



ANNUAL REPORT

2018-19

Vol. 1. Issue 1. July 2019

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with great pleasure that our Board of Directors and I present the Annual Report for the Beaufort Area Hospitality Association (BAHA). Our initial year was focused on creation of our new organization, strategic planning and execution of our goals. While this report can only provide highlights, you will note that much has been accomplished in our inaugural year. In May, we inducted our Board of Directors, elected officers and welcomed Lise Sundrla as our Executive Director. We solidified our purpose and mission and established our year one goals to engage partners, civic leaders and the community about our industry and its impact on our economy and quality of life. Within the year, we received our 501(c)6 status and brought on Abbi Hancock as our Partner Coordinator to work with BAHA's existing partners and to engage new partners.

It has been a pleasure to see our industry come together to share and network. We are fortunate to have formed strong liaisons with the Beaufort, Port Royal Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB), the City of Beaufort, Technical College of the Lowcountry, and USC-Beaufort – all of which are represented on BAHA's Advisory Board. Their input and vision is critical to our on-going success. We've done a lot of listening to our partners and we are working to address the issues impacting our industry – from workforce, to housing, to service training, to fluctuations in the market.

We offer thanks to our Board, Advisory Board and staff for their dedication and commitment; and to our first -year partners, sponsors, and community and civic leaders for their partnership and support. And, we are delighted to once again welcome Ameris Bank as our Premier Sponsor. Lastly, I want to thank the team members who keep our industry moving – from the restaurant hosts, servers, bartenders, culinarians and back of the house, to the hoteliers, smiling desk associates, and housekeepers, to the many attractions that showcase our community – we thank you for being a part of our industry and for taking pride in our community.

We hope you will enjoy our Annual Report and we invite you to become a partner in the progress!

Jonathan Sullivan, Board Chairman

Board of Directors

- Jonathan Sullivan**, *Chairman*
- Vimal Desai**, *Vice Chairman*
- Megan Morris**, *Secretary-Treasurer**
- Nick Borreggine**, *Fat Patties/Salt Marsh Brewing**
- Jill Breaux**, *Fripp Island Resort**
- Chip Dinkins**, *Plums, Inc.*
- Esther Harnett**, *Property Owner*
- Frank Lesesne**, *Anchorage 1770 ***
- Craig Reaves**, *Sea Eagle Market*

Advisory Board

- Mary Lee Carns**, *Technical College of the Lowcountry*
- Robert LeFavi**, *USC- Beaufort Campus*
- William Prokop**, *City of Beaufort*
- Robb Wells**, *Beaufort, Port Royal, Sea Islands Convention and Visitor Bureau*

Staff

- Lise Sundrla**, *Executive Director*
- Abbi Hancock**, *Partner Coordinator*

**Denotes Incoming Board Member – FY20*
***Denotes Outgoing Board Member*



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Cultivating

Providing opportunities for hospitality owners, managers and sales staff to engage and collaborate in a social setting is an important part of supporting and sustaining our industry. During our first year, BAHA hosted 4 Social events for existing and potential partners.

Thanks to partners and sponsors – **Common Ground Coffeehouse & Market, Fishcamp on 11th, Holiday Inn & Suites, and Ameris Bank and Hargray** for hosting and supporting these events.



Unifying

Regular meetings with Lodging and Restaurant Owners, GMs, Marketing and Sales Directors were held throughout the year. This provided an opportunity to share important industry information and promotional initiatives.

We thank **Brody's Bar & Grill, Holiday Inn & Suites, Best Western Sea Island Inn, and Anchorage 1770** for hosting and supporting these meetings.



Strengthening

Work sessions and meetings held throughout the year helped identify challenges facing our hospitality industry.

Workforce, healthcare and childcare are top among concerns for our hospitality partners.

In February, BAHA's Lodging Partners shared concerns about fluctuations in room nights. BAHA formed a task force to look further into the concerns, identify causes and formulate solutions. We anticipate presenting our findings to civic leaders over the summer.



Supporting

Beaufort's hospitality industry benefits from festivals and activities that attract travelers to our community and enhance our quality of life.

In support of these initiatives, BAHA joined with the City of Beaufort to coordinate the food and beverage function of both the **2018 Shrimp Fest** and the **2019 Taste of Beaufort**.

BAHA will continue to look for ways in FY20 to support our industry through events and promotional opportunities.



Marketing

In 2019, BAHA partnered with the **CVB, the Lowcountry Tourism Commission** and BAHA sponsor **Ameris Bank**, to host a **Travel South Fam Tour** for over **25 Bus Tour Operators** from across the country.

The event provided a great opportunity to showcase our area restaurants, lodging and attractions to an important segment of Beaufort's travel industry. We also partnered with the CVB, City of Beaufort and partners to celebrate **National Travel & Tourism Week**.



Informing

One of the many services that BAHA provides to partners is the bi-monthly NewsFlash.

The **NewsFlash** serves as a resource for partners, civic leaders and the community, featuring industry updates, announcements, and links to promotions and opportunities.

The **NewsFlash** will be expanded in FY20 to include partner spotlights and features along with Hospitality Star training updates.

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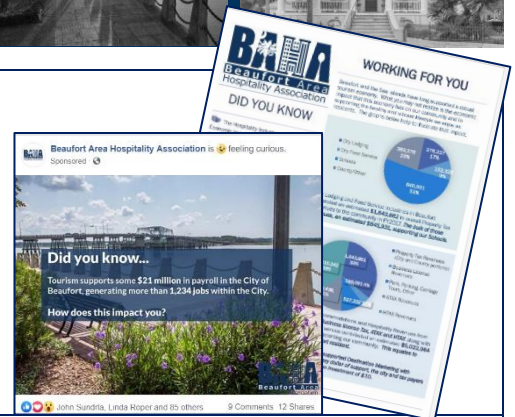
Hospitality Works



Understanding the industry and its impacts on greater Beaufort and our quality of life is vital to ensuring community and civic support.

The accommodations and food service industries represent the largest employment sector in Beaufort County at 20.1% of the area workforce generating more than \$21 million in payroll annually in the city of Beaufort alone. Combined, accommodations and hospitality revenues from property tax, business license tax, ATAX and HTAX contribute an estimated \$5.1 million annually to supporting our community. This equates to \$373 per Beaufort resident.

BAHA regularly attends and participates in local government, neighborhood and community meetings, serves on area task forces and boards, and offers presentations to local civic groups to not only be informed, but to share key information about our hospitality industry.



Networking

BAHA launched their website and Facebook presence in July 2018. Twitter and Instagram presence was launched in 2019. Through social media we provide announcements, recognize our partners, and provide industry information and promotional opportunity.

The BAHA website features a **Partner Spotlight**; **Lifestyles of the Lowcountry Section**, an active **job board**, and industry information, news and updates.

In Spring 2019, a **directory listing** and link to partners was launched on the site.

Growing and Sustaining

Ensuring a ready and capable workforce is the number one concern facing our hospitality industry today.

In 2018, BAHA established an interactive online Job Board and launched an ad campaign for the Job Board on Palmetto Breeze Commuter Buses and social media.

We participated in local Job Fairs, connected with partners to develop a hospitality training program, and began initiatives to address housing, transportation and childcare needs.

Branding BAHA

The BAHA Board of Directors participated in a strategic planning process in Spring 2018 to craft the organization's purpose, mission, and vision statements, and to establish core values to guide programs and actions of the board.

BAHA's brand and image were developed through this process.

This information is used in informational packets, newsletters and marketing tools to introduce BAHA to the community.



"The Hospitality Industry is the number one economic driver in Beaufort. We need the community to know that these dollars create growth and prosperity for our home."

– Frank Lesesne, Anchorage 1770

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Hospitality Works



Building Relationships

BAHA's Board of Directors is made up of 8 members representing the greater Beaufort hospitality industry and each serving 3-year terms. The Board has also named an Advisory Board with representation from the CVB, USC-Beaufort Campus, City of Beaufort and Technical College of the Lowcountry, to provide key industry guidance and connectivity.

Strategic Alliances

BAHA is fortunate to have formed several strategic alliances from the outset. Our alliance with the CVB is critical to our local hospitality industry and to ensuring a healthy, vibrant tourism market. Through this alliance, BAHA has been able to provide enhanced benefits to our partners, and in turn, support enhanced and sustained funding for the CVB.

Planning for the future

The BAHA Board and Advisory Board held their annual retreat in June to discuss accomplishments, identify challenges and industry needs, and to set goals and a plan of work for fiscal year 2020. Focus in 2020 will include providing expanded partner initiatives including hospitality training, networking and enhanced benefits, along with enhanced focus on workforce and community engagement.

"Ameris Bank is pleased to be the Premier Sponsor for the Beaufort Area Hospitality Association! Our Beaufort area Hotels, Inns, Restaurants and Attractions represent a critical part of the fabric of our unique Lowcountry culture that draws tourists, visitors and future residents to our community."

– Tom Hermann, Market President



2348 Boundary Street | Beaufort, SC 29902

Our Sponsors



Our Mission

Through advocacy, innovative programming, and business relationships, we will work to cultivate and unify the Beaufort Area Hospitality Industry to ensure a healthy and vibrant future



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