

ANNUAL REPORT FY 24

SAVANNAH-GEORGIA CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY



SAVANNAH
CONVENTION CENTER

SAVANNAH-GEORGIA CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARK SMITH, CHAIRMAN
Water Utility Management, LLC

JOSEPH MARINELLI, VICE CHAIRMAN
Visit Savannah

BERT BRANTLEY, SECRETARY/TREASURER
Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce

BENJAMIN POLOTE JR.
The Polote Corporation

PATRICK FARRELL
Chatham County Commission

ANNE SCHEER
Scheer, Montgomery & Call P.C

ANSLEY WILLIAMS
Live Oak Restaurants

MARTIN MILLER
Alcove Properties, LLC

PRITPAL SINGH
Left Lane Development

TRIP TOLLISON
Savannah Economic Development Authority

RUTH QUATTLEBAUM-EDWARDS
Retired

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



OUR MISSION

To be the event venue of choice, driving economic growth and showcasing the uniqueness of Savannah, Chatham County and the State of Georgia.

OUR VISION

Be the premier event destination delivering exceptional service and creating memorable experiences.

LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

Rep. Jesse Petrea
House District 166

Rep. Ron Stephens
House District 164

Rep. Edna Jackson
House District 165

Rep. Carl Gillard
House District 162

Rep. Bill Hitchens
House District 161

Rep. Anne Allen Westbrook
House District 163

Sen. Ben Watson
District 1

Sen. Derek Mallow
District 2

Sen Billy Hickman
District 4



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to provide this report on the Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority.

Our fiscal year ending June 2024 was another year of exceptional performance for the Savannah Convention Center. We ended the year with an operating profit of over \$825,000, \$1.8 Million better than budgeted. This is a remarkable achievement as it is rare for a convention center to yield an operating profit. It is equally noteworthy given that our expansion was scheduled to open in September of 2023, and the delay resulted in the need to reschedule and reorganize many of our events that had been scheduled to utilize the expansion.

The highlight of the year was the conclusion of our national search for a General Manager. This resulted in the hiring of Mr. Kelvin D. Moore, CMP. Kelvin has enjoyed a remarkable career in the convention industry. His fifteen-year tenure with ASM Global (previously SMG) culminated in him serving as Regional Vice President and General Manager of McCormick Place in Chicago. We are so fortunate to have secured such a talented executive to oversee our building expansion, our hotel project and our convention business enhancement. Kelvin is leading us to a new level of operational performance. Kelvin was immediately faced with the challenge of the expansion's delayed opening while simultaneously building out his team. His experienced hand has guided us expertly through a very interesting year. Thank you, Kelvin!

I want to thank my fellow Authority members, Mr. Joe Marinelli, Vice Chairman; Mr. Bert Brantley, Secretary-Treasurer; Mrs. Anne Scheer, Mrs. Ruth Quattlebaum, Commissioner Pat Farrell, Mr. Martin Miller, Mr. Ben Polote, Mr.

Pritpal Singh, Mr. Trip Tollison, and Mr. Ansley Williams. They are excellent stewards of your convention center and a pleasure to work with.

Of course, we could only be under construction with continued appropriations from the State of Georgia. We thank our local delegation led by Representative Ron Stephens supported by Senators Ben Watson, Derek Mallow and Billy Hickman, Representatives Anne Westbrook, Bill Hitchens, Carl Gilliard, Edna Jackson, and Jesse Petrea for keeping our funding request in front of the legislature. We received \$8 million in the 2024 legislative session to complete our convention center.

We look forward to 2025 and all future years with confidence. We are excited to open our expanded convention center in January of 2025. Presently, we have over 100 groups booked that would not be meeting in our Center but for the expansion.

After 7 years of effort, we are developing a new 400-room headquarter hotel. The Authority has determined it will follow the successful format established by the Georgia World Congress Center Authority. The GWCCA opened a 975-room Signia Hotel, by Hilton, in January of 2024 on the site of the former Georgia Dome. The GWCCA will own this hotel. The hotel was financed with bonds sold by Morgan Stanley to private investors, a substantial contribution from the Hilton Hotel Corp, and a cash infusion from the GWCCA. Our hotel is under design with funds advanced by the Savannah Georgia Convention Center Authority.

The Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority will own our hotel. Morgan Stanley and Hilton will underwrite it. The financial plan will include bonds sold to private investors and a contribution from Hilton. Rather than a cash donation, the Savannah-Georgia Convention

Center Authority will guarantee approximately 15% of the bonds issued by pledging a portion of its hotel-motel tax. This hotel is necessary to ensure the maximum performance of the expanded Convention Center. We look forward to a groundbreaking for this exciting project in 2025. I would like to thank Mr. Frank Poe, Executive Director of the Georgia World Congress Center, for his invaluable assistance in developing our hotel project. I would also like to thank our development team spearheaded by Mr. David Songy of the Songy Highroads Company of Atlanta.

And speaking of Frank Poe, the reality of his retirement at the end of this year has set in. Eleven years ago, I sought his advice on our finances which led to the Georgia World Congress Center taking over management of the Savannah Georgia Convention Center. He is leaving us in a very strong position. Frank has been an excellent leader, visionary, mentor, and friend. I wish him Godspeed and a wonderful retirement.

In summary I am pleased to report on the many accomplishments of the Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority during fiscal 2024.

We look forward to continued success during 2025.

Respectfully,
Mark V. Smith
Chairman



record. That is why places like the Savannah Convention Center - and the hardworking men and women employed there - are so important to our state. They don't just provide travelers with exemplary service; they also support their communities and bring needed business to the surrounding area.

As we look forward to another fruitful year, including celebrating the 25th anniversary of this Savannah institution and completing noteworthy expansions, I want to thank the leadership of the Convention Center for their vision and commitment to its success. With southeast Georgia welcoming unprecedented economic growth in recent years, this region will need a premier space such as this readily available for trade shows, conventions, meetings, and more. We look forward to watching the role the Savannah Convention Center will play in that exciting future and have confidence this team will ensure it is a success.

Sincerely,

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Greetings,
As Georgia has broken

tourism records in recent years, Savannah has played a key role in transforming the Peach State into a premier destination for leisure and business travelers from across the world. Our state is blessed to be home to the natural beauty of our golden isles, with the historic Hostess City the crown jewel of our coast. At its heart, the Savannah Convention Center has grown alongside its home to attract business travelers from across the globe and provide them with an incredible professional experience right in the heart of the charm and culture of Savannah.

Our most recent tourism numbers showed that, as a state, we reached 171 million visitors in 2023, 5 million more than the previous record. Those tourists contributed \$43.6 billion to our businesses, another



GREETINGS FROM THE GOVERNOR





MESSAGE FROM THE GWCCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Frank Poe, Executive Director
Georgia World Congress Center Authority

As I reflect on my time working with the Savannah Convention Center (SCC), it's remarkable to see just how much has transpired since the Georgia World Congress Center Authority first inked the management agreement over a decade ago – a groundbreaking private-to-public partnership in our industry. Savannah's charm continues to capture the imagination of meeting planners from around the world, and the Convention Center has thrived, earning high praise from clients, and remaining on a strong path of prosperity.

With exciting expansion plans on the horizon and a solid strategy for future capital projects, Savannah Convention

Center is well-positioned for continued growth and success. This is due in no small part to the incredible team whose hard work and dedication have made the SCC what it is today. Their passion and commitment are truly the heart and soul of the Center's success.

As I step away, I do so with complete confidence that the SCC will continue to have a lasting positive impact on Savannah, the region, and the state of Georgia. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the State for its trust in me and our team's partnership with the SCC. I look forward to seeing this partnership flourish for many years to come and know the future is bright.

Thank you for the honor of serving alongside such talented and dedicated individuals. The best is yet to come.



MESSAGE FROM THE GWCCA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

we continue to support strategic capital investment projects that ensure the Savannah Convention Center remains a premier destination. These investments are essential to maintaining a competitive edge and positioning SCC for long-term success and continued contributions to Georgia's economic development.

Thank you to our partners, customers, and stakeholders for their ongoing support and commitment to our shared vision. Together, we will build on our success and continue to elevate Savannah's role as a cornerstone of Georgia's thriving convention industry.

It is with great pride and excitement that I join the Savannah Convention Center in celebrating another remarkable year of growth, success, and shared accomplishments. As we reflect on the progress we've made, it's clear that the strong partnerships in Savannah play a vital role in driving economic impact. Together, with Atlanta our cities form a connection unlike any other in the convention and hospitality industry, celebrating the best of Georgia's innovation and unique culture that sets us apart.

Our collaborative efforts have attracted world-class events and conferences and have also strengthened the local economies and benefited the entire state. As we look ahead, it's important that



Kevin Duvall, CEO
Georgia World Congress Center Authority

MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

As we reflect on another year of remarkable achievements at the Savannah Convention Center, I am reminded of the true meaning of progress: the process of gradually improving or getting nearer to achieving or completing something. This year has been a testament to that, as we have continued to move forward, tackling challenges, celebrating milestones, and consistently working toward excellence.

From a financial perspective, fiscal year 2024 was outstanding. We achieved the highest gross revenue in the convention center's history, at over \$15 million. This success, along with consistently high customer satisfaction scores, reflects the dedication

and professionalism of our exceptional team and the level of committed partnership with our event organizing partners. These accomplishments truly highlight what we can achieve together.

Campus development continues to be a priority, with over \$302 million in capital investments completed, planned, or underway. The most significant of these is the \$276 million expansion of Savannah Convention Center, which is nearing completion. Thanks to the support of State of Georgia, this project will double the Center's size, enhance our ability to host a wider range of events, elevate the guest experience, and continue to drive economic impact. I am pleased to report that more than 100 events have already been booked to utilize the expanded space.

Looking ahead to 2025, the future is bright. The Savannah Convention Center will celebrate its 25th anniversary; plans are in motion for the grand opening of our expansion project; and we are embarking on hotel development plans that will serve to reinforce the Savannah Convention Center's reputation as one of the premiere convention and event facilities in the Southeast and elevate the destination onto a national stage.

With ongoing support from the State of Georgia, exceptional stewardship by the Savannah Georgia Convention Center Authority Board of Directors, and strong partnerships with Visit Savannah, the local hotel and hospitality community and our municipal partners at Chatham County, City of Savannah, City of Tybee, City of Pooler and Garden City, the success of the Savannah Convention center is a shared achievement, and we look forward to continuing this journey in 2025 and beyond. As we move forward, we will stay true to our mission to be an economic driver while also serving as the premier community gathering space for Savannah and surrounding areas. We are excited about the opportunities that the future holds and we look forward to embarking on this exciting new chapter... together!

Kelvin D. Moore, CMP

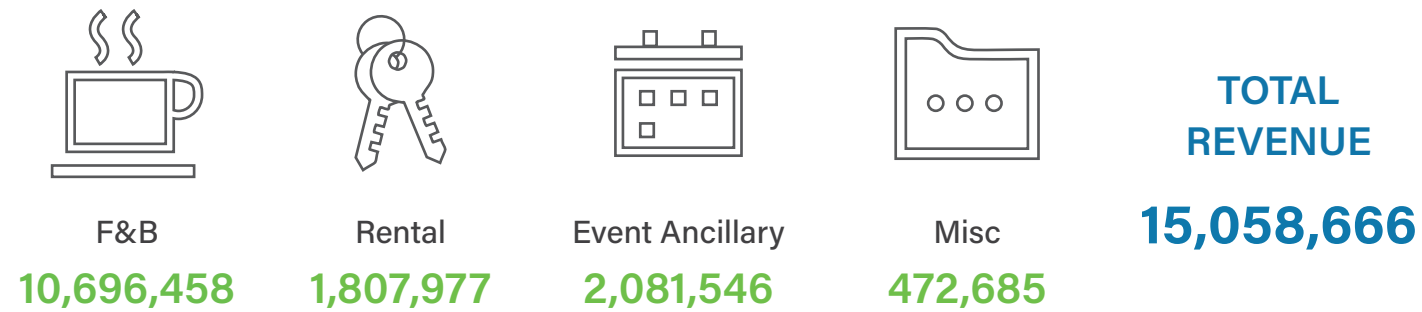
Senior Vice President & General Manager



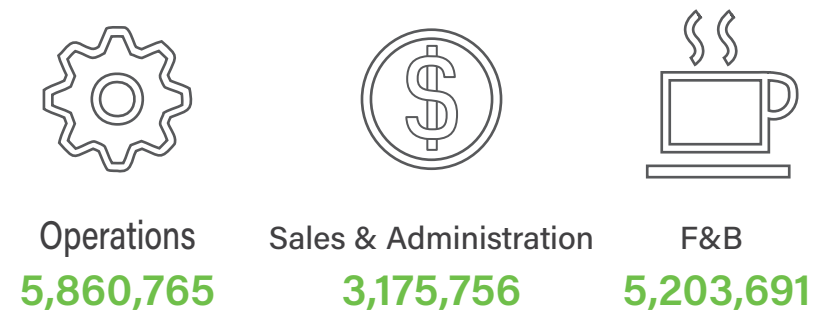
FINANCIAL UPDATE

SAVANNAH CONVENTION CENTER

REVENUES



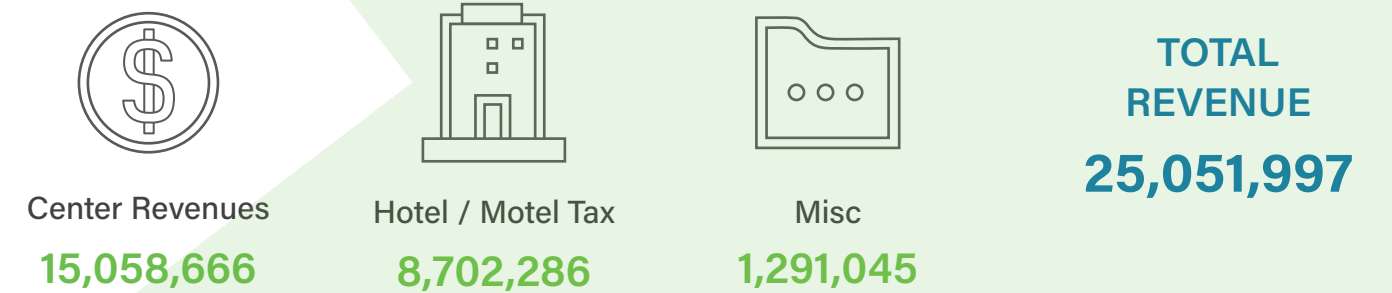
EXPENSES



TOTAL EXPENSES
14,240,212

SAVANNAH-GEORGIA CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY

REVENUES



EXPENSES



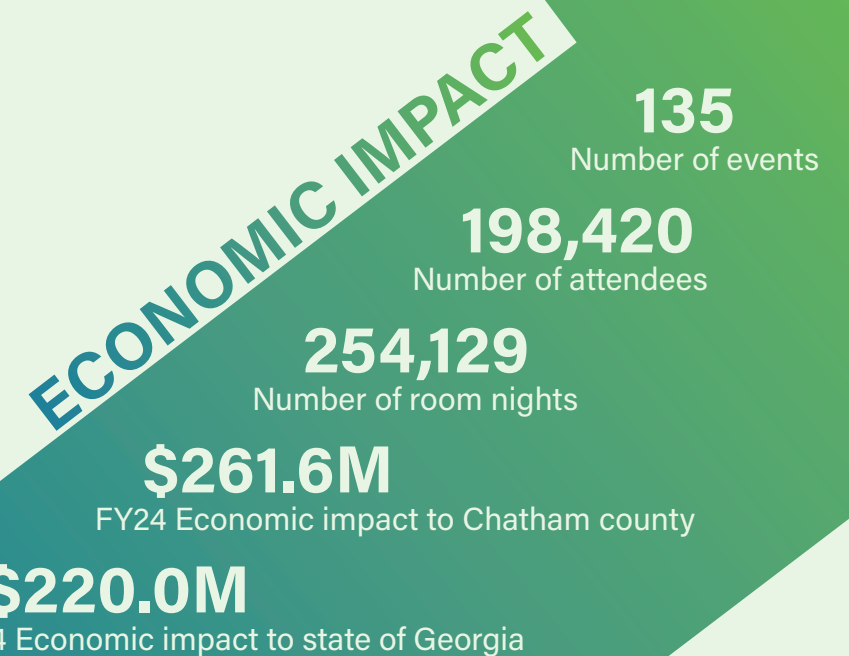
NET INCOME

Net income before depreciation and capital
7,143,032

Depreciation
635,663

Capital projects
3,711,036

Net income after depreciation and capital



SALES UPDATE

REFLECTING ON A YEAR OF GROWTH AND RESILIENCE



As we conclude the year, we reflect on the achievements and milestones of 2024, celebrating the dedication and resilience of our team, partners, and stakeholders. This has been a year of significant growth as we embraced challenges and transformed them into opportunities, reinforcing our commitment to mission, customer service, and community impact.

With the expansion delayed, the sales team survived a challenging year. The 26 events booked in the expansion space had to be rescheduled, moved to a different location in the existing building or relocated to a different destination. The team has been able to maintain excellent relationships with the customers, doing everything possible to make the transitions as seamless as possible.

This year, we've not only deepened our commitment to excellence but also expanded our horizons, venturing into new markets, exploring new processes and innovative ways to share information with the customer. As we continue to grow, I am profoundly grateful for the dedication and support from each of you that made our achievements possible.

With all the challenges we faced, 2024 was the best revenue in SCC's history.

I want to personally thank the sales team for their efforts in fiscal year 2024. During this time, they remained dedicated to the customer, team members, and the building's financial obligation.

As we look to the future, our goals for 2025 are clear: to continue building on our strengths, embracing innovation, and creating long-lasting value for our customers. A dream is coming true for the community and the State of Georgia, with the Savannah Convention Center being the second-largest convention center in the State. Over 600,000 square feet of space will put the Savannah Convention Center in a different tier, competing with similar or larger venues. The building is exceptional and gives the sales team many amenities to unveil to planners. We remain committed to our journey as we pursue our vision for an enhanced experience for visitors and locals alike.

This year, we were fortunate to have Kelvin Moore join our family as General Manager. Kelvin's vision for the future will bring us into a different era. I would like to thank our SGCCA Board of Directors, led by Mark Smith, GWCCA staff, stakeholders who believed in the project, and our area partners for their role in assisting with this year's success.



ANGELA DANIELS
Director of Sales & Marketing
Over 30 years in the Hospitality Industry



STACI STOVER
Sales Manager - Northeast Territory
Over 40 years in the Hospitality Industry



LILY OSTRANDER
Sales Manager - Midwest Territory
8 years in the Hospitality Industry



KIM HOMANSKY
Sales Manager - Local Catering, Weddings, Graduations, Consumer Shows
8 years in the Hospitality Industry



DAYNA MERCER
Sales Manager - Sports/Competitive Arts & Southeast Territory
15 years in the Hospitality Industry



CHARLEN VESEY
Sales Booking Coordinator
4 years in the Hospitality Industry

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

STELLAR YEAR
BEST GROSS REVENUE \$15,054,489

- 135** events
- 198,420** attendees
- 254,129** room nights
- 324** proposals sent
- 57** site visits



"Excellent"
rating of Sales staff by our customers

OPERATIONS CAPITAL PROJECTS OVERVIEW

The Savannah Convention Center has had a remarkable year of growth and development, marked by significant progress in capital projects, construction, and expansion efforts. These initiatives are designed to enhance our facilities, increase capacity, and improve the overall experience for our clients and visitors. Our team has worked diligently to ensure that each project aligns with our mission to provide a world-class convention experience, while also supporting the economic vitality of the Savannah area. As we continue to build for the future, we remain committed to delivering excellence in every aspect of our operations.

Projects in Construction Phase (3.3M)

- Facility Carpet Replacement (Meeting Room 106 and E. Concourse NF) (840k)
- Trane Automation Conversion (350k)
- Exhibit Hall/Ballroom Lighting/Dimming System (750K)
- Meeting Room/Ballroom Airwall Replacement (1.4M)

Projects in Design Phase (800K)

- Meeting Room Door Replacement (300K)
- Interior Furniture Replacement (500k)

Projects in Procurement Phase (9.84m)

- Audio Visual Replacement (450k)
- Riverwalk Repairs (9M)
- Bryan Square Reseal (750K-390K(BID))

Projects in Planning Phase (3.6M)

- Public Space Art (500k)
- Marquee Sign (375k)
- Employee Locker Rooms (250k)
- Replacement of Facility Signage (125k)
- Fiber Optic Upgrade (50k)
- Ballroom Upgrade (450k)
- Auditorium Balcony (Seating Addition) (650K)
- Hutchinson Island Monument Sign (46K)
- Deferred FF&E for Expansion (1.2M)

Project Completed this FY (8.9M)

- Facility Repaint (450k)
- Exterior Door Upgrades-Electronic Locks (950k)
- Exterior Furniture Replacement (69k)
- Tondee's Furniture Replacement (93K)
- Trench Drain Replacement (35K)
- Additional AED's (6K)
- Siemens Fire Panel Upgrade (175k)
- Moveable Performance Stage (137k)
- Roof Replacement Project (5.9 M)
- Kitchen Equipment Upgrade (150k)
- Phone System Upgrade (26K)
- Electric WheelChair Lift (50K)
- Chiller #1 Motor Rehab (200K)
- Chillwater Valve Replacement AHU 8 & AHU 9 (7k)
- Upgrade Coolers and Freezer Thermostats and Gaskets (17K)



Expansion Progress

- Dried in Facility (except hanger door)
- Installed Hanger Door
- Meeting Rooms- Installed Lighting, Electrical, HVAC, Millwork, Airwalls, and Carpet
- Ballroom- Installed lighting, Electrical, HVAC, Millwork, Rigging Points
- Installed escalators from 1-2 and 2-6 floors
- Installed and Operational 90% Elevators
- 75% Complete on the Reconfiguration of the main parking lot
- Completed structural topping slabs for the parking garage
- Installing landscaping on the North Side of the facility
- Installed High Performance Concrete Panels
- Installed Switch Gear
- HVAC is currently running in all spaces
- Completed Central Plant Installation
- Substantially completed drywall installation in Public Area
- Installing additional drive and drop off area next Bryan Square





FOOD & BEVERAGE

SAVANNAH CONVENTION CENTER TEAM

The Savannah Convention Center's Food and Beverage team is proud of the past year's achievements, innovations and growth. Our focus has been on enhancing the culinary experience for our guests through a combination of exceptional service, diverse menu offerings, and sustainable practices. By collaborating with local vendors and continually refining our operations, we have maintained the highest standards of quality and excellence. This report highlights our commitment to delivering memorable dining experiences that complement the overall success of events hosted at our facility.

The Food and Beverage team had a record year with over \$10,000,000 in sales. In addition to the incredible revenue, our culinary team pushed out more than 150,000 meals this year. We worked together to make every visitor's experience memorable. Whether it be a gala, business meeting, sporting event, or tradeshow, the SCC Food and Beverage team takes pride in every meal served by using various sustainable options for guests when available. Our expansion will provide guests with several new food and beverage options for dining and quick service meals. We have also updated our central kitchen with the latest advancements in cooking technology for our newly expanded building. The Food and Beverage team takes immense pride in serving our community, clients and partners.

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Your focus on delivering high-quality work and ensuring client satisfaction has elevated our standards as a company. Your attention to detail and professionalism are second to none.

- Q1. BEE BRINSON** / Banquet Captain
- Q2. TINA TAYLORSON** / Operations Coordinator
- Q3. PATRICE SIMMONS** / Catering Coordinator
- Q4. LINDSAY OLEAR** / Event Manager

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Your willingness to collaborate and support your colleagues sets you apart. You always prioritize the team's success over individual recognition, and we are incredibly fortunate to have you on the SCC team.

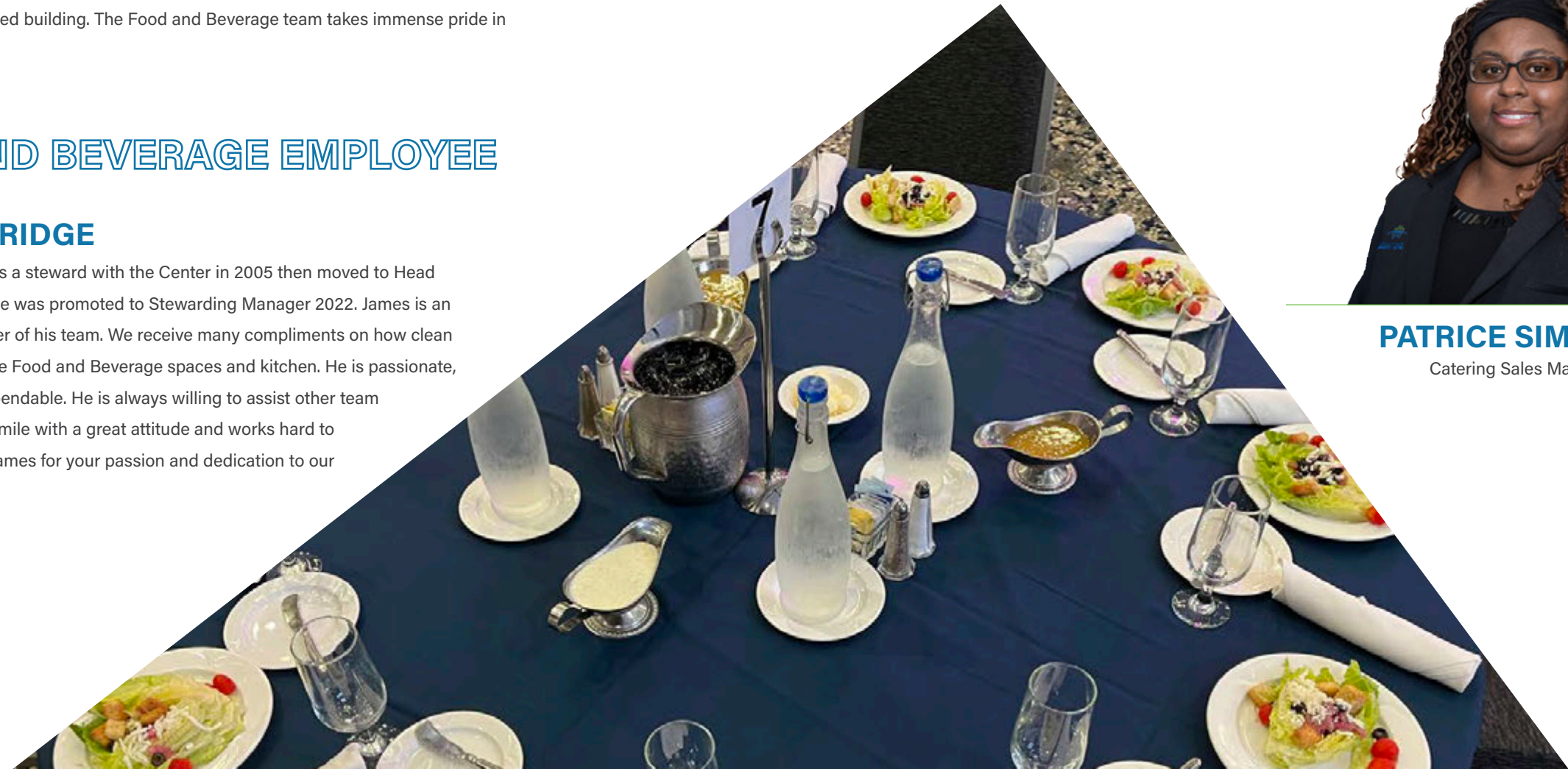


PATRICE SIMMONS
Catering Sales Manager

OUTSTANDING FOOD AND BEVERAGE EMPLOYEE

JAMES STROWBRIDGE

James began his employment as a steward with the Center in 2005 then moved to Head Steward in 2018 and as of late he was promoted to Stewarding Manager 2022. James is an exceptional employee and leader of his team. We receive many compliments on how clean and organized he helps keep the Food and Beverage spaces and kitchen. He is passionate, punctual, hardworking, and dependable. He is always willing to assist other team members and always wears a smile with a great attitude and works hard to complete his task. Thank you, James for your passion and dedication to our Food and Beverage team.



EVENT SERVICE

The Event Services Department at the Savannah Convention Center is proud to present another year of exceptional service, marked by outstanding customer satisfaction and resilience in the face of challenges. Despite the hurdles posed by construction delays during our much-anticipated expansion, our team remained committed to delivering seamless, high-quality events. This dedication is reflected in our customer survey scores, which continue to exceed expectations and highlight our unwavering focus on delivering remarkable experiences. As we move forward, we are excited to build on this success, providing even more innovative and world-class service to our clients and guests.



"Excellent" rating of Event Management staff by our customers

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- Executed **135** events
- Attendance numbers range from 10 to **25,000** attendees
- Event types: Weddings, Banquets, Graduations, Boat Shows, Conferences, Trade Shows, Sporting & Competitive Arts Events
- **93.3** Survey Scores from Customers



JACKIE MITCHELL

Assistant Director of Event Services



ASHLEY REESE

Event Manager



LINDSAY OLEAR

Event Manager



STEPHANIE LOUDERMILK

Event Manager

“

The entire events team was fantastic to work with. Our events manager was very much on top of everything with our event. She was very helpful and got me in touch with all the needed team players at the Convention Center. She always went above and beyond to assist and made our experience superb! This is not just my comment, but from my team and leadership as well.”

“Very good communication even after I had to change several things. Great to work with.”

“Very responsive with last minutes requests for room set up. Appreciated.”

“Our event manager was outstanding to work with. The attention to any crisis that arose was top notch!”

“Great communicators and lightning-fast on requests!”

5 EVENTS GROSSING OVER \$500,000 IN REVENUE

- Gulfstream
- Electrification Int'l Conference & Expo
- 50th Annual Explosive & Blasting Techniques
- LRP Publications
- Society Human Resource Management





ONE INTERNATIONAL DRIVE SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31402
912.447.4000 | SAVCONVENTIONCENTER.COM

