 miles, and took Eamonn Keaveney five days, five hours and 23 minutes to complete, making his one-wheeled trek the fastest crossing of Ireland by unicycle. Keaveney told the Guinness World Records that the journey appealed to him because "it seemed like a perfect mix of daunting and ridiculous." Keaveney previously earned the record for the world's longest barefoot journey in 2016 and said he had never ridden a unicycle until he started training for his new title. HOTS wonders if Keaveney will be "two tired" to go for another record?*



Dancers welcome attendees to the Destinations International Annual Convention in Tampa, Florida, right before the opening keynote session. The convention took place at the JW Marriott Tampa Water Street from July 16–18.

WEEKLY NEWS OF ASSOCIATIONS, CLUBS AND HOTELS

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## ASAE Providing Tips for First-Time Annual Meeting Attendees

By Todd McElwee

First-time attendees of the ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition are getting tips from organizers to help them navigate and make the most of the event. The First Time Attendees tab on the event's website offers information to help rookie participants hit the ground running in Cleveland. Tips include creating an agenda of sessions to attend via the show's app and engaging with other attendees on it. Arriving early to preferred sessions is never a bad

idea as many fill up, ASAE said. Organizers added the Hive is a great space to network or take a break. ASAE is also supplying first-time attendees with "new-bee" stickers on their badges. "First Timer" ribbons will also be available in the registration area. "Take the time to peruse the CONNECT webpage to learn about the available networking opportunities to plan for while onsite," ASAE said. "The opening and closing parties are the official evening events included with your registration that you won't

want to miss!" ASAE also called on Annual Meeting vets to help with the welcome and connect with the first-time attendees. "If you see a first timer, say hello, introduce them to some of your contacts, sit by them in a learning lab, or simply stop by The Hive! Not only will you help the first timers, but you'll grow your own network and likely make a great new friend!" ASAE said. Find more information at [asaecenter.org](http://asaecenter.org).

## Playbook

continued from page 1

recommendations, use-case scenarios, and data to inform accessibility strategy and decision. It also includes more than 90 tips vetted by leading disability advocacy organizations in addition to "TravelAbility Trusted" innovations, amenities, and a directory of third-party providers that can help destination organizations and travel businesses assess and scale existing accessibility efforts.

"This is a win-win for travel organizations and the millions of travelers who can benefit from more accessible and inclusive travel experiences," said Jake Steinman, founder & CEO of TravelAbility. "TravelAbility is thrilled to partner with Destinations International to advance the cause of accessibility in the travel industry. What excites me the most is that this partnership opens

the door to reaching more than 750 destinations worldwide to help them become more inclusive." The World Health Organization estimates that 1.3 billion people—or 16% of the global population—live with disabilities. Leisure and business travelers with disabilities continue to face

many barriers related to travel, from initial travel research to visitation. For more information about the partnership or the Accessibility Playbook, contact DI Chief Inclusion Officer Sophia Hyder Hock at [shyderhock@destinationsinternational.org](mailto:shyderhock@destinationsinternational.org) or Jake Steinman at [jake@travelability.net](mailto:jake@travelability.net).

Stay Connected

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# NEWS

## Destinations International Announces New CDME Recipients, DMAP Accreditations

By Jonathan Trager

Destinations International (DI) announced that 68 industry leaders have earned the Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME) designation and three destination organizations have for the first time received Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) accreditation.

All were recognized at the DI Annual Convention that took place from July 16–18 in Tampa.

“Congratulations to the new CDME credential recipients, representing the pinnacle of individual accomplishment in the tourism sector,” said Don Welsh, President & CEO of DI. “These distinguished leaders have enhanced their professional expertise, preparing themselves to navigate the evolving challenges and competitive dynamics

within our industry.”

The CDME program is the only industry certification program specifically designed for destination management professionals and is the tourism industry’s highest individual educational achievement.

“Earning the CDME designation marks a significant professional milestone, as it challenges destination leaders to innovate and adapt within our ever-changing sector,” said Brett Oetting, CDME, President & CEO of Visit Corpus Christi and Chair of the CDME Board of Directors. “In today’s complex environment, it’s crucial that senior executives possess the strategic skills necessary to advance their communities and organizations.”

To view a list of the new CDME recipients, visit [here](#).

Meanwhile, the following DMAP

accreditations were announced: Royal Commission for AlUla in Saudi Arabia; Seminole County Office of Economic Development and Tourism in Florida; and Visit Chicago Southland, which earned beyond meeting the required standards of accreditation. “We are delighted to have these destinations in our esteemed DMAP community,” said Welsh. “Destination organizations have never been more vital to the economic vitality of their local communities, and this industry accreditation is a recognized benchmark for quality and performance. I thank the DMAP Board of Directors for their dedication to our industry and their stewardship of this crucial program.”

The DMAP accreditation program requires a destination organization to successfully comply with a multitude

of mandatory and voluntary standards that span a variety of performance areas. These include governance, finance, human resources, sales, communications, destination development, and research.

“Accreditation through DMAP underscores the critical role that destination organizations play in their communities,” said Tania Armenta, President & CEO of Visit Albuquerque and Chair of the DMAP Board of Directors. “As custodians of their destinations’ brands, participation in DMAP underscores a destination organization’s adherence to rigorous standards. This commitment is a clear signal to stakeholders that the organization managing the destination brand possesses the necessary infrastructure and expertise to beneficially influence the visitor economy for both tourists and local residents.”

## EIC Honorees

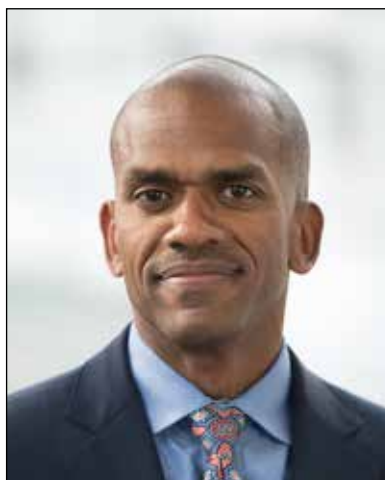
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By honoring and celebrating those who have helped shape our industry, we demonstrate the global business events industry’s unique capacity to foster human connection and collaboration, leaving a lasting economic and social impact on the communities we serve. We are grateful for the Hall of Leaders inductees’ many contributions and leadership — all have genuinely and humbly inspired industry professionals globally.”

Breden began her association management career in 1984 after graduating from Florida State University. She has served as a member of several boards and was 2022 Chairperson of EIC. She was recognized with the IAEE Chairperson’s Award in 2015 with other accolades including the CMP Fellow. Her resume also includes serving as Interim CEO of IAEE and CEO of the Center for Exhibition Industry



Cathy Breden



Greg O'Dell

Research (CEIR).

Recently, the IAEE Woman of Achievement Award was rebranded as the IAEE Cathy Breden Woman of Achievement Award.

“I am deeply honored and humbled to be recognized with the Hall of Leaders Award,” she told *USAE*. “Many of the past inductees have been mentors of mine, including Janet Sperstad, Bob Dallmeyer, Edward Liu, Sandy Angus, Patricia Farias Barlow, Peter Nathan, Steven Hacker and David DuBois. My success would not have been possible without the great IAEE staff team and the incredible members and volunteers for whom I have had the great fortune to work with.

A tenured events executive and former PCMA Board Chair, O’Dell was instrumental in leading a working group that resulted in the PCMA Board structure of one governing body inclusive of Directors and Trustees for both PCMA and the PCMA Foundation. As President &

CEO of Events DC at the onset of the pandemic, he allocated \$25 million of the organization’s reserves to provide funding to the local hospitality community, including restaurants, hotels, community non-profits and undocumented workers.

In April, he was bestowed PCMA’s Lifetime Achievement Visionary Award.

“I am honored to receive this recognition from the Events Industry Council and humbled to be inducted with such an esteemed group of leaders that I admire and greatly respect,” O’Dell said. “Moreover, I am eternally grateful to all that have and continue to support me and guide me throughout my career.”

An industry trendsetter, Solaris founded Boldpush in 2022 with past clients including IMEX, Tourisme Montreal and Visit Newport Beach. Previously, he occupied a series of leadership, marketing and organiza-



William Reed



Julius Solaris



Robin Lokerman

tional posts at EventMB, Swapcard, Showthemes, Hopin, and University of Queensland.

He said: “Through the years, I’ve looked at EIC inductees with incredible respect—people like Patti Shock,

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# NEWS

## Wyndham Opens First ECHO Suites Property in South Carolina

By Jordan Bradley

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts opened the first property for its newest extended stay brand, ECHO Suites Extended Stay by Wyndham, in Spartanburg, South Carolina, marking the occasion with a grand opening ceremony July 11.

The Spartanburg extended stay property is a new build with 270 guest rooms. Guests can book single-queen and two-queen studio suites with kitchens.

The inaugural ECHO Suites also offers a lobby, fitness center and 24/7 guest laundry facilities “designed to limit labor needs” for owners and property managers. Room rates are averaging around \$92 per night at the property.

“Spartanburg, like many other cities

around the country, is booming with projects that require long-term, comfortable and affordable stays. ECHO Suites is the answer with a well-designed prototype created with the operator in mind,” said Philip Cox, owner of the ECHO Suites Spartanburg. “Plus, when you add in the collaboration with the world’s largest hotel franchisor, it’s a perfect match.”

Wyndham is set on continued investment in the extended stay segment in the United States, according to Krishna Paliwal, President of Hawthorn Extended Stay by Wyndham and Head of Architecture, Design and Construction at Wyndham.

“There’s enormous potential in the



Wyndham Hotels & Resorts celebrated the opening of its first ECHO Suites Extended Stay by Wyndham July 11 in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Pictured: Philip Cox (center right, with scissors), ECHO Suites Spartanburg Owner; and Krishna Paliwal (center left, in gray suit), President of Hawthorn Extended Stay by Wyndham & Head of Architecture, Design and Construction at Wyndham.

extended-stay segment, and the opening of our first ECHO Suites in Spartanburg is an exciting example of the brand delivering on that opportunity to our owners,” Paliwal said.

The hotel company noted that its dedication to the extended stay segment coincides “with historic infrastructure investments” within the United States, including the \$2.1 trillion 2021 Infrastructure and Jobs Act and the \$280 billion CHIPS and Science Act of 2022.

The pair are driving development and construction projects throughout the United States, requiring construction and other trade workers to travel for the duration, Wyndham said.

Wyndham’s pipeline of its ECHO Suites properties in development is close to 270 hotels in the United States and Canada, totaling more than 33,000 guest rooms.

Wyndham expects to open additional ECHO Suites in Texas and Virginia later this year.

## Hyatt Regency in Arlington, Virginia, Files for Union Election

By Jordan Bradley

A group of hotel workers at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Arlington, Virginia, have filed for a union election, according to UNITE HERE Local 25, the local hospitality union collaborating with workers.

Workers at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City are seeking to organize “for respect on the job, higher pay and benefits, and fair workloads,” Local 25 said.

Of the Hyatt Regency Crystal City’s voting workers, 70% voted in favor of unionizing, a significantly higher percentage than the 30% needed to file for a union vote with the National Labor Relations Board.

“A supermajority of housekeepers at the Hyatt Crystal City have spoken loud and clear, and they want a union,” said Paul Schwalb, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of Local 25. “Their work is exhausting and even painful. They deserve the standards, rights, respect, wages and benefits that union hotel workers in D.C.’s Hyatts have won.”

Local 25 noted that departments in the U.S. government—including the Department of Defense, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Labor—are frequent customers of the 686-room Hyatt Regency Crystal City, spending more



Workers at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Reagan National Airport have voted to hold a union election.

than \$4 million at the hotel in the last decade.

The union has also levied charges of unfair labor practices against Hyatt and one of its subcontractors, J&B Cleaning, over non-compete policies which allegedly bar employees from working at Hyatt for one year should they end their employment with or be terminated from J&B.

A Hyatt spokesperson noted that Hyatt has a long history of working with unions via an emailed statement.

“Our purpose is to care for people so they can be their best. Our colleagues are the heart of our business, and their wellbeing is always a top priority,” said Michael D’Angelo, Head of Labor Relations in the Americas at Hyatt. “We have a long history of cooperation with the unions that represent our employees, and we respect our colleagues’ rights to voice their opinions.”

## Brooks

continued from page 2

Brooks said. “With 25% of your happiness under your direct control from your habits, you can also affect your circumstances positively and manage your genetics.”

The four habits of the happiest people said Brooks, a devout Catholic,

include faith (could be religious faith, but anything that gives you a sense of the transcendent), family (close family connections release bonding hormone oxytocin), friends (those who are “useless to you” as opposed to “useful to you”), and work (earning your success and helping others).



Visit Fairfax celebrated its 20th Anniversary on July 11 with an event at The Atrium at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens with members of Fairfax County’s hospitality community, including several former board chairs of the organization and elected officials. Left to right: Pat Herrity, Supervisor, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Cheryllyn Harley LeBon, Chair, Visit Fairfax; Jeff McKay, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; and Barry Biggar, President & CEO, Visit Fairfax.



# NEWS

## Marriott Launches Program to Ease Business Travel

By [Jordan Bradley](#)

Marriott International launched a new program, Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy, for small-sized to medium-sized businesses with the aim of making business travel easier from booking to expensing the trip.

The Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy program allows business travelers to book hotels in the Marriott Bonvoy collection of hotels at discounted rates, Marriott said, as well as flights, train travel and rental cars with one booking platform. To further cultivate ease throughout the process, travelers are able to access live travel data, real-time trip reporting, and expense management through Business Access.

Through the Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy app, business managers are able to shop rates for all avenues of travel, access interactive maps that identify potential travel disruptions—such as extreme weather events—to “proactively mitigate risks” for their travelers and manage their company’s travel policies to ensure compliance with spending limits.

“We recognize the significant value small businesses provide to the hotel industry, which is why we’re excited to combine the benefits of our award-winning travel program with a comprehensive suite of tools in Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy,” said Drew Pinto, Executive Vice President and Chief Revenue and Technology Officer at Marriott.

Part of the catalyst for the program were the results of a Marriott Bonvoy-commissioned global survey. Conducted by Wakefield Research in May this year, the survey asked business travelers at small to medium businesses about their experiences booking travel for their company.

The survey found that 75% of respondents in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Mexico reported feeling frustration with their travel booking platforms, and 27% of respondents expressed disappointment with their respective travel platforms’ lack of integration.

“In fact, 58% are so unwilling to work within their current programs that they would rather ask for forgiveness than permission for book-

ing outside their companies’ travel management platforms,” Marriott reported.

Marriott’s new program is currently available for businesses based in the United States, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, but the hotel company said it expects to expand into other regions in the future.

Stays booked through this program are also eligible to earn points through Marriott’s loyalty program, Marriott Bonvoy, with seamless integration through Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy.

The Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy “provides everything they need to manage their business travel needs,” Pinto added.

## DI Advocacy

*continued from page 1*

report that identifies destination organizations as uniquely positioned to help drive positive transformation in the local community, the association added.

“The Destination Effect is achieved by using destination promotion to transform a location into a destination,” said Jack Johnson, Chief Advocacy Officer at DI. “A destination is where people want to visit, live, work, play, and invest. Together, these are the indicators of community vitality—a community’s energy, liveliness, drive and ambition. The work of destination organizations is to be the catalyst for community vitality, and they are uniquely positioned to do it. We are grateful for the support of our partner Tempest in this important initiative.”

The campaign will offer a range of materials developed by DI and its members, including key industry research, case studies, and storytelling.

These materials will be made available on the campaign website, which also launched on July 17. The website will host links to resources of interest to policymakers and elected officials such as industry briefs, blogposts, and podcasts from DI members, peer organizations, other nonprofit policy centers, academia, and more.

The Destination Effect website is a DI initiative made possible with the support of one of its partners, Tempest, which offers web, marketing, and cloud software solutions.

“Tempest is proud to support Destinations International on this important initiative,” said Gregg Shapiro, President & Chief Creative Officer of Tempest. “We see the Destination Effect website as a powerful tool that will help inform and educate stakeholders on the importance and value of destination organizations to the local community.”

More information on the campaign is available at [thedestinationeffect.com](http://thedestinationeffect.com).

## EIC Honorees

*continued from page 4*

Carina Bauer, Corbin Ball, Joan Eisentodt, Dave Lutz and so many more. Being part of this group is an honor and validation of my past 17 years of producing content and research for the industry. I also understand the responsibility of advocating for the event community and its incredible people.”

Reed was PCMA’s Chair in 2016. He has spent roughly three decades in meetings and has been honored with PCMA’s Visionary Award. He’s an author and speaker and in 2008 was named an ASAE Fellow.

Lokerman has driven MCI’s expansion outside of Europe since 2007. He was the first non-US member of the ASAE Board and was 2010-11 Chairman of the ASAE Foundation, his Up with People profile said. He traveled as a student with Up with People and obtained his Master in Science of Management from Boston University, Brussels while working with the organization.

“I am humbled and honored to be inducted into the Hall of Leaders,” he told *USAE*. “Many of my predecessors have been friends and mentors to me and it is great to be honored for my contributions to an industry which I love so much. The event industry connects talent and drives positive change and innovation. Our truly global industry contributes significantly to social, cultural and intellectual capital. I hope to see many industry colleagues and friends in Las Vegas on 7 October to celebrate my induction and 75 years of EIC’s success.”

### Additional Award Winners

EIC Pacesetter Award Honorees:

- Paola Bowman, CMP, CMM, Di-

rector of Client Services and Events of Arlington (TX) CVB

- Shameka Jennings, CMP, CAE, DES, Principal and Chief Events Officer of EventsNoire

- Sina Bunte, CMP, DES, Founder of DigitalMind.events

EIC Social Impact Award Recipients:

- Diane Hawkins, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, Executive Vice President-Volunteer Engagement of Meeting Professionals International

- Gary Murakami, CMP Fellow, GTP, GLP, CMM, DES, Vice President, Global Sales and Industry Relations of Teneo Hospitality Group

“The strength of the business events industry is built upon the passion, ideas, dedication and innovation of so many professionals,” said EIC Board Chair Ana María Viscasillas, CDME, DES, a business tourism strategist for the Global Visitors Economy and Board Liaison & Immediate Past Vice President for COCAL (Federación de Entidades Organizadoras de Congresos y Afines de Latino América). “This year, as we celebrate 75 years of EIC, we shine a light on the exceptional people and organizations that are making a lasting impact through their leadership while inspiring us as we look toward the future,” she said.

Learn more winners at

[eicglobalawards.org](http://eicglobalawards.org).



Pictured here (left to right): Milton Segarra, CDME, President & CEO of Discover The Palm Beaches; Chris Thompson, CDME, retired President & CEO of Brand USA; Don Welsh, President & CEO of Destinations International; and Emanuel Perry, Executive Director of the Tourist Development Council of Palm Beach County, at Unlock the Block, the opening party for the DI Annual Convention in Tampa on July 16.





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