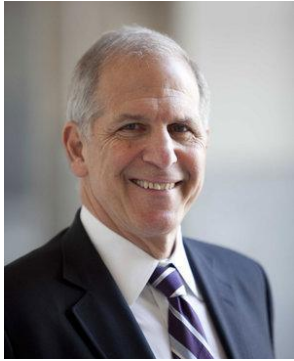


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Thought Leaders



Brent D. Glass

Director Emeritus

Smithsonian's National Museum of American History
Washington, DC

Brent D. Glass is Director Emeritus of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, the world's largest museum devoted to telling the story of America. A national leader in the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of history, Glass is a public historian who pioneered influential oral history and material culture studies, an author, and an international speaker on cultural

diplomacy and museum management.

As director of the National Museum of American History since 2002, Glass led a two-year, \$120 million renovation and development of 20 new exhibitions for the 2008 reopening, including the major exhibitions on The Star-Spangled Banner; Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life and On the Water: Stories from Maritime America, and 80 public programs and 2,500 theater performances. Since 2008, more than 13 million people have visited, a 50% increase over previous years and the Museum's website has an additional 8 million visitors.

Glass is an active member of and consultant to the diplomatic, cultural, and academic communities. He is a member of the Flight 93 Memorial Advisory Commission and of the State Department's U.S.-Russia Bilateral Commission Working Group on Education and Culture. He travels frequently as a featured speaker or participant in U.S. State Department public and cultural diplomacy programs and serves as a consultant and advisor to several cultural organizations including The Presidio in San Francisco Presidio and the DeVos Institute at The Kennedy Center in Washington. He is a trustee of Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, and a Senior Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Studies in Washington, D.C.

Before joining the Smithsonian, Glass served from 1987-2002 as executive director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, managing the largest and most comprehensive state history program in the country, with 25 historical sites and museums, State Archives, State Museum, the State Historic Preservation Office, public history programs and historical publications.

Glass earned his doctorate in history from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, a master's degree in American Studies from New York University, and a bachelor's degree from Lafayette College. He also completed the program for government executives at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He writes extensively on topics ranging from state-of-the-museum blogs to public memory, historic preservation, and industrial history.

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Danny Guerrero

VP North America Strategy
MMGY Global
Los Angeles, California

Danny Guerrero brings 20 years of dedication to integrated marketing and communications in travel, tourism, and hospitality to MMGY Global. He is a passionate, and committed leader having led teams for three different MMGY Global agency brands from his post in Los Angeles where he serves as General Manager.

An ardent supporter of diversity in travel, Danny leads the development of industry-leading research programs, thought leadership platforms, and integrated marketing programs at MMGY Global to advocate for better representation of travelers of color, different perspectives and abilities in the industry. He also serves as Co-Chair of the agency's DEI Council and is a member of Destinations International's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, as well as CalTravel's DEI Task Force.

Danny is a proud first-generation Mexican-American (Chicano) and is a native of San Diego, California where he began his career as an intern for the San Diego Tourism Authority at 18 years of age through INROADS, an organization that places talented underserved youth in business and industry and prepares them for corporate and community leadership.



Joe Lambert

Chief Listener and Convener
StoryCenter
Berkeley, California

Joe Lambert founded the Center for Digital Storytelling (now StoryCenter) in 1994. He and his colleagues developed a computer training and arts program known as The Digital Storytelling Workshop. Joe's and his staff have traveled the world to spread the practice of digital storytelling, to all 50 US States and some 79 countries. Lambert is author of Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Community (6th Edition, Digital Diner Press) and his more recent Seven Stages: Story and the Human Experience(Digital Diner Press).

In 2021, Lambert celebrates his 38th year as a non-profit Executive Director, having evolved his work from his the 1980s and early 1990s in the performing arts.

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Tonya M. Matthews, Ph.D.

CEO

International African American Museum
Charleston, South Carolina

Dr. Tonya M. Matthews is a thought-leader in institutionalized equity and inclusion frameworks, social entrepreneurship, and the intersectionality of formal and informal education. Her background as both poet and engineer has made her a highly sought-after visioning partner on boards and community building projects, as well as a frequent public speaker and presenter for communities across all ages and venues.

A non-profit executive leadership veteran, Dr. Matthews is currently Chief Executive Officer of the International African American Museum (IAAM) located in Charleston, SC at the historically sacred site of Gadsden's Wharf. IAAM is a champion of authentic, empathetic storytelling of American history and thus, one of the nation's newest platforms for the disruption of institutionalized racism as America continues the walk toward "a more perfect union."

Dr. Matthews has a storied career in leadership. Most recently, she served as Associate Provost for Inclusive Workforce Development & Director of the STEM Innovation Learning Center for Wayne State University and, prior to that, as the President & CEO of the Michigan Science Center – flexing her science and tech educational equity chops in both roles. Dr. Matthews credits her time at Wayne State University for a deeper understanding of the intersectionality of education, career, community agency, and self-efficacy which she refers to as the "pre-K through Gray" pipeline. While at the Michigan Science Center, she founded *The STEMInista Project*, a movement to engage girls in their future with STEM careers and tools. She continues this work today through *STEMInista Rising*, supporting professional women in STEM – and the colleagues who champion them – with an inclusive emphasis on women of color.

Dr. Matthews' dedication to the community and her accomplishments is widely recognized. She was noted as one of the Most Influential Women in Michigan (Crain's Business, 2016) and honored as *Trailblazer* by Career Mastered Magazine (2017). She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences Board on Science Education and was appointed by both Democratic and Republican administrations to the National Assessment Governing Board. Dr. Matthews is a published poet, included in *100 Best African-American Poems (2010)* edited by Nikki Giovanni, and has written several articles and book chapters on inclusive governance, non-profit management, and fundraising.

Dr. Matthews received her Ph.D. in biomedical engineering from Johns Hopkins University and her B.S.E. in biomedical and electrical engineering from Duke University, alongside a certificate in African/African-American Studies. She is a member of Delta Sigma Sorority, Inc. and The Links, Inc. Dr. Matthews a native of Washington, D.C. and, in each community she has settled, is known for planting roots on the side of town best for keeping an eye on progress.

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Topic Experts



Carylann Assante, CAE

Chief Executive Officer
Student & Youth Travel Association
Arlington, Virginia

A seasoned tourism and association executive with more than 30 years of experience in the industry, Carylann Assante, CAE serves as the Executive Director of the Student & Youth Travel Association, the international association that promotes student and youth travel worldwide. Carylann is also the Executive Director of the SYTA Youth Foundation, the philanthropic arm that provides scholarships and educational experiences for students and youth who are unable to travel due to financial and personal hardship.

Prior to joining SYTA, Carylann served as the Vice President of Member Relations and Partnerships at ASAE, the American Society of Association Executives. In this role, Carylann was responsible for building relationships with associations and business partners that served the industry. As an experienced association executive, Carylann spoke at conferences, meetings, and industry events on all aspects of association management.

Since joining SYTA in 2010, Carylann developed and implemented initiatives that contributed to membership, registration, and revenue growth for SYTA and the SYTA Youth Foundation. The SYTA Annual Conference, the premier showcase for Student & Youth Travel experienced record growth with over 1000 attendees participating in business-to-business meetings. The SYTA Youth Foundation doubled its fundraising and the number of kids impacted through travel.

Prior to returning to Washington DC, Carylann served as Director of Conferences and Events at both Virginia Tech and the University of Virginia. Carylann Assante, CAE is an Associate Board of the U.S. Travel Association.



Terry E. Brown

Director of Federal Partnerships
America 250
Washington, DC

Terry E. Brown is on special assignment to the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission serving as the Director of Federal Partnerships. He is the former Superintendent of Fort Monroe National Monument and a long-time veteran of the National Park Service (NPS), with more than 30 years in federal service. Under his leadership at Ft. Monroe, innovation flourished across all programs areas including science, interpretation, natural resources, law enforcement, cultural resources, and administration. Terry helped organize and lead the commemoration of the 400th Anniversary of the

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arrival of the first enslaved Africans in English North America, which culminated with the joint ribbon-cutting on a Fort Monroe Visitor Center and a Healing Day Ceremony. This was one of the most successful events in the Fort's history.

Terry also played a critical role in helping to stand up the Academies of Hampton School Initiative, which was working to transform the traditional high school experience into an innovative model that prepared all students for career opportunities, linking academic courses to college majors and career sectors. Subsequently, he was awarded the 2017 Council Spotlight Award from the City of Hampton, in appreciation of service to the community. He served as a liaison to the Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees, and in 2018 he was selected by the Secretary of Interior to serve as a member of the Federal 400 Years of African American History Commission.

Terry's NPS career began at Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River. He went on to serve as an Interpretive Park Ranger at Independence National Historic Site, a Supervisory Park Ranger at National Mall & Memorial Parks, and Site Manager of Boston African American National Historic Park. Additionally, he detailed as Site Manager at Old Post Office Tower, Chief of Interpretation and Education at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Superintendent of Springfield Armory National Historic Site, and Chief of Interpretation and Education at Boston National Historical Park.

He is the recipient of several NPS awards and honors, including the Outstanding Service Award for 2004 Federal Executive Board of Excellence in Government with the category of Improved Federal Image. In 2019, he received from the City of Hampton another Council Spotlight Award in appreciation of his work in the community. Most recently he received the prestigious 2019 Appleman-Judd-Lewis award for his leadership in the commemoration of 400 years of African American history that ultimately led to racial unity and healing at the park.

Raised in a military family, Terry graduated from AFCENT Brunssum International High School in the Netherlands and returned to the U.S. to earn his Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at Grambling State University. Throughout his career, he has been guided by one important question: "At the end of the day, are we inspiring others to be good stewards of these resources?"



Cory Cart, APR
Chief Client Officer
Bandwagon
New Orleans, Louisiana

Cory Cart, APR, has destination and hospitality marketing experience that includes Visit Oxford, MS; Gallup, NM; New Mexico Tourism Department; Ruth's Chris Steak House; Google Cultural Institute; Clearwater, FL; Aiken, SC; Sunland Park, NM; Destination Bryan, TX; and many more. A

nationally accredited PR practitioner, Cory's clients have been featured by Wall Street Journal, NBC's Today, New York Times, Travel+Leisure, National Geographic, and hundreds of other media outlets. As the chief client officer at Bandwagon, Cory guides clients through integrated destination marketing campaigns built around strong brand differentiators. He also leads the firm's crisis communication and planning team. Cory was honored by the Southern Public Relations Federation as a Sr. PR Practitioner

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and was selected as the 2016 Public Relations Practitioner of the Year by the Public Relations Association of Louisiana.



Lauren Cleland

Director of Data Intelligence and Digital Marketing
Visit Savannah
Savannah, Georgia

Previously named one of the Top Women in Travel by WITTI and one of Destination International's 30 Under 30, Lauren Cleland has been a proud member of the tourism marketing world since 2012. After starting her career with the Georgia Tourism Division, Lauren has spent the past 6 years helping to build, refine and innovate Visit Savannah's content marketing and digital media strategies. After growing and leading Visit Savannah and Visit Tybee's robust content strategy and team for 4+ years, Lauren succeeded Zeek Coleman in the role of Director of Data Intelligence & Digital Marketing where she currently oversees the DMO's use of data as a marketing and media planning tool as well as all paid digital media campaign creation and subsequent analysis. She's a proud Girl Mama plus a huge fan of all things Dolly Parton and Walt Disney World.



Alea M. Cot

Assistant Provost for International Education
University of New Orleans
New Orleans, Louisiana

As Assistant Provost for International Education at the University of New Orleans (UNO), Alea Cot brings over 30 years of administrative practice in study abroad and exchange, international student services, and language study. Her extensive experience in international program design, fiscal and human resource management, as well as student recruitment, has contributed to the steady growth and success of international programming at UNO. As head of the Division of International Education, she is the chief advocate to the President, Provost and other UNO academic and administrative leaders in their efforts to internationalize the campus and curriculum, expand international student services, and increase international opportunities for students and faculty. Since 1973, over 13,000 students have participated in UNO's study abroad programs.

Ms. Cot co-chaired a capital campaign to support the founding of the new International Center on the UNO campus. Opened in 2015, the Center houses the majority of UNO's international programs and services. It is a hub for international outreach and academic programming, a learning and socializing space for UNO students, faculty, and staff, and a resource for the New Orleans community.

Ms. Cot's passion for international education began as an AFS high school exchange student in Thailand and continued with her junior year abroad at the *Universidad Complutense* in Madrid, Spain. Since then, she has assumed numerous leadership roles in professional associations that serve international education and has presented papers and presided over workshops, presentations and conferences in the

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United States, Mexico, and Europe. She also currently serves as President of the governing board at Benjamin Franklin High School in New Orleans.



Dana Criswell

Tour Guide
New Orleans

Dana Criswell is retired from the University of New Orleans, where she worked for more than 25 years. She began her career as an adjunct instructor in the English Department, but after several years moved into administration and served as Assistant Director of the Office of International Students and Scholars. In her last years at the university, she was Program Director for the Intensive English Language Program. Her studies in graduate school focused on African Literature and she spent one exciting semester at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. Her love of history and New Orleans culture led her to become a licensed tour guide after retirement. She specializes in tours of the French Quarter, downriver neighborhoods, and various New Orleans cemeteries.



Janet Ferguson

Independent Scholar and Consultant
Bermuda

Janet's time as the Executive Director of the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) at Bermuda College led to her current volunteering and working partnerships with the National Museum of Bermuda (NMB) Educational Travel Consortium (ETC), Grow Society, NY, and the Bermuda Environmental Sustainability Taskforce (BEST). Janet is also a visiting adjunct professor at the Teacher's College, Columbia University AEGIS doctoral program where she uses Boal's theatre of the oppressed "image theatre" to explore models and theories of racial identity. She continues to teach, undertake research, write, and co-supervise graduate students across multiple disciplines. Janet holds post-graduate qualifications in Commonwealth Area Studies, Marketing, Teaching & Course Design in Higher Education as well as a doctoral degree in Continuing Education, from Warwick University.



Patrick Gallagher

President & Founder
Gallagher & Associates
Baltimore, Maryland

Over the past 30 years, Patrick has built a strong reputation globally as a leader in the field of Museum Planning and Design. He has worked with every kind of collection from microscopic stardust, to hundreds of vintage

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military tanks and aircraft, in institutions ranging from cultural history and natural science to sports, music, and the arts. A graduate of Northern Illinois University, Patrick is a past president of the SEGDC and has served on the board of numerous professional design organizations.



Rodney E. Gould

Travel Attorney
Smith Dugan Buell & Rufo
Boston, Massachusetts

A litigator with over 40 years of experience, Rod has conducted litigations in federal and state courts throughout the country. He concentrates in travel and tour operator law, recreation law, commercial litigation, securities, and antitrust law, employer/employee relations including EEOC and state administrative issues, intellectual property, and general corporate counseling. As a nationally recognized expert in transportation and travel

law, he routinely counsels travel-related entities throughout the country, and has served as an expert witness in numerous cases.

He co-authored a major text titled *Litigating International Torts in U.S. Courts*, (West 2017, 6th Edition). Prior to joining Smith Duggan, Rod was a partner at Rubin Hay and Gould P.C. Previously, he was an associate at Covington & Burling, Washington DC, and later at Rosenman Colin Freund Lewis & Cohen in New York City. He also served as Vice President and General Counsel at International Weekends Charter Vacations, as Group Counsel at Digital Equipment Corp, and as Assistant Regional Director, Boston Regional Office of the Federal Trade Commission.

Rod is also the author of many articles and regularly gives speeches to travel associations, other trade groups and bar associations. He has taught various courses at several New England law schools and was selected as a Massachusetts Super Lawyer in *Boston Magazine*.



Devin Heath

Executive Director
Visit Natchez
Natchez, Mississippi

Devin Heath serves as Executive Director of Visit Natchez, the official destination marketing organization of Natchez, Mississippi. After graduating from Loyola University in Maryland, Heath has served in various capacities within tourism and hospitality organizations over a 28-year career spanning over 9 states and the District of Columbia. Heath has worked with diverse communities, developing programs to attract and sustain new groups of visitation. Richmond-Virginia, Atlanta-Georgia, and now Natchez-Mississippi are some of the destinations where he and his community developed

programs to address the difficult histories of their past. Currently, Heath and his team are partnering with the National Park Service, the Historic Natchez Foundation, and the community to address telling

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the full story of the foundations of their community through the modern era. With a goal of bridging the gap between unconsciousness and understanding, Heath recognizes the role tourism can have in providing avenues for experiential learning.



Catherine Hansen-Stamp

Lawyer
Golden, Colorado

Catherine Hansen-Stamp is an attorney in private practice in Golden, Colorado. She advises travel, recreation, adventure, sport, and/or experiential program providers and related organizations on law, liability and risk management issues. She speaks and writes frequently on these issues, both regionally and nationally. She has presented at the Annual Wilderness Risk Managers' Conference since its inception in 1994 and is currently on the Steering Committee. She co-authors articles regularly (with Charles 'Reb' Gregg) for American Camp Association's CampLine. She has authored a variety of other publications as well. Her clients have included adventure travel and tripping programs, camps, schools, outfitters and guides, dude ranches, corporate team builders, ropes and challenge course builders and facilitators, resort owners, science and environmental programs, competitive event sponsors and others. Cathy graduated from The Colorado College in 1981 and received her Juris Doctor from the University of Wyoming in 1985. She is a member of both the Wyoming and Colorado Bar Associations and currently serves on the University of Wyoming College of Law Advisory Board.



Brian Jewell

Executive Editor
The Group Travel Leader, Inc.
Louisville, Kentucky

Brian Jewell is executive editor of The Group Travel Leader, Inc., a niche publishing company serving the group tourism markets. In this capacity, he oversees the company's print and online products, including flagship magazine The Group Travel Leader, which reaches 15,000 tour operators, travel agents, group leaders, and other travel industry readers. He also oversees Going On Faith, the national magazine for church groups with an audience of 6,500 church travel planners, and Select Traveler, which reaches 4,100 bank club travel directors, university alumni travel directors and chamber of commerce travel planners. Brian has been with the company since 2004, previously serving as associate editor, project manager, and staff writer. His work with the company has taken him to 48 U.S. states and more than 25 foreign countries. He resides in Lexington, Kentucky, with his wife Laura and children Daisy and Liam.

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Adam Karlin
Travel Writer/Journalist
New Orleans, Louisiana

Adam Karlin is a travel writer and journalist based out of New Orleans. He is a regular author for Lonely Planet and has contributed to over 100 guidebooks for that company, covering destinations in Asia, Africa, and North America. His traditional journalism has been published by the BBC, NPR, The Christian Science Monitor, and Huck, among other publications, while his creative nonfiction has appeared in Catapult, The Bitter Southerner, and been listed in Best American Travel Writing. He lives in New Orleans with his wife, daughter, and son.



Kristin Kitchen
Founder & CEO
Sojourn Heritage Accommodations
Miami, Florida

Kristin Kitchen, Founder, and CEO of Sojourn Heritage Accommodations, is a historian, successful businesswoman, and member of the National Blacks in Travel and Tourism Collaborative.

With a background in real-estate development, having owned and managed over 20 residential and commercial properties, Kristin has taken that knowledge along with her passion for entrepreneurship to the next level. By integrating a model that not only transforms blighted or underutilized historic structures in urban communities into viable hotel lodging spaces but in doing so, helps to restore the community by creating or enhancing existing businesses from within the community to operate as vendors for the hotel. “We create jobs and entrepreneurs within each community because our mission is to make our communities better and to empower the people that live there.”

For the last 15 years, Kristin has been the owner and operator of the Six Acres Bed & Breakfast in Cincinnati, Ohio. Restoring this historic 6000-sq. ft. home that was once part of the Underground Railroad and turning it into a successful business led to a partnership with Cincinnati public schools to provide field trips to the historic inn and teach children about the Underground Railroad. This project also inspired Kristin to launch a new brand of boutique hotels in 2014. The Sojourn Heritage Hotel Brand focuses on African American History and Culture in urban areas, to share local history while uplifting the community.

Kristin holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration and a Masters in African American Studies. Kristin lives in Miami, Florida with her adorable, 8-year-old daughter Zahri Jean.

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Marie Lovejoy
Media Specialist/Facilitator Trainer
StoryCenter

Marie is a visual artist, theatre artist, audio producer and storyteller. She produces the Antenna::Signals podcast, a narrative storytelling series exploring issues within her New Orleans community through a creative sonic landscape. Since 2010, Marie has served as a Media Specialist and Facilitator Trainer with StoryCenter, where she teaches digital storytelling and podcasting. In 2021, she served as a panelist in Media Arts for the National Endowment for the Arts. Marie is a member of Alternate Roots, a social justice organization supporting Southern artists. In 2018 she collaborated on New Noise Theatre Company's devised theatre piece, *Jubilee*, a synthesis of performance and facilitation considering issues of family and race. BA, Theater, Florida State University; Certificate in Audio Documentary Studies, Duke University Center for Documentary Studies.



Jeffrey Ment
Managing Partner
Ment Law Group
Hartford, Connecticut

Jeffrey Ment provides legal counsel to travel companies around the world. He has been in the travel industry for more than thirty-five years. Prior to law school, he gained valuable experience while working as a travel agent, tour guide, and sales manager for two airlines.

Mr. Ment graduated from the University of Connecticut (1989) and the University of Miami School of Law (1992). He is admitted in New York, Connecticut, the United States District Courts of New York (SDNY and EDNY) and Connecticut as well as the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. Mr. Ment has years of experience mediating cases and was selected as a mediator for Litigation Alternatives, Inc. located in West Hartford, CT.

Mr. Ment offers a unique ability to represent the many facets of the travel and tourism industry: travel agents, OTA's, tour operators, hospitality groups, cruise lines, motorcoach tours, and insurers. He handles the defense of personal injury actions, international and national compliance laws, seller of travel law compliance, general representation for travel companies, resolution of IATA/ARC issues, contract drafting, and risk avoidance management services. His cases come from around the globe, including Africa, South America, Europe, and the Caribbean. He is trusted by travel agents, host agencies, technology companies, tour operators, and insurance companies to handle matters across the country and around the world, particularly in claims arising from accidents or incidents. He regularly represents clients in liability litigation arising from these accidents.

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Mr. Ment is a sought-after speaker at industry events. He regularly addresses members of the National Tour Association, United States Tour Operators Association, American Society of Travel Advisors, Family Travel Association, Adventure Travel Trade Association, Wellness Tourism Association, Student & Youth Travel Association, and the International Tour Management Institute. He is a member of The International Forum of Travel and Tourism Attorneys and the Academy of Hospitality Industry Attorneys.

Mr. Ment writes the legal column for Travel Age West and is frequently quoted in the media on articles on travel. The Ment Law Group has offices in Hartford and Westport, Connecticut, and New York City.



Janet Moore

Owner/Founder
Distant Horizons
Long Beach, California

Janet Moore founded Distant Horizons in 1985 to combine her passion for travel with her love of learning. Since its first program for the Denver Art Museum in 1986 to China, Distant Horizons has operated hundreds of customized programs for institutions including Harvard University, Johns Hopkins and the Nature Conservancy. Many of Distant Horizons' programs are aimed at donor groups providing a high level of access and curated experiences. Prior to starting Distant Horizons, Janet obtained a Master's in Public Policy at the University of Michigan. During her undergraduate and graduate studies, she worked as a tour manager for the American Council for International Studies, organizing High School programs for students and teachers in Europe. In 1983 she moved to Los Angeles to open their California office. For the last several years she has been voted as part of the "A-LIST Travel Operators" by *Travel and Leisure* Magazine. She has contributed to NPR's "The World" and is frequently interviewed by prominent national newspapers on travel issues. Janet lives by the ocean in Long Beach, CA and is married to physician David Larson and has four children. Janet has held numerous board positions including the Downtown Long Beach Alliance and the Intellectual Virtues Academy.



Nekasha Pratt

Founder
Bright Advisory Group
Nashville, Tennessee

Nekasha (pronounced "Ne-kee-sha") Pratt is an award-winning marketer and strategist, founder of consulting firm Bright Advisory Group, and a publishing VP of marketing. Previously the marketing director for Tennessee Tourism for 3.5 years, she also served as the state's delegate and review committee member for the US Civil Rights Trail. Prior to that position, Nekasha was the marketing director for the National Museum of African American Music. Throughout her career, she has held leadership positions at global organizations, worked with Fortune 500 companies, and helped lead campaigns that have won 25+ awards, including ESTO Mercury and international Cannes Lions awards.

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As a sought-after speaker and thought-leader, Nekasha has consulted and/or provided talks regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and representation for organizations and events such as Willis Towers Watson, Government Social Media Conference, Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Marketing Store, International Black Film Festival, among others. She has been featured on podcasts as well as interviewed for publications such as Thrive Global, Bizwomen Business Journal, CrowdRiff, and Platform Magazine. Nekasha holds a bachelor's degree in Management/Marketing and is a globally certified Project Management Professional (PMP).



Olga M. Ramudo

President & CEO
Express Travel
Miami, Florida

Olga Ramudo is President & CEO of Express Travel which has grown from what began as a startup business in 1989 that was started with her sister and a best friend, to today being one of the leading travel management companies in the United States. Its great reputation and long-term client retention are Express Travel's greatest source of accomplishment. The commitment made to the Hispanic luxury market, corporate travel, as well as community involvement, has earned Express Travel numerous awards and recognitions throughout the years, including national travel agency of the year from ASTA, top ten women-led business, and fastest-growing company in the State of Florida.

Olga Ramudo has conspicuously pioneered and led the charge to not only advocate on behalf of the tourism industry but has also provided an outstanding public role model as a successful woman-owned business who has always found the time to serve her community and her industry through leadership appointments on numerous local, state, national and international organizations. The South Florida Business Journal has recognized Olga as one of their Ultimate CEOs as well as one of the top influential business leaders in South Florida. Miami Today has also recognized her with the "Best of Miami" designation. WITII (Women in Travel and Tourism) honored Olga with its Lifetime Achievement Award.

The U.S. Secretary of Commerce has appointed Olga to a third term on the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. She also sits on the national board of ASTA (American Society of Travel Advisors), the World Trade Center Miami, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, and the Executive Board of the Beacon Council where she also serves as Treasurer of the organization. The Miami Dade County Board of County Commissioners has appointed Olga to serve on their Tourism Development Council Board and Miami's Mayor appointed her as her representative to the International Trade Consortium (ITC). Express Travel is composed of corporate, leisure, groups and meetings, cruise, and study abroad departments. Olga studied in Puerto Rico and has two sons and two granddaughters.

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Dan Richards

CEO

Global Rescue

Lebanon, NH

Mr. Richards has served as the Chief Executive Officer of Global Rescue since he founded the company in 2004. He also serves as the President of Crisis Services Company, a Vermont-based captive insurance company. Mr. Richards has been a featured speaker on CNN, Fox News, NPR, and other major media outlets regarding crisis response, mitigation, and travel risk management topics. He currently serves on the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board at the U.S. Department of Commerce, is the Chairman of the Board of Global Wildlife Conservation, a science-based environmental conservation organization, is an Ambassador for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Team, and a Global Member of the World Travel and Tourism Council. Prior to founding Global Rescue, Mr. Richards spent a decade in the private equity and financial services industries. He previously worked at the \$1.3 billion private equity affiliate of Thomas Weisel Partners and in various positions at Thoma Cressey Equity Partners, Donaldson, Lufkin and Jenrette and Deutsche Banc Alex Brown. Over the last two decades, he has been involved in financings and private equity investments for more than 30 companies. Mr. Richards is a graduate of Middlebury College where he played football, rugby and was a competitive powerlifter. He received his MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College where he has served as an Entrepreneur-in-Residence.



Sherry L. Rupert

CEO

American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA)

Albuquerque, New Mexico

AIANTA CEO Sherry L. Rupert (Paiute/Washoe) has nearly two decades of executive-level experience managing and promoting Native American tourism. Since joining AIANTA as CEO in 2019, she has spearheaded several initiatives, including the organization's groundbreaking new Tribal Agritourism program and overseeing AIANTA's first-ever virtual American Indian Tourism Conference, which drew a record number of registrants in 2020.

As CEO of the only national association dedicated to indigenous tourism, she is the leading voice when it comes to advocating for travel and tourism as a significant economic driver in tribal nations. Among her responsibilities, she curates a robust educational program for tribes and indigenous-owned hospitality enterprises around the country. Prior to assuming the role of CEO, she was President of AIANTA's Board of Directors since 2010. During that time, she was instrumental in working with Congress to pass the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act.

Rupert was formerly the Executive Director of the State of Nevada Indian Commission, where she reported directly to the Governor of Nevada to serve as a liaison to the state's 27 tribes, bands, and colonies. During her tenure, she developed the Nevada Indian Territory initiative and won awards and

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accolades for her work in preserving the site of the Stewart Indian School as a museum and cultural center.



Berkeley Young
President
Young Strategies
Charlotte, North Carolina

As president of Young Strategies, Inc., Berkeley excels at all types of market research and strategic planning for tourism destinations large and small. With 20+ years of experience, Berkeley has worked with more than 100 destinations in 26 states and is a frequent speaker at national conferences. Young Strategies and HTC Partners recently collaborated on a project for

Natchez, Mississippi with research demonstrating the potential for this historic city to grow its heritage tourism.