



MINUTES

**Date/Time: Thursday, March 17, 2016 (3:30-4:30pm)
Hampton Inn Downtown**

MISSION

Our mission is to provide Kent County hospitality related businesses an opportunity to meet professionally with a common interest to better serve our industry and community while furthering the overall tourism landscape of our region.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Women in Lodging (WIL):

Sara, Stephanie, and Norina spoke to us about Women in Lodging's Grand Rapids Chapter. It is the first professional career advancement chapter for women in the lodging and tourism industry created by women, for women. The benefits to joining WIL include: networking, events, holiday parties, and the national women in lodging directory. The group meets on Fridays at the end of each month (summer months meeting are held on Thursdays). Agenda topics include: vision, energizers, how to get what you want, and many more! The GR Chapter is recruiting members from the area including students from the local colleges. Please contact Sara if interested SJorgensen@ashospitality.com.

GVSU:

The acting President of GVSU's KCHA Student Chapter is Doug Kessler. Doug introduced his board members and actions plans for next year. The KCHA Student Chapter has grown dramatically within the last year and will continue to assist students with job and internship placement. Next year they hope to partner with the KCHA to host speakers and network with local leadership. Please contact Kristen Jack if interested Jackk@gvsu.edu.

Mayor:

Mayor Rosalynn Bliss opened by thanking us for participating in the ambassador program for Grand Rapids. She is proud to say that Grand Rapids made the list of "one of the best places to visit in 2016". Mayor Bliss is currently working on a few challenges in the Grand Rapids area including: Affordable housing and racial disparities. She stated that we could help Grand Rapids flourish by working on diversity within our industry and help everyone feel welcomed within our community.

Experience GR:

Toast of the Town is April 26th, invites went out on March 16th. Please let Kate know if you are interested in attending. Annual meeting is March 24th at the Crowne Plaza at 4pm, reception to follow.

WMSC:

The 24th Annual NASC Sports Event Symposium will be held April 3rd-7th. WMSC Annual Luncheon will be held at the JW Marriott on May 4th. Please contact Natalie for tickets and information. WCHA games and USQRA Rugby are this weekend. WMSC is excited to announce that Grand Rapids was awarded the Disc Golf Masters in August of 2017!

CTA:

Lisa shared with us that since August 2013, we are now up to 2700 CTA's for the Grand Rapids area. Please visit the CTA website for volunteer information as well as discounts and specials for CTA's.

WMTA:

Check out WMTA.org to see its new look. Carefree travel guide is still available, please contact via website. January 7th, 2017 will be the WMTA's 100th Anniversary party, details to come.

GVSU:

Annual Golf outing will be June 13th, website registration will be available soon. The 5th Annual GVSU Hospitality and Tourism Management Spring Gala will be held at the JW Marriot on April 8th at 6:30pm. This year's theme is "A Night on Bourbon Street". Please RSVP by April 1st. Please see Kristen Jack for Auction Donor form if interested.

Round Table:

Dianna: The KCHA will be focusing on Michigan Cares for Tourism and the CTA program this year as well as human trafficking training.

Brian: KCHA is in need for students to apply for the scholarship. Please make an effort to talk to your staff and students about the opportunity. Deadline was extended to April 1st.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- March 13 TIPS Training @ JW Marriott (1-5:30pm)
- March 15 KCHA Scholarship Applications Due
- March 17 KCHA Monthly Meeting @ Hampton Inn Downtown (3:30-5pm)
- March 23 Deadline to Register via KCHA for Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism

Round Table Discussion

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