#### PEOPLE



## CONVENTION BUREAUS

**Diann Bayes** has been named vice-president of the San Angelo (Texas) Convention & Visitors Bureau. She most recently served as senior vice-president of membership services at the Texas Travel Industry Association.

**Art Jimenez** has been appointed executive director of tourism sales at

the Reno-Sparks (Nevada) Convention & Visitors Authority. With more than 30 years of experience in tourism sales and marketing, Jimenez most recently served



Art Jimenez

Disney CEO Bob Iger, director James

Cameron and the cast of "Avatar"

as vice-president of marketing for the

Travel Leaders Group. He also spent more than 17 years at the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority in multiple leadership roles.

Samantha Swadish has been named director of marketing at Visit Phoenix. Swadish previously worked with Hilton and Waldorf Astoria properties, most recently at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix as marketing and public relations manager.

Jill Vance has been named director of sales at the Lee County (Florida) Visitor & Convention Bureau. Vance most recently served as group sales manager at the Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village in Cape Coral, Florida. Prior to that, she served as director of sales and marketing for the Wyndham/ Cleveland at Playhouse Square.

**Keith Talbert** has been hired as associate director of sales at the Okla-

homa City Convention & Visitors Bureau. Talbert previously held several sales roles at Visit Wichita (Kansas) and served the Mid-Atlantic market at the



Keith Talbert

Nashville (Tennessee) Convention & Visitors Corp.

Visit Milwaukee recently made several staff promotions. Marissa Werner has been promoted to senior sports and entertainment sales manager, Lauren **Hyps** is now senior convention sales manager, and Michelle Haider has been appointed senior meeting and event-services manager. Werner was formerly the organization's sports and entertainment sales manager. She also served as an account executive with the NBA's Milwaukee Bucks. Hyps has been with Visit Milwaukee since 2008 and previously worked at the Hyatt Regency/Milwaukee and the Pfister Hotel, also in Milwaukee. Haider most recently served as Visit Milwaukee's convention services manager.

#### **GRAND OPENINGS**

Pandora—the World of Avatar has opened at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, just in time for the summer season. The project, the largest addition to Disney's Animal King-

dom, was more than five years in the making and was created through a partnership between Walt Disney Imagineering, James Cameron (the director of the film) and Cameron's company, Lightstorm Entertainment.

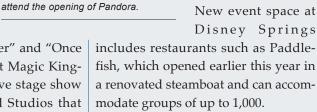
Other new attractions at Walt Disney World include the

new "Happily Ever After" and "Once Upon a Time" shows at Magic Kingdom Park and a new live stage show at Disney's Hollywood Studios that celebrates the music, characters and

films from Pixar Animation Studios and will run through the summer months.

Groups meeting at Walt Disney World can hold events in the parks or at one of the four main convention spaces: Disney's Coronado Springs

Resort (which is undergoing a major expansion project), Disney's Yacht and Beach Club (which is also expanding its meeting space), Disney's Contemporary Resort and Disney Springs, which recently completed an expansion project. New event space at



—Ann Shepphird

### HOSPITALITY & SUPPLIERS

**Jane Davis** has been appointed executive director of sales administra-

tion at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia. Davis has experience working in sales at the Willard InterContinental Washington,



Jane Davis

D.C., and as national account director for Salamander Hotels & Resorts.

**Rudy Tauscher** has been named general manager of the Sofitel/New York in New York City. Tauscher has held sev-

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# Association Update

News from state and regional associations and local societies of association executives



· The Washington, D.C.-based **Destination Marketing Associa**tion International has announced its 2017 "30 Under 30" class. Now in its seventh year, the program recognizes 30 individuals who are age 30 and under, providing them with chances to engage in professional development and networking opportunities throughout the year. For the first time, there was a tie for the final recipient, so this year's class has a total of 31 members. They are: José Arana, marketing and communications executive at Meet Puerto Rico; Jake Buchheit, marketing and communications coordinator at Visit KC (Missouri); Lauren Cleland, digital content strategist at Visit Savannah (Georgia); Kenzie Coleman, sales manager at Visit Omaha (Nebraska); Jamie Cox, marketing coordinator at Visit Franklin/the Williamson County (Tennessee) Convention & Visitors Bureau; Katie Egresi, graphic designer at Experience Columbus (Ohio); Kimberly Franz, marketing director at the Dunwoody (Georgia) Convention & Visitors Bureau; Andrea Gardi, senior project manager of the Regional Tourism Organization 4 Inc. in Ontario, Canada; Drew Hays, sports sales manager at Visit Wichita (Kansas); Emily Hendricks, creative services coordinator at Visit Saint Paul (Minnesota); Kate Herron, director of marketing at Experience Grand Rapids (Michigan); Britt Hijkoop, senior manager of international public relations at NYC & Company in New York City: Ahmed Ibrahim, membership sales manager at Destination DC in Washington, D.C.; Natalie Jamieson, manager of research and data analysis at Visit Baltimore; Cambria Jones, marketing specialist at the Allen (Texas) Con-

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eral roles at New York City properties including general manager and area vice-president of the Mandarin Oriental and hotel manager of the Peninsula.

**Dave Jacobs** has been appointed general manager of the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort & Spa near Austin, Texas. Jacobs previously was general manager of the Hyatt Regency/O'Hare in the Chicago suburb of Rosemont.

Onal Kucuk has been named gen-

eral manager of the Camby Hotel in Phoenix. Kucuk has served in various leadership positions across the country, most recently as general manager of



Onal Kucuk

the Hotel Lincoln in Chicago.

Jon Mathews has been appointed hotel manager of the Marriott/Syracuse Downtown in Syracuse, New York. He most recently served as director of operations at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel in Seattle.

Andrew Neubauer has been appointed director of sales and marketing at the Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort & Spa in Marco Island, Florida. Neubauer previously served as the director of national accounts for the Naples Grande Beach Resort in Naples, Florida.

**Mike Bonner** has been named director of sales and marketing for Rose-

wood London by Rosewood Hotels & Resorts. Bonner has more than 23 years of experience in the luxury hospitality industry and most recently served as



Mike Bonner

vice-president of global marketing for One & Only Resorts in Dubai.

Jan Smith has been hired as director of sales and marketing at the Westin/Jackson, which is scheduled to open later this summer in Jackson, Mississippi. Smith most recently served as director of human resources for Fusion

Hospitality and as area director of sales for the Peachtree Hotel Group.

**Bob Arrivillaga** has been named director of sales and marketing at the

Island Hotel in Newport Beach, California. Arrivillaga most recently served as associate director of group sales at the Montage/Deer Valley in Park City, Utah. He



Bob Arrivillaga

also previously held various sales positions at properties including the St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort & Spa in Dana Point, California, and the Paradise Point Resort & Spa in San Diego.

Christian Gonzalez has been hired as Rosewood Hotels & Resorts' regional director of sales and marketing for the Mexico region. Gonzalez most recently served as director of sales and marketing at the Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara in Southern California.

### CONSTRUCTION & EXPANSION

The **21c Museum Hotel Nashville** has opened in downtown Nashville, Tennessee's historic Gray & Dudley



21c Museum Hotel Nashville

building. The 124-room hotel features curated exhibitions and cultural programming, a spa and more than 10,500 square feet of function space.

The **Limelight Hotel Ketchum** recently opened in Ketchum, Idaho, near the Sun Valley mountain resort. The 99-room boutique hotel provides 4,000 square feet of meeting space.

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The Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood, Florida, has completed a \$100 million renovation, which added 10 new culinary concepts and updated guest rooms and indoor and outdoor public spaces. The resort now features 1,000 guest rooms and 209,000 square feet of meeting space.

The Talbott Hotel in Chicago has reopened following a \$20 million renovation that included an update of guest rooms and public areas and the addition of a fitness center and restaurant. The property now offers 178 guest rooms and 1,500 square feet of meeting space.

The 264-room Hotel Palomar/Los Angeles-Beverly Hills has completed a \$12 million, property-wide renovation. New features include a game room, a new restaurant and more than 5,000 square feet of meeting space.

The 2,267-room Walt Disney World Swan & Dolphin Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, has completed a \$5 million renovation of its 329,000 square feet of meeting space. In addition, the Dolphin Resort guest rooms and lobby are undergoing a renovation scheduled to be completed this fall.

The Naples Grande Beach Resort in Naples, Florida, has completed a \$2 million renovation of its public spaces. Updates were made to the Vista Ballroom, lobby lounge and Spressi coffee bar. The resort features 474 guest rooms and more than 83,000 square feet of meeting and event space.

L'Auberge Del Mar in San Diego's North County has completed a renovation of its 121 guest rooms, public areas and more than 10,000 square feet of meeting space. The hotel also offers a 5,000-square-foot spa, tennis courts and several food and beverage options.

The Williamsburg Inn in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, has completed a multi-phase renovation, which included an update of the property's exterior and its food and beverage offerings. The hotel offers 62 redesigned guest rooms and 9,000 square feet of event space.

The newly rebranded **Hyatt Centric**/ Times Square New York recently completed a renovation that included updates to its second-floor meeting space and terrace and its rooftop lounge. The property offers 487 guest rooms, a reimagined restaurant and 7,000 square feet of meeting space.

The 1,996-room **Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center** in National Harbor, Maryland, recently unveiled a new waterfront venue: the RiverView Ballroom, which has 16,000 square feet of meeting space as well as two outdoor terraces totaling more than 10,000 square feet of space. Gaylord National is now home to five ballrooms and more than 600,000 square feet of meeting space.

The Crystal Ballroom at the **Omni** King Edward Hotel in Toronto has



Omni King Edward Hotel

reopened following a \$6.5 million restoration. Closed for nearly 40 years, the 5,000-square-foot ballroom can accommodate groups of up to 300 people. The Omni King Edward Hotel features a total of 301 guest rooms and more than 22,000 square feet of meeting space.

#### AND FINALLY...

To kick off its 25th anniversary, the Sheraton Grand/Chicago recently hosted a special dinner to celebrate its most important attribute: its staff. Fifty-four staff associates have been with the hotel since its opening year, some even since its opening day. Each person was recognized individually for his or her contributions at the event. ■

—Edited by Jennifer Lee

vention & Visitors Bureau; Chandler Jones, account manager of the Austin (Texas) Convention & Visitors Bureau; Victoria Lightfoot, public relations specialist at the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau; Roxanne Lombard, senior researcher at Cape Town (South Africa) Tourism; Wesley Lucas, communications manager at the Frisco (Texas) Convention & Visitors Bureau; Aime O'Keefe, senior web specialist at Discover The Palm Beaches in West Palm Beach, Florida; Sarah Radzanowski, tourism product developer at Edmonton Tourism in Alberta, Canada; Kara Reed, convention services manager at Visit Indy (Indiana); Daniel Schwartz, senior manager of tourism at the San Francisco Travel Association; Brian Screptock, manager of partner Services at Brand USA in Washington, D.C.; Lauren St. Martin, public communications specialist at the Pasco County Office of Tourism Development/Visit Pasco (Florida); Joe Tacynec, creative director at the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (Pennsylvania); Maranda Tippin, site experience specialist at the San Diego Tourism Authority; Elena Vizzini, destination development coordinator at Travel Oregon; Angelica Von Seyfried, content manager for meetings at the Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board; Ivette Wilhelm, public relations manager at the Galveston Island (Texas) Convention & Visitors Bureau; and Angela Wirkler, group sales manager at the Boulder (Colorado) Convention & Visitors Bureau.



 At the Dallas-based International **Association of Exhibitions & Events'** Women's Leadership Forum, Megan Tanel was presented with the 2017 IAEE Woman of Achievement Award. Tanel is senior vice-president of exhibitions and events for the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM). She has been with AEM for more than 20 years and has held various volunteer roles in the industry.