

2017 LEAD:Tourism Conference  
Main Conference Agenda  
Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017  
Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort, Cherokee, NC

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Conference Theme: **Growing Partnerships with Outdoor Tourism and Local Communities**

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Registration, Coffee and Pastries

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:15 AM – 10:00 AM Keynote Address: Outdoor Travel Trends and Factors Impacting the Future Demand for Outdoor Adventure Travel

*Learn the latest trends in travel and how the future of outdoor adventure tourism fits into the market demand for 2017 and beyond*

- **Berkeley Young, President, Young Strategies, Charlotte, NC**

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM Western NC County Tourism Economic Fact Sheets

*Back by popular demand. Receive your customized county Tourism Economic Fact Sheet. Available for all 26 counties in Western NC. Compiled and reported by senior students in WCU's Hospitality and Tourism program in the College of Business.*

- **Dr. Steve Morse and WCU Hospitality & Tourism Students, Western Carolina University**

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM Networking Break with Vendors

*Time to network with colleagues and vendors and get your customized Tourism Economic Fact Sheets*

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Breakout Sessions (concurrent sessions, choose one of the following sessions to attend – all sessions repeated in the afternoon)

- A. Development and Branding a Small Destination for Big Outdoor Tourism: Two Fish Stories

*Learn how two small rural destinations successfully developed, branded and marketed their community for outdoor tourism activities on a shoe-string budget*

- **Dennis Tumlin, Executive Director, Rhea Co. Economic & Tourism Council, Dayton, TN**
- **Julie Spiro, Executive Director, Jackson Co. NC Chamber of Commerce; and Nick Breedlove, Director, Jackson Co. NC Tourism Development Authority, Sylva, NC**

B. The Power of Selling Outdoor Tourist Experiences over Geographic Places

*Learn about the five essential strategies you need to know to successfully sell the outdoor tourist experience instead of selling the geographic place.*

- **Roger Brooks (video), Seattle, WA**

C. Developing, Branding and Marketing the NC Blueways Program and the Roanoke River Region

*Learn how the NC Blueways program in western NC, and the Roanoke River Region in eastern NC were successfully developed across multiple county lines to showcase the growing outdoor tourism market across NC*

- **Betty Huskins, Exec. Director, Smoky Mountain Host, and Executive Committee, NC Blueways, Franklin, NC (Western NC)**
- **Carol Shields, Executive Director, Roanoke River Partners, Scotland Neck, NC (Eastern NC)**

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Networking Lunch

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

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2:00 PM – 2:45 PM Identifying Primary Target Markets for Outdoor Tourism in Western North Carolina

*Find out what the primary target markets for outdoor tourism in western NC look like and how the demographics of future outdoor tourists will impact marketing strategies for the future*

- **Chris Cavanaugh, President, Magellan Strategy Group, Asheville, NC**

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM Networking Break with Vendors

3:15 PM – 4:00 PM Developing Effective Tourism Partnerships With Outdoor Tourism Providers and Communities

*Since most tourists seeking outdoor activities don't know and don't care where county lines are, learn how the most effective branding and marketing campaigns are well designed partnerships among multiple county and community-based regional tourism marketing groups.*

- **John Whisenant, Director of Tourism, Tennessee Hospitality and Tourism Association, Nashville, TN**

4:00 PM Conference concludes