



DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

2020 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS ISSUE

Lohrenz: Become a Better Leader by Facing Fears

We are facing uncertain times – feeling overwhelmed is very normal. But as the Destinations International 2020 opening keynote speaker Carey Lohrenz explained on July 14, facing that fear says a lot about what type of leader you are.

During her presentation, Lohrenz spoke about her career in the Navy and the journey that led to her becoming the Navy's first

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Albom Says 'Giving Is Living' During Closing Session



Mitch Albom, whose life changed profoundly through his conversations with an old professor facing his death, and his experiences caring for a girl from a Haitian orphanage, helped close the Destinations International 2020 Annual

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CVBs Encouraged to Embrace Community Funding

These are not normal times. It was a statement made by Jack Johnson, Chief Advocacy Officer, Destinations International, during the Industry Roundtable: A New Approach to Funding Destination Organizations on July 15.

Johnson opened the session by revisiting some of the statements he shared at last year's Destinations International Convention in St. Louis. He said that at the time, he had spoken about vulnerability – but wasn't thinking along the lines of the pandemic that we are currently facing.

"Most of us have responded with the urgency that this moment requires, with a message drawn from emotion," said Johnson, adding that it's been a simple message that we have to help the people in our communities.

Shutting Down to Save Lives

Rather than looking at the current situation as a new normal, Johnson referred to it as the great interruption.

"What we are going through today is a great interruption," he said. "It was one of the biggest challenges of our lives and test of our humanity. We were asked to shut down our industry to save lives – I applaud you for that



selfless act."

As he spoke about the need for new approaches and new ideas, he also spoke about how CVBs can help and protect their communities.

"It requires doing things with less resources and a more creative approach," said Johnson. "It is one heck of an opportunity that should not be wasted – we can create something that can be seen as a community shared value."

He encouraged organizations that have already pivoted to focus on engaging with their communities to continue to do so.

"Do not pivot back – move forward down this road," he said. "It is the key to you surviving the great interruption. We need to not be thinking about a return to

normal, but the next normal. The changes that have occurred will not go away."

Community Funding

As destination organizations provide support and services to the many different stakeholders, so should communities be a source of funding.

Andreas Weissenborn, Senior Director of Research and Advocacy, Destinations International, spoke about how industry data showed that 94 percent of CVB funding came from public sources, and the remaining six percent from private sources.

The "meat and potatoes" of funding has been heads in beds (occupancy and sales taxes). But there is now a need to expand the

potential sources that are offered by adapting a community funding model.

He explained that many different industry sectors benefit from the services provided by a destination organization.

“By focusing on the tourism vertical exclusively, you’re ignoring others,” said Weissenborn.

Recruitment Tool

One segment are the companies within your community that seek to recruit qualified employees. “They rely on the strength of your brand to recruit,” he said, adding that the same would apply to both hospitals and healthcare networks.

“I’m not aware of any destination organization that collects funding from a hospital,” said Weissenborn.

Also related is recruiting that colleges and university do. “They talk about what a great place your community is,” he said.

And a result of successful recruitment initiatives is that property values will rise. Realtors and property managers then also benefit.

“We can go on and on picking out industries that benefit from your work,” he said. “Many, many stakeholders in your area benefit from the work you do, but do not fund the work that you do.”

“The point is that there are more sectors that should be contributing to your efforts than hotels and general membership ... They should all be throwing money into the pot.”

— *Gabriel Seder*

Gabriel Seder, Senior Director of Advocacy Policy and Program Development, Destinations International, then offered detailed look at the community-benefit funding model.

“DMOs are community assets – everyone benefits; some more than others,” he said. “Our funding model should represent that.” The graphic he presented

identified four groups: usual suspects, unusual suspects, public sector/government, and partnerships and alliances.

“I am not advocating from any specific percentage from any of the groups shown,” he said. “The point is that there are more sectors that should be contributing to your efforts than hotels and general membership.”

The usual suspects include those businesses that would not exist without visitors, such as restaurants, attractions, venues, campground and livery drivers. “They should all be throwing money into the pot,” Seder said.

Next would be the unusual suspects, which include some of the groups Weissenborn spoke about, including hospitals, employers, colleges/universities and property owners.

“Government should chip in beyond sales tax – they benefit more than anyone else,” said Seder. “A growing and vibrant environment means a growing and vibrant tax base.”

2020
ANNUAL CONVENTION
INSPIRING GREATNESS

The Time is Now: Race Relations Need to be Addressed



DON WELSH



AL HUTCHINSON



MICHELLE MASON



JOY BIVINS

Headlines don't lie. Race relations are no longer a topic that can be addressed only when tragic events arise. Communities are mobilizing and want to see changes made. Industry leaders came together July 14, for the Industry Roundtable: Why Race Matters. Powerful comments and observations were shared by the panel, along with their hopes for what happens now.

Don Welsh, President and CEO, Destinations International, moderated the session.

"Race is a topic that must be addressed to advance society," said Welsh. "These deaths have had an impact all over the world."

Welsh opened the discussion by asking the panelists what has made recent events the true tipping point.

Joy Bivins, head of collections, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, spoke about the history of, and the impact of slavery, as well as events of the modern civil rights movement.

"In each instance, an event

such as running or sleeping at home resulted in death," said Bivins. "It shows how fragile Black life can be. In none of these instances did Black lives matter. It provides a moment to look at how race impacts our lives."

While we as a society try to move forward, the past will always have an impact, she said.

"There's no easy dismantling of these systems," said Bivins. "When we interpret what is happening today, we have to do so with an eye not focused only on

the present, but on the past as well. No matter how hard you try, the past is always present.”

Welsh then asked how each panelist has been impacted by race, in both personal and professional settings.

“Race has impacted me from two perspectives: I am Black and a female,” said Michelle Mason, President and CEO, Association Forum. “I carry those identities with me every day. They have been tested now more than ever – I’m exhausted, frustrated and I hurt. As a Black woman, we play multiple roles – we’re leaders, providers, nurtures, supporters, and now healers.”

She spoke of sacrifices that had to be made. “We have to focus on so many things that others don’t necessarily have to.”

She also alluded to the need for a systematic approach.

“I am excited for the future, and now we’re at a point where these conversations are more critical than before,” said Mason. “This is now a global dialogue, and we’re going to be held accountable to deliver.”

Al Hutchinson, President & CEO, Visit Baltimore, spoke about how critical the conversation now is.

“We need to bring as many voices as possible to this conversation – it’s going to take our white

A powerful montage featuring Black tourism executives was shown prior to the Industry Roundtable: Why Race Matters. The audience heard directly from their peers.

“It’s a challenging experience to be Black. There are two different standards.”
– *Al Hutchinson, President & CEO, Visit Baltimore*

“Your family tells you about how the perception may be different from that of your white friends.” – *Elliott Ferguson, President and CEO, Destination DC*

“You must be 10 times better than white people to receive the same equal treatment.” – *Cleo Battle, COO, Louisville Tourism*

“I have to make sure my children understand their surrounds at all times – that’s difficult.” – *Dan Williams, Vice President of Sales, Experience Columbus*

“I have experienced racism in a number of fashions – sometimes subtle, sometimes not.” – *Melvin Tenant, President and CEO, Meet Minneapolis*

How has murder of George Floyd impacted you?

“To see a man killed on camera – it brings back visions of lynching.” – *Dan Williams*

“You can learn about Black lives by making a choice – and question the norms around us. You no longer have the excuse of ignorance.” – *Cleo Battle*

“I have had so many substantive conversations about race in past few weeks, more than I had in the past few years.” – *Melvin Tenant*

“We can’t do reconciliation without talking about truth. We need to have tough, hard, uncomfortable conversations.” – *Al Hutchinson*

“Black people are tired, we’re at the brink. We want non-Black people to listen.” – *Dan Williams*

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Race Relations

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colleagues to help us and take the lead,” Hutchinson said. “Help us to craft out what the solutions will look like down the road. We may have the opportunity to end this conversation if we do it right.”

Beyond a person’s racial identity, race is often interwoven in a destination’s story. Welsh asked the panelists what it means when a city stays silent.

“Uncovering the history of a place can be difficult because it’s not celebratory, something that they may not want visitors to know,” said Bivens. “But it is critical that history not be hidden, even if it’s difficult history to deal with. There can be no shame in the truth, but there is shame in trying to hide it.”

Hutchinson agreed, stating that we must tell the “good, bad and ugly about our destinations. If we want to be authentic with storytelling, we need to recognize and communicate that side of our history to travelers. America has not always been welcoming to all people, especially people of color.”

Speaking as a destination marketer, he stressed the need for a city to embrace their cultural story.

“When you are telling a destination’s story, you are talking about your family,” he said. We need to tell an honest and inclu-

“Uncovering the history of a place can be difficult because it’s not celebratory, something that they may not want visitors to know. But it is critical that history not be hidden, even if it’s difficult history to deal with. There can be no shame in the truth, but there is shame in trying to hide it.”

— Joy Bivens

sive story, and sometimes it’s not always pretty.”

Welsh closed the session by asking each speaker what they think could happen in the next 12 months.

Bivens’ response related to

how communities have rallied around each other.

“If we can sustain the energy and passion and the concern around how much Black lives actually do matter, then I do believe that something can change.”

She also made a powerful comment as she explained that the Black community cannot be the only ones that push for change.

“It’s strange to ask the victim all the time to do the work,” said Bivens. “We have to create coalitions to allow for shared action. We need to educate ourselves. There’s no reason to not know about some of these things.”

Mason preferred to see a focus on what can be done in one month, rather than 12.

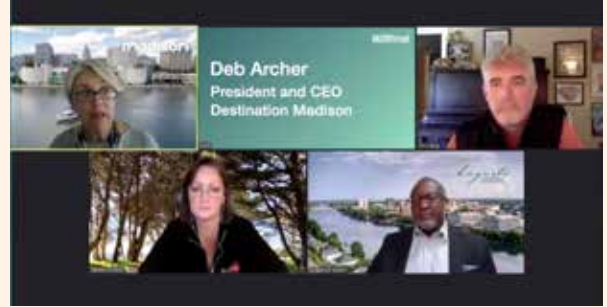
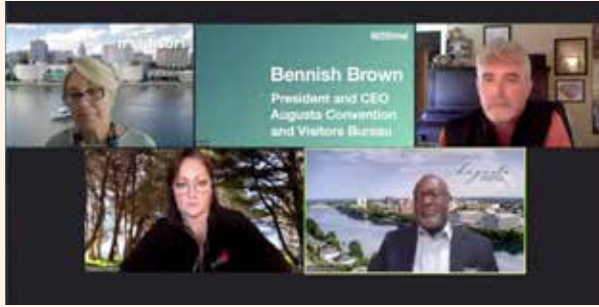
“A year is too far away,” she said. “What are we going to do in 30 days? I am hopeful that within in 30 days we’ll start to see some actions.”

And while he also called for conversation, Hutchinson said he wants more than just talk about the problems, but talking about how to fix the problems.

“Let’s fix this,” he said. “It should not be that complicated to fix. I am excited to be at the table and be one of the voices.”

He hopes that virtual meetings can be held next month, that will help start the focus on

Fostering Culture in the Workplace



A workplace's culture has a far-reaching impact. During More Important Than Ever: Culture in Destination Organizations on July 14, panelists discussed the importance of creating a welcoming environment that attracts, equips and unleashes exceptional talent.

Chris Ihrig, CEO & Lead Practitioner, Fired Up! Culture, moderated the panel discussion. He began by pointing out that workplaces are more social, more mobile and now work life is now our whole life, 24-7.

He began the discussion by asking each of the three panelists to identify a key benefit of investing in workplace culture.

Deb Archer, CDME, President & CEO, Destination Madison, spoke about the need to create a place of trust. Her organization used the results of a culture survey to identify some things that they could activate quickly.

"When people saw that we were able to take action, they started to buy in," said Archer.

Bennis Brown, President & CEO, Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau, pointed to team learning.

"We read together, so we learn together," he said. "Building better internal relationships results in building tangible external relationships, and how you interact with community and clients."

The third panelist, Tammy Blount-Canavan, CDME, Executive Vice President and Principal, Fired Up! Culture, spoke about the importance of working together.

"I was looking for a team that was going to fulfill the mission that we were on together as an organization," she said. "I need people that respected each other and were there for all the right reasons."

Ihrig also asked the panelists about what they learned about

themselves during the process of conducting culture work.

Archer said she found that she wasn't moving fast enough, while Brown spoke about collaboration.

Blount-Canavan found that it's important to keep everyone informed.

"Sometimes we try to protect people from knowing too much information that would distract or hurt them," she said. "I learned that is not helpful. Including people in conversations helps them understand challenges. The people I were trying to shelter had some good ideas."

The pandemic has impacted our work lives in many ways, with each panelist speaking about a different aspect of the impact.

"I've seen the whole spectrum," said Archer. "Fear, worry, concern, anger and resentment."

Brown said the COVID-19 impact gave his team the opportunity

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Albom

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Convention July 15 suggesting that, in the end, “giving is living.”

The author of the best-selling memoir in publishing history, *Tuesdays With Morrie*, Albom said these life experiences taught him about destinations. “If you’re going to go someplace, I think the best places you can go are ones that make you different, or places that you can make a difference,” he said.

Albom’s former professor, Morris “Morrie” S. Schwartz, was an American professor of sociology at Brandeis University and an author. The two developed a friendship outside of the classroom during Albom’s years in college in the 70s. “He became more like an uncle to me,” he said. “The last day of graduation, I bought him a briefcase. It was cheap, I didn’t have any money, but it had his initials etched into it. You would have thought I gave him a brick of gold.”

But Albom neglected to stay in touch after graduation. Then, 16 years later, he saw his former mentor on Ted Koppel’s “Nightline” program saying that he had a terminal illness. He called Schwartz, then went to visit him, then decided to visit him weekly to find out “what do we know,



...Lessons from Morrie.

...Our Sudden Family.

...My Meaning of Life.

when we are really looking death in the face, that puts everything else in perspective.”

During those visits, Albom noticed how others coming to see Morrie would “come in with strategies, as they didn’t know how to visit a dying man. They’d

tell funny stories, and they’d go in happy and come out in tears. They would say, ‘he started asking me questions. I went in trying to cheer him up and he ended cheering me up.’”

Albom’s changing life lesson had begun. “Giving makes



me feel like living. Taking never really makes us happy,” he said. In the recordings people made during their last moments alive after the 9/11 attacks, Albom said no one talked about their money – they reached out to tell people close to them that they loved them.

Later in life, a local Detroit pastor sought out Albom’s help in traveling to his orphanage in Haiti after that country’s devastating 2010 earthquake. “Eventually I was able to charter a six-person airplane. When we started going into the city (of Port Au Prince), it was hell on earth.” When reaching the orphanage, the travelers found a building intact but a place teeming with people looking for help. “I went

back every month with a crew from Detroit to build it back up, but I noticed the kids were still starving. That’s when [the pastor] told me he really didn’t have any money, so I blurted out, “I could probably run this place, how hard could it be?”

In the process of providing 50 new children a place to live, meals and medical care, Albom met a five year old name Chika – a girl with Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) – untreatable in Haiti at the time. Albom and his wife Janine brought her to the United States, and together became a family for two years until she died of the disease. “All of our jobs is to carry our children,” he said.

“The travel that I miss with

everything being closed down is not to go to California, or to New York to see a show, or a nice beach vacation. I miss the children of the orphanage. It’s hot, it’s dirty but I’m making a difference,” he said, noting that he had visited at least monthly for ten years until the coronavirus crisis hit.

Albom said the lessons of Morrie, and later of Chika, have changed his life: give to live, listen to others, and invest now in the important relationships you will remember on your deathbed. “As we go on in this very difficult period of time, as you’ll get back to this different destination business, there are worse things to say than ‘where do you think you can make a difference?’”

Culture

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to pause and get to know one another.

“This has been a great time for reflection and movement in the right direction,” he said.

Creating a virtual work environment has created new challenges.

“It’s about finding the right tools and right mediums,” said Blount-Canavan. “We also need to be intentional about

relationships.”

Ihrig then posed two questions from the audience to the panelists.

When asked about how to prevent silos, Archer said it was something her team faced.

“We needed to take the time to restructure how teams were being led,” she said. “We came out with a more collaborative approach.”

Another audience question related to the impact of downsizing along with remote work prac-

tices. Brown said it is important to realize that there’s a lot going on besides work right now.

Ihrig then posed one final question to the group: If the audience could take one step related to their workplace culture going forward, what would they recommend?

Archer recommended conducting a culture survey; Brown stressed the importance of tapping into your values; while Blount-Canavan said “be relentless. Own your culture all day, every day.”

Tourism Will Change for the Good of Our Communities

CVBs have the opportunity not only to bring back tourists to their destinations after the Coronavirus pandemic, but have an equally important need to support their communities in myriad ways in times of multiple challenges. That was one consensus of the Global All Starts Innovators Showcase July 14, sponsored by Miles Partnership.

Chris Adams, head of research and insights, and Elena Prostova, vice president, new business development, both of Miles Partnership, moderated the panel of three industry experts, with the first presentation focused on “Five Ways Tourism Will Be Changed Forever.”

Connecting and Unifying

Rita McClenny, president and CEO, Virginia Tourism Corporation said to keep an eye on research from around the world. “While liberating to some, disorienting or distasteful to others, there are five things to consider: COVID-19, racism and social justice, calls for equality, political realignment and the financial stress of the world economy under pressure,” she said, comparing our current times with the unrest and social change of 1969. “Travel connects us, so



anything that’s connecting is also unifying.”

Todd Davidson, CEO, Travel Oregon, said people have an intrinsic desire for travel. “It’s not ‘if,’ it’s ‘when,’” he said. “Tourism should be a boon, not a drain to communities. We need to capitalize on the sense of unifying the travel and tourism industry to create a better life for all. Look at our policies – how we’re serving our workforce, which is probably one of the most diverse around America and the world.”

McClenny said there’s a new value proposition out there. “Travel is personal. You want to go to a safe place to visit with healthy practices and amazing local food. It’s a requirement. It’s on the bucket list. It has to be there,” she said.

Davidson said there could be a future requirement for travelers to prove that they’ve been vaccinated for COVID-19, noting how some states are now requiring some out-of-state travelers to quarantine for 14 days when they arrive. And technology is already a big part of the new world. “The advance of temperature scans at attractions will become part of the travel experience, sort of like a ‘TSA-plus,’” he said. “We also want more digital content instead of being part of a group of people on a tour – we want a docent-led experience in an art gallery, for instance.” What won’t change is “the deep desire to travel and to have a deep human connection when we do. We need to keep this at the heart of our work as we move forward.”

Signe Jungersted, CEO and Founding Partner, Group NAO, Copenhagen, offered her insight on “Three Ways DMOs Will Be Changed Forever.” She noted the industry is in the “acute-shock era” of Coronavirus, but also in the pre-vaccine era. “DMOs went from appealing visitors to come to pleading with them to stay away,” she noted.

Traveling Freely Again?

“We’re feeling the sense that we’ll come back to the reality of traveling freely, but will we really?” she asked, noting the sharp growth in the number of recent cases in states like Florida. “The real question is what will stick in moving forward for the DMOs.”

Jungersted said the industry is now laying the foundation of what comes ahead. “We’re really eager to rebuild. In that, we want the recovery to be successful and reassuredly fast.” Cypress, for instance, offered to pay for quarantine lodging in the event travelers became sick and stranded there. Sicily offered discounted flights and free access to attractions.

But some of the goals have changed. She cited Amsterdam’s new key measure of success as “thriving in balance” as opposed to growth. Venice is defining itself by its locals – part of an effort to refine success. “Action is in fact

power,” Jungersted said. “It’s not so much who you serve, but how you serve.”

She mentioned Helsinki. “They realized they are not for everyone. The mayor even described the city as an acquired taste. They want to be a leader on climate change to make consumption

“Travel is personal. You want to go to a safe place to visit with healthy practices and amazing local food. It’s a requirement. It’s on the bucket list. It has to be there.”

—Rita McClenny

more sustainable. Now in crisis recovery, they’re taking a cultural stand for the city,” Jungersted said.

As there is a shift from pandemic to more of a hybrid crisis, she said destination organizations need to start preparing for a combination of two or more crises that may reinforce one another.

Jungersted said past overtourism and growing political division will connect us to what’s coming and be able to build a defense for that, “positively affecting the vision ahead to battle the hybrid crisis.”

The moderators asked the panel what, in hospitality, is most likely to look different, coming out of the crisis. Restaurants, hotels, and certainly airlines were on everyone’s list. And there was a sense from all that appealing to local residents and visitors from nearby locales will be important.

Engaging Locals

Davidson said Oregon surveyed its residents last year and found the key to improving local tourism sentiment is for residents to have positive engagement with visitors and tourists: telling visitors of the stories of their people and bringing them into the story as well.

McClenny mentioned Virginia’s WanderLove grants, designed to provide immediate recovery marketing funds to destination organizations across the Commonwealth that have been heavily impacted by the novel coronavirus pandemic, this year attracting 114 applications. “Nearly 98% of our DMOs came up with creative ideas for those who travel with their families in the summer.”

Relationship-building during a Pandemic: Coming out Stronger from COVID-19

There's no doubt about it, the past four months have been extremely challenging for the tourism industry. That especially is true of our organizations' employees. Working remotely, home schooling, furloughs...the list can go on. And then you also need to factor in relationships with both current and potential clients. Site visits are much different these days.

During Reimagining Yourself: Preparing for a Post-COVID Industry on July 14, speakers presented ways of providing support to team members, using video in creative ways and how they plan to move forward in this new environment.

Moderated by Kellie Henderson, Senior Vice President; and Nicole Newman, Vice President, both with SearchWide Global, the session featured a discussion with Carol Motley, Director of Convention Sales, Destination DC; and Brett Oetting, CDME, President & CEO, Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau.

For Motley, one of the initial impacts was the need to furlough staff, but she reported that some are due to return next week, though some will be on a con-

densed work schedule. She also reported a loss of more than \$250 million from canceled events.

Oetting's experience was doubly challenging, as he assumed his new role on March 16, just one day before the pandemic required him to close the office and have staff

“We can teach them the skills. It’s important to find people that can roll with these types of things.”
—*Brett Oetting*

work remotely. His organization also had to furlough employees. One silver lining, he said, was that rather than focusing on meeting city leaders, he was able to get to know his new employees.

In regard to communicating with clients, both said there's a focus on safety, but timing does impact what they are sharing with clients.

Oetting said his office re-

ceived a request from a client scheduled to meet in Corpus Christi in January, but would like to postpone until October. Tourism has been strong of late, however – he reported a 57 percent occupancy rate in May. There now is a renewed focus on communicating with partners about being safe and how to practice social distancing in a beach community.

In Washington, D.C., Motley said they are following directives and phases put out by Mayor Muriel Bowser's office.

“Safety will be addressed when the time is right,” she said. “We are making sure that our team is a resource – that we are disseminating information from other agencies.”

COVID-19 has also impacted recruiting. The moderators asked if there were new skill sets that employees should be looking for?

Resiliency is what came to mind for Motley.

“It's not necessarily a new skill set, but they are going to have to dig deep and pull from their existing strengths,” she said.

Oetting said he's always focused on personality. “We can teach them the skills. It's



important to find people that can roll with these types of things.” He added that it is important for employees to have the right growth mindset, and can also understand the situations that they are in.

Zoom calls may be all the rage now, but will they continue when face-to-face meetings can resume? Both Oetting and Motley said yes, as the technology has offered new opportunities to connect with clients.

“Some aspects of what we are doing now are going to be the new normal,” said Oetting.

Motley pointed to the fact that the tourism industry is driven by relationships, but sometimes things become too transactional.

Now, there seems to be more time for personal conversations – and getting to know someone on a more personal level. Sharing experiences helps those relationships grow and thrive.

“We need to build on true relationships of trust that we got away from,” said Motley.

Oetting spoke about how his team used video calls to virtually meet, and eventually win, a new contract, all done without ever meeting the client in person.

Managing staff during the current pandemic requires more of the leadership team. Both Oetting and Motley spoke about the need to communicate with staff and recognize that these are not

normal times.

“Employees need to feel they are in the safe place,” she said. “In Washington, DC, we are in the hub of it. They need to be able to ask questions. The more knowledge that we take in, and the more open we are, the more you will feel comfortable talking with clients.”

Oetting echoed those sentiments, stressing the need to make sure everyone

is on the same page.

“The most important job of the CEO is to build a cohesive team,” he said. “I have been trying to focus on checking in on my employees. This time has helped me to learn the right path to build relationships.”

And while there are so many unknowns right now, both panelists offered a final tip to the audience.

Motley encouraged listeners to keep an open mind: “You will and can inspire others.”

Oetting said the industry needs to stick together: “Tourism will come back faster if we all stay on the same page. Tourism gives a respite from real life.”

Lohrenz

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female Tomcat F-14 fighter pilot.

“The cockpit is one of most demanding environments on earth and where I learned some of my most unforgettable lessons,” she said. “The ability to work through fear kept me alive. Those same skills are what keep any leader relevant and moving forward.”

In these challenging times – especially for the tourism industry, Lohrenz explained that high-performing teams require fearless leaders. She talked of feeling as if you’re stuck on a ladder, or possibly looking for better ways to do things.

“You’re so fearful of doing things wrong that you’re stuck in a rut and paralyzed by fear,” she said. “No matter your situation, you need to be able to work through fear – the best leaders

stare fear in the face, and they go for it anyway.”

Lohrenz spoke about three fundamental traits of leaders: courage, tenacity and integrity. She said that these traits are key to leading any team, and it’s important to determine how to use these traits to inspire and align your team.

“You would think I think I have the most important job because I am a fighter pilot,” said Lohrenz. “But we know it takes an entire high-performing team to get this job done – we cannot do this job ourselves.”

She shared her personal experiences, which included leading a squadron of 250-300 personnel, many of who were under the age of 20. And in addition, 50 percent of the 5,000 people on the carrier will turn over every nine months.

Leading 19-year olds

“Imagine from a leadership perspective – you’re trying to

not only lead yourself and your team during this change, but how would you get the job done if everyone you worked with was 19 years old?,” she asked.

Knowing what your purpose is, and having a vision to accomplish it, is crucial. The clearer the vision, the greater the focus you will create amongst your team.

“The single biggest predictor of your ability to be successful is knowing your purpose,” she said. “These are unprecedented times. Figuring out the purpose is what will determine if you will be successful or relevant long-term.”

Having clarity from the beginning is also important, as is a good attitude.

“A fuzzy idea will not get clearer the further down the line you go,” she added. “A great attitude doesn’t guarantee your success but a negative attitude kills your ability to adapt”

Cutting corners is also not an option.

“To get to be excellent, you can never cut these corners,” she said.

She reminded attendees to focus on what matters.

“If in day-to-day activity, you lose sight of the most important work you are doing, you are guaranteed to fail,” said Lohrenz. “You must figure out what the most

“You’re so fearful of doing things wrong that you’re stuck in a rut and paralyzed by fear ... the best leaders stare fear in the face, and they go for it anyway.”



important work is – purpose is the filter. Keep it simple; be clear about what you want your team to accomplish.”

One suggestion that she provided to the audience:

- Take a stack of Post-it Notes and a sharpie
- Write down the three most valuable things that you should be focusing on.
- Put it where you can see it.

“That clear vision gives us focus, and focus is power. Diluted focus is diluted power.”

Plans that were made just a few months ago may no longer be valid. But regardless, action is required. She stressed the need to try new things, and not being afraid to fail.

“Over the course of time, the one thing that holds out to be true – only the people who continue

taking action are the ones who survive and thrive,” she said.

Accepting Failure

Failure will happen – it’s something that you need to accept.

“Most people underestimate the ability to recover from failure, and it leads to us passing up valuable opportunities,” she said. “Failure will happen, it’s what you do with it that will define you.”

Lohrenz spoke about how she dared to show up different – as Congress had prohibited women from flying in combat. She was told that she could either leave the Navy, or transfer to a non-flying job. She spoke about telling her commanding officer that they needed to find a third option, then left his office.

“You don’t have to be cou-

rageous all the time – throw it in and run!”

Then a few weeks later, changes were made to allow women to fly in combat.

“Don’t wait for an invitation to make a difference, continue to step up.”

Another mantra she shared with the audience was this approach: Aviate. Navigate. Communicate.

“The first thing you must do is slow down,” she said. “Maintain perspective, identify priorities, observe, listen, and ask questions.”

Then once you find your inner compass, you will be able to figure out where you need to go.

“In a crisis, you have to get a sense of stability and then figure out the next step,” she said. “What does success look like for us, right now.”

Then it is important to communicate your intentions, which can be done using this three-prong message:

- Keep it simple.
- Clarify the complex.
- Understand what your mission is.

Confronting your fear is a necessity – it is what drives success. Her challenge to the audience was to have the courage to keep showing up, and think about how you can inspire greatness.

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PAUSE. CHANGE. INNOVATE.
JULY 23

Join Destinations International, industry leaders and peers on July 23 for a day-long marketing and communications virtual summit focusing on the evolving role of destination marketers and the need for destinations to effectively react to the rapid changes occurring in the industry.

The event kicks off with a welcome by Don Welsh, President and CEO; and Jack Johnson, Chief Advocacy Officer, of Destinations International. Johnson sets the tone for the day with insights on what it will take to transition from a traditional CVB model to what a CVB needs to be in the new normal.

Mathew Sweezey, principal of marketing insights, Salesforce.com, provides the morning keynote. Regarded as one of the leading minds on the future of marketing, his visionary insights into consumer behavior, technology, and new business strategies have changed the way startups, Fortune 500 companies, and nonprofit organizations alike find customers, break through and build modern brands.

During Navigating the Data, the question on the table: How do we as an industry navigate the data to put us back on a path to recovery? A panel of industry experts sort through what this data means, what data points are most telling and what will be the new benchmarks as we look to 2021.

The afternoon continues the data theme, with a working Virtual Shirtsleeves session to dig into the data. Discussion groups will be divided regionally to unpack the sweet spots for the marketing spend in 2020.

Are You Really Addressing Diversity and Inclusion? asks: Was your destination really prepared for this moment? Did you know what to say and how to respond?

Was your branding reflective of being inviting to all? Join us for a discussion on why diversity and inclusion is critical to travel and destination brands.

The tale of how two cities that launched their meetings recovery marketing plan, post COVID-19, follows, examining the efforts of Explore Branson and Visit Fort Worth. More Than Just Media Relations examines the importance of your organization's voice in the community, especially during a crisis. The issues of quarantines, phased re-openings, safety and security will be discussed during "Balancing Visitor and Local Sentiment." A virtual happy hour and virtual chat conclude the day's agenda.


DESTINATIONS
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Destinations International strives to make our members and their destinations successful. As the world's largest and most reliable resource for destination organizations, we inform, connect, inspire and educate our members with the goal to drive destination economic impact, job creation, community sustainability and quality of life through travel.