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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



2013 proved to be a phenomenal year for tourism in Little Rock, as well as for the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau (LRCVB). From exciting awards such as being named the #1 "Greatest Place to Live" for Metropolitan Cities with Less than 1 Million Population by Kiplinger Personal Finance, to being recognized nationally as one of Outside Magazine's "Best Towns of 2013", Little Rock is truly on a roll.

The destination also saw a lot of positive movement toward continued revitalization with numerous projects completed, and even more on the horizon. This year, Little Rock helped the state with a few "firsts"—Arkansas's first full-service Marriott hotel and the state's first Bass Pro Shops finally came to fruition in 2013. In addition, Pulaski Technical College opened its Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management Institute, providing an amazing facility to train our future chefs in the state's only accredited culinary school. And to culminate a year of pioneering firsts, Entergy Arkansas, along with several partners including LRCVB, illuminated three downtown bridges, providing a glowing experience like no other in Arkansas.

One of the most significant accomplishments in 2013 for LRCVB, and the citizens of Little Rock, was the passage of a special election to fund the renovation and expansion of Robinson Auditorium. The historic theater and conference center has served the city well for 75 years. It will now undergo a \$68+ million renovation and expansion, becoming one of the South's best performing arts facilities while offering magnificent views of the Arkansas River via the new conference center.

Financially, we continued to experience significant revenue growth, with total tax collections up 3.52% over 2012, fueled by strong performances in both prepared food and hotel room sales. This allowed us to complete all of our planned sales, marketing and operational programming goals. Additionally, we were able to add to our reserve accounts for the future Robinson renovation.

The sales team had its strongest annual production since 2008, securing more than 127,000 convention room nights and 105 motor coach tour bookings. LRCVB continues to expand out-of-market awareness as a convention destination and in 2013 established an agreement for direct sales representation in Chicago, adding to its representation in Washington DC. New for 2013, was also the addition of the TAP report. This report analyzes trends within the industry, as well as LRCVB's sales performance, and provides valuable information for consumption benchmarks and pace targets.



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



The marketing and communications department hosted a record number of travel journalists in 2013 and Little Rock continues to garner tremendous media coverage. We also finalized and announced our new destination brand strategy this year, an effort that began in 2012. We feel that our new brand and core values are more reflective of what Little Rock has become as a travel destination over the past decade. The "With a Southern Accent" tagline is used to illustrate the true southern charm and authenticity of the city and our people. In addition, we experienced huge increases in our web traffic and all social media platforms.

The facility operations team continues to shine in customer service scores received by our client surveys, as well as in our secret shopper reports. In 2013, Robinson Center and Statehouse Convention Center saw an increase in the total number of events and annual attendance. The completion of the new roof on the First Security Amphitheater will allow for event growth in the future. In addition, the team continues to play a huge role in the transformation of the city-owned primary convention hotel into the Marriott Little Rock. Our overall facility usage at the convention center is right in line with many of the national averages, and in 2013 our facilities welcomed more than 700,000 patrons.

The Travel and Tourism industry continues to be recognized internationally as a major economic driver. As the #2 economic industry in Arkansas, Little Rock not only serves as the state's capital, but as the largest hub for tourism. We welcome more than 5 million visitors annually, and it is safe to say the secret is out – Little Rock is a wonderful place to visit and experience. With the exciting things that happened in 2013, coupled with on-going developments and continued announcements for future growth, Little Rock is sure to remain on a roll!

Gretchen Hall. President & CEO, Little Rock CVB



### LEADERSHIP

### LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU (LRCVB)

The Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) is the official destination marketing organization for the City of Little Rock, charged with marketing and selling the city as a meeting, convention and visitor destination. The LRCVB also operates the Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Auditorium, River Market facilities and multiple parking facilities. The organization is divided into four primary divisions: finance & administration, facility operations, sales & services, and marketing & communications.

### **LEADERSHIP**

# LITTLE ROCK ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION COMMISSION

The Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission is the governing body for LRCVB. It is a volunteer board consisting of seven members – two City of Little Rock elected officials or board members, four owners within the Little Rock hospitality industry and one atlarge seat.

Warren Simpson, Chairman Capi Peck, Vice-Chair Mark Stodola, Mayor Larry Carpenter Gene Fortson, City Director Tim Morton Philip Tappan

### LRCVB EXECUTIVE TEAM

- Gretchen Hall, President & CEO
- Jim Rice, Sr. VP/COO
- Leigh Ann Biernat, Sr. VP Finance & Administration
- Alan Sims, VP Sales & Services
- John Mayner, VP Marketing & Communications

### LRCVB MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Gretchen Hall. President & CEO
- Vicki Spears, Executive Assistant to the President & CEO Facility Operations Division
- Jim Rice, Sr. Vice President/COO
- Kim Berry, Executive Assistant to the SVP/COO
- James 'Doc' Doolittle, Sr. Dir. of Facilities Maintenance/Engineering
- Bobby Green, Security Supervisor
- Randy Guptill, Director of Technical Services
- Ricardo Henderson, Building Services Manager
- Johnny Loney, Auxilary Services Manager
- Diana Long, Director River Market Operations
- Trudie Long, Parking Manager
- Phyllis Lucas, Sr. Director of Event Operations
- Gwen Stallings, Building Services Supervisor



Finance & Administration Division

- Leigh Ann Biernat, Sr. VP Finance & Administration
- Dan DeLaughter, Sr. Director of Information Technology
- Ionette Neal. Sr. Director of Tax Revenue
- Sydney Ragsdale, Controller
- Kim Sanders, Human Resources, Payroll and Benefits Representative Sales & Services Division
- Alan Sims, Vice President Sales & Services
- Jennifer Willis, Convention Services Manager

Marketing & Communications Division

- John Mayner, Vice President Marketing & Communications
- Dan Limke, Creative Services Manager
- · Libby Lloyd, Communications Manager
- Charlie Oppedisano, Retail Sales Manager



# VALUE OF TOURISM

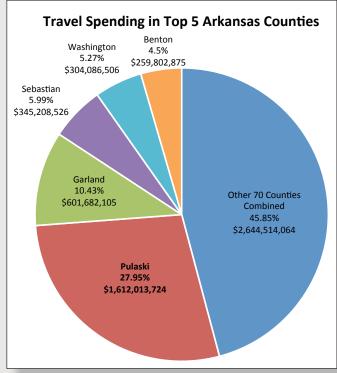
### **IN ARKANSAS**

- #2 economic industry
- Domestic and international travelers to Arkansas spent \$5.8 billion in 2012 and generated \$411 million in state and local taxes revenue dollars that help fund local jobs and public programs such as police, firefighters, teachers, road projects and convention centers.
- Provides more than 58,000 jobs.
- Visitors spent an average of \$252.29 per trip.
  - Source: Arkansas Parks & Tourism 2012-2013 Annual Report

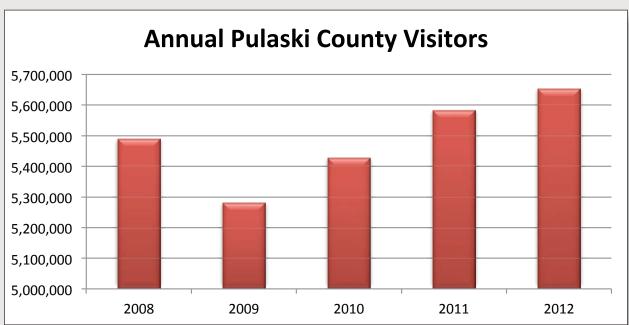
### IN PULASKI COUNTY

- Total travel expenditures in 2012 = over \$1.6 billion
- Travel generated local tax = almost \$28 million
- Travel generated state tax = \$63 million
- Visitor trips in 2012 = over 5.6 million
- Tourism jobs = 12,972
- Tourism Spending Generates \$75,820 in Pulaski County Tax Revenues Daily
- Tourism Tax Relief: Tourists increase the local tax base by \$517 per household
- In 2012 Pulaski County accounted for 24.73% of the total visitors to Arkansas, 27.95% of the total travel spending in the state, and 22.3% of all tourism-related jobs in the state.

Source: Arkansas Parks & Tourism 2012-2013 Annual Report



Source: Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism 2012-2013 Annual Report



Source: Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism 2012-2013 Annual Report



# FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

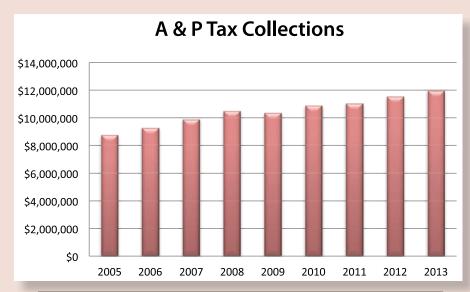
Finance and Administration is comprised of the Human Resources, Information Systems, Purchasing, Accounting and Tax Departments. The division provides services typical of these departments including cash management; record keeping and reporting; tax collection; budget and cost benefit analyses; personnel and payroll administration; as well as technological assistance to our multiple locations and clients. The division also coordinates the annual external audit, as well as contract renewals and procurement for the entire organization. Finance and Administration is also the primary liaison to the City of Little Rock Human Resources Department, which provides certain contracted human resource functions for LRCVB.

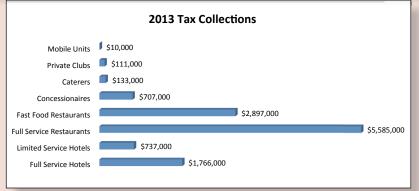
### 2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

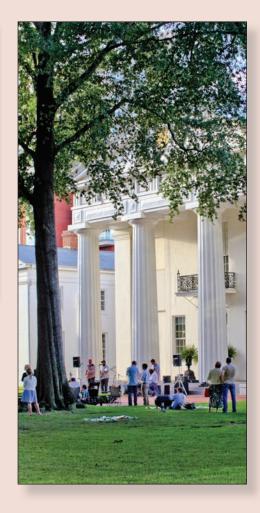
Under new leadership in 2013, the division had a banner year with regards to tax revenue, as well as development and implementation of several organizational initiatives. Tax collections totaled \$11,946,035,

the largest annual tax revenue year in the organization's history, representing an increase of 3.52% over 2012. The division continues to research tax management software options as well as online payment capability.

Continuing the organization's commitment to salary administration, a human resources consulting firm was selected to review job classifications and compensation of the organization. The study will be completed in 2014. In conjunction with the City of Little Rock, LRCVB enrolled all full-time employees in the new defined benefit pension plan that provides additional contributions and better long-term benefits. The IT department implemented several enhancements to equipment, technical upgrades, and computer systems and software improvements. These enhancements provide more efficiency to the organization at lower operating costs.

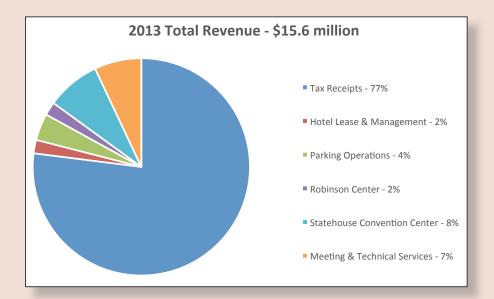








# FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

















# FACILITY OPERATIONS

The Facility Operations division, under agreement with the City of Little Rock, is responsible for the operation of Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Auditorium, the municipal parking garage at Robinson Center and the parking decks at 2nd and Main Streets, as well as 2nd and River Market Avenue. In addition, under a Memorandum of Understanding with the city, LRCVB is also the management entity of the River Market. These responsibilities include managing Ottenheimer Market Hall, two 6,000 sq. ft. outdoor pavilions, the 7,500-seat First Security Amphitheater and all surface parking within Riverfront Park. Additionally, this division has direct operational responsibility, and serves as contract liaison, between the city-owned hotel properties and the Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission. Hotel contractors are Trinity Hotel Group of New York (Double Tree Hotel), and FWH II of Memphis (Marriott Hotel). Lastly, the facility operations division manages the commission -owned parking lot on block 2, CLR, directly across from the Statehouse Convention Center.

### 2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

The management team at the River Market continues to create additional programming which attracts additional visitors to the area. Most of those efforts are noted in the LRCVB Signature Events section. The event operations department provides the hands-on service and contracting responsibility for our clients that utilize the various managed facilities. The division, as a whole, continues to receive high service scores on our client surveys, as well as our secret shopper reports. In addition, numerous capital projects were completed throughout the year, including:

- Waterproofing and concrete/joint replacement, SHCC sidewalk
- Completion of SHCC ballroom level renovations from 2012
- Completion of new First Security Amphitheater roof and replacement of all fixed seating
- Refurbishment and painting of amphitheater restrooms and dressing rooms
- Installation of safety & traffic bollards, Markham Street, SHCC
- Re-painting of 2nd & Main St. parking deck, with CLR
- Heat exchanger replacement (3) SHCC original boiler room, a joint repair and replacement project with Marriott Hotel
- Construction of new server room for bureau-wide efficiency, SHCC
- Replacement of escalator side panels (1973), Robinson Center, DOL requirement
- Replacement of step chains, all SHCC escalators
- Fire panel replacement, SHCC, along with Marriott tie-in
- Emergency generator (1982) rebuild, SHCC & Marriott Hotel
- Waterproofing and leak eradication of west face Marriott Hotel, with FWH II





### RIVER MARKET 2013

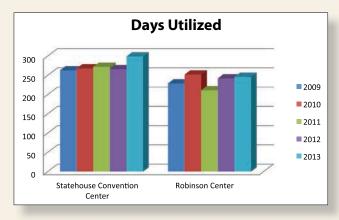
EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS	
Shows	27	72,625	
Dance/Party	14	1,635	
Banquets, Receptions Luncheons	72	26,285	
Meetings	32	1,866	
Farmers Market	53	109,807	
Sports/Hobby	18	34,097	
TOTALS	216	246,315	

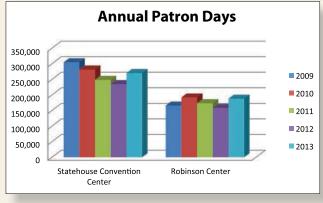
### **ROBINSON CENTER 2013**

EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS	
Convention	11	7,120	
Shows	78	121,073	
Dance/Party	3	415	
Banquets, Receptions Luncheons	32	6,735	
Meetings	45	12,622	
Consumer Show	2	2,000	
Sports	1	1,000	
Graduation	5	5,100	
Recital/Competitions	24	26,725	
Rehearsals/Other	39	4,650	
Exams	6	693	
TOTALS	246	188,133	

### STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER 2013

EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS
Convention	53	146,022
Shows	3	875
Dance/Party	4	1,272
Banquets, Receptions Luncheons	35	25,122
Meetings	36	7,684
Consumer Show	16	60,682
Sports	6	16,470
Graduation	2	0
Recital/Competitions	7	9,450
Rehearsals/Other	2	1,100
Exams	1	1,500
TOTALS	165	270,177









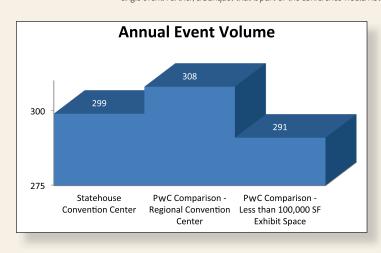
### **Convention Center Comparisons**

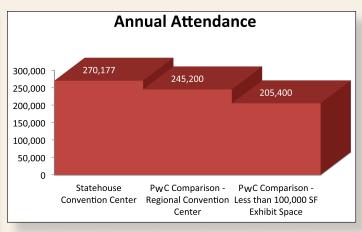
Comparison information provided via 29th volume of PwC Convention Center Report 2013, which evaluates trends in the North American convention industry.

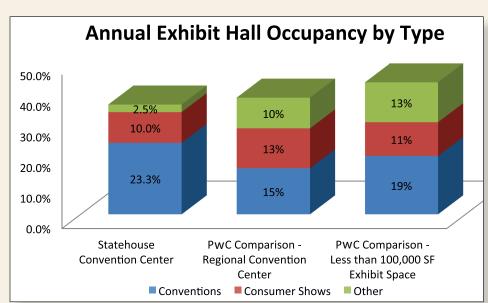
### 2013 Annual Event Volume & Attendance

	TOTAL EVENT VOLUME	TOTAL ATTENDANCE
Statehouse Convention Center	299	270,177
PwC Comparison - Regional Convention Center	308	245,200
PwC Comparison - Less than 100,000 SF Exhibit Space	291	205, 400

Figures for "All Events" represent all center events regardless of event type or space utilized (exhibit hall, ballroom, multi-purpose, etc). Events are defined as one activity or a series of related activities. For example, either a three-day conference or single three-hour local banquet would be classified as a single event. Further, a banquet that is part of the conference would not be classified as a separate event.







Occupancy is calculated as the ratio of occupied square foot days (OSFD) to available square foot days (ASFD). These two terms refer to the gross square feet of space occupied or rented during the year as a percent of the total amount of space available for rent. It has been recognized industry-wide that the "practical" maximum exhibit hall occupancy rate is approximately 70 percent and the "efficient" range is considered to be approximately 50 to 60 percent. Occupancy levels less than 50 percent generally suggest the existence of marketable opportunities or open dates, while an occupancy rate above 60 percent increases the potential for lost business or "turn-aways."



### First Security Amphitheater

Riverfront Park's Amphitheater officially became First Security Amphitheater with the spring 2013 completion of the roof project. The new roof was made possible by a partnership with the City of Little Rock, LRCVB, First Security Bank and Riverfest, Inc. Officially opening with Riverfest in May, the amphitheater hosted several additional events and concerts during the summer and fall of 2013. In addition, First Security and LRCVB further partnered on new fixed seating for the venue.

The original blue seats, installed in 1987, were replaced with 1,400 matching teal seats in the main seating area immediately in front of the stage. Also, to put the final aesthetic touches on the project, the LRCVB maintenance and River Market staffs completed dressing room upgrades and painted all of the wood accents on the dressing rooms and public restrooms in the amphitheater area with matching teal. Special thanks must go to First Security Bank for their generous contribution which made those long anticipated projects a reality.

### **Robinson Renovation**

Robinson Auditorium has long been a landmark in Central Arkansas. Construction of the Joseph T. Robinson Memorial Auditorium began in 1937 and officially opened in December of 1939. The structure was a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project, and is an excellent example of the Art Deco style architecture of the time.

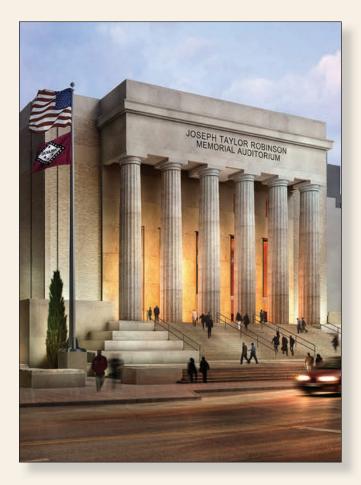
The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. The facility is owned by the City of Little Rock and managed by the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The 1939 structure currently suffers from a wide array of deficiencies, including stage loading/unloading, stage size, acoustical insufficiency, dressing room access and inadequate wing space within the performance hall. Also, structural, mechanical and electrical issues, public circulation and outdated conference center spaces exist within the facility.

Knowing the center is in need of major upgrades if the facility is to continue to serve Central Arkansas into the future, the Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission (LRA&P) empanelled a Robinson Center Concept Team in October, 2011. The group was tasked with evaluating all aspects of the existing facility, research user needs, propose conceptual solutions and estimate the cost and construction schedule of the proposed additions and renovations. The concept findings were presented publicly on June 5, 2012.

With a commitment to renovate and restore the facility, the LRA&P announced the selection of Polk Stanley Wilcox Architects, partnered















with Ennead Architects, on January 17, 2013 as the architectural and design team for the future renovations.

On March 28, 2013 CDI Contractors LLC, partnered with Hunt Construction Group were selected, by LRA&P, as the general contractors and construction managers.

On September 23, 2013 the final schematic renderings and cost estimates were presented publicly. The schematic plans depict major interior upgrades within the performance hall including, additional vertical volume to create a two tiered balcony, increased lobby space, acoustical improvements, theatrical upgrades, loading dock expansion, a larger stage area, and new dressing room facilities. In addition, an

enhanced and modern ballroom and small conference center was unveiled. New technology, mechanical systems, and outdoor plaza spaces were also included in the presentation.

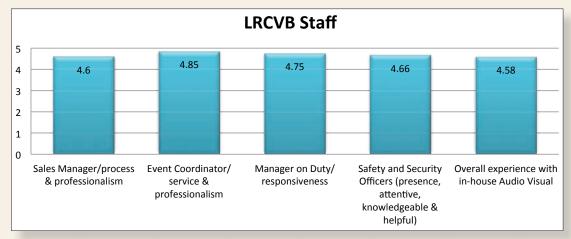
A special Little Rock election was called for Tuesday, December 10, 2013, asking citizens to dedicate the existing 2% A & P tax for the repayment of bonds to fund the renovations. The final vote tally reflected nearly 75 percent of voters were in support of dedicating these funds for the Robinson Auditorium restoration.

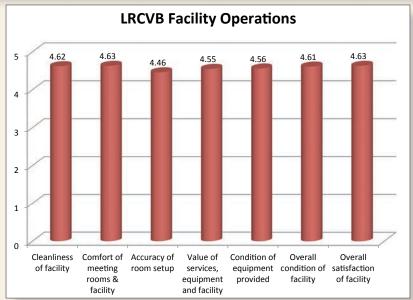
Final design development is expected to be complete in spring, 2014, with construction beginning July 1, 2014 and scheduled for completion in September 2016.



### **Client Surveys**

Servicing more than 530 events and more than 700,000 patrons each year, below are the cumulative scores for staff and facilities, received from client surveys. Scale of 1 to 5 (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=very good, 5=excellent)

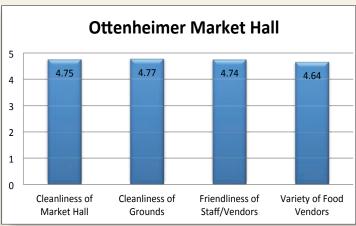












### **Secret Shopper Summary**

GEO Advisors conducted an assessment of the LRCVB managed facilities including: Statehouse Convention Center; Ottenheimer Market Hall, River Market pavilions, First Security Amphitheater, as well as all parking operations. The assessment took place July 29 – August 1, 2013.

The primary focus of the research was to evaluate the overall quality of guest service provided by the staff at each facility, in the following areas: General Facility Condition, Cleanliness, Preventative Maintenance, Guest Services, Event Services/Event Management and Security Services. Quantitative scores were averaged to provide an overall rating by category — Staff, which includes touch-points such as appearance, proactivity, helpfulness and availability; Performance, which includes condition of facility, cleanliness, restrooms and maintenance; and Facility, which includes wayfinding signage, ingress/egress signage, and quality of lighting and other safety measures. Staff and performance scores exceeded a 4 out of 5 star rating.







## SALES & SERVICES



# SALES AND SERVICES

The Sales and Services team functions collectively to achieve one primary goal – to bring more visitors to Little Rock, filling our hotels, restaurants, facilities and attractions. These visitors are categorized as Sports, Meetings & Conventions, motorcoach/group travel and individual leisure travelers. When visitors spend money in Little Rock they become "temporary taxpayers," positively impacting the local economy and reducing the financial tax burden of every household within the community. The revenue generated by this visitor spending fuels economic development, creating and sustaining jobs, businesses and growth to the local economy.

### 2013 Year in Review

Building on the success of 2012, the sales leadership maintained a focus on our key performance indicators; new business leads and definite room night bookings. In 2013 the Sales and Services team increased new leads generated to 305, representing a 30% increase over the previous year. This increase in new business opportunities was also reflected in definite room night booking performance, achieving a seven year high of 127,498 definite room nights, representing a 10.2% increase year-over-year. These accomplishments demonstrate the strong commitment of a dedicated and highly motivated sales team and the extraordinary level of teamwork with the new destination based sales support in the Washington, DC and Chicago markets. With a full year of representation in Washington and nine months in Chicago, both markets combined to generate more than 20 new booking leads representing almost 20,000 room nights. Those new business opportunities converted into more than 3,000 definite room nights with an additional 3,000 room nights pending a decision in 2014.

A new Director of Tourism Sales joined the team in 2013, faced with the challenge of implementing a new sales process, business lead distribution system and definite booking procedure. Through enhanced partner relationships and the support of our marketing team, new tools have been developed to more effectively promote and sell "Uniquely Little Rock" itineraries specifically targeting multiple tour group demographics.

#### Strategic initiatives that contributed to a successful 2013:

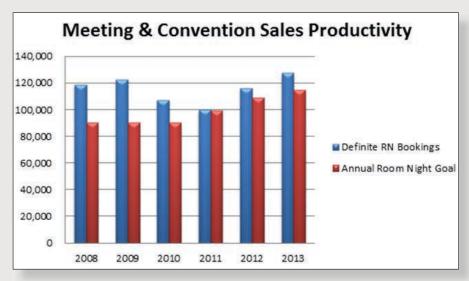
- Significantly enhanced and leveraged strategic partnerships with two key third party meeting professional organizations Helms Briscoe and Conference Direct. In 2014 we will look to expand this type of preferred positioning partnership with another large third party organization, Experient.
- Effectively expanded the destination sales effort to include representation in a second key meetings market, Chicago. Both



Washington DC and Chicago representatives demonstrated the ability to leverage their existing relationships, and key industry contacts, to develop a significantly greater visibility and presence for Little Rock, that has not previously existed in these key markets.

- Effectively evaluated and implemented ongoing individual core performance measurements to ensure every member of the sales team continues to be proactive and accountable in the development of new business. Specific benchmark goals placed on identifying new business opportunities resulted in more than 1,300 qualified new business prospecting activities.
- Effectively chose a more quantifiable, forthright destination marketing approach using Cvent, the primary communication, research and site selection tool in the meetings & conventions industry, to promote Little Rock as a viable meetings destination. This program will be extended and expanded in 2014.
- Expanded site visits and FAM opportunities, resulting in a growing number of meeting planners experiencing the destination first-hand. In 2013 the sales team hosted 96 site visits, totaling 230 clients. This included Little Rock hosting Travel South Showcase, the Official Regional Destination Marketing Organization for the Southern United States. The annual showcase event attracts journalists, tour operators, retail travel agents and other travel professionals.





# MEETING AND CONVENTIONS YEAR/YEAR PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

	20	011	2	012	2013	
	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL
Definite Room Nights	99,000	99,902	109,000	115,662	115,000	127,498
Tentative Room Nights		96,462		193,499		206,254
Leads		166	205	235	230	305

### **T**OURISM

2013	GOALS	ACTUAL
Definite Bookings	150	153
Leads	40	88



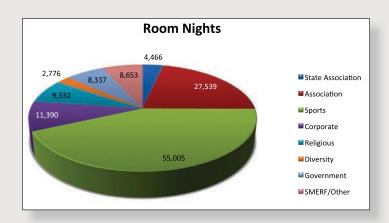
# SALES & SERVICES

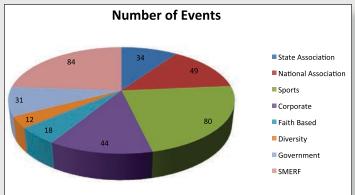
	LRCVB BOOKING PACE BASED ON 2013 "END-OF-YEAR" PERFORMANCE								
YEAR ITY/FTY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YEARS YEARS YEARS YEARS + TOTAL									
	RM NTS	RM NTS	RM NTS	RM NTS	RM NTS	RM NTS	RM NTS	RM NTS	
2008	46,175	23,497	9,825	1,490	18,665	18,816	0	0	118,468
2009	45,475	40,527	9,398	8,600	5,694	12,650	0	0	122,344
2010	34,765	37,875	21,436	5,476	2,570	4,009	550	550	107,231
2011	43,204	26,071	8,885	4,514	5,143	3,452	6,994	1,639	99,902
2012	58,100	33,148	19,691	1,096	349	0	0	3,278	115,662
2013	86,151	23,857	8,129	5,234	1,382	0	2,745	0	127,498
6 YR AVG	52,312	30,829	12,894	4,402	5,634	6,488	1,715	911	115,184
ITY/FTY = Year	In The Year	/ For The							



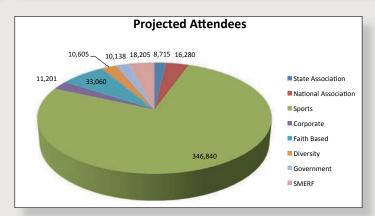
### 2013 Business Mix

Business mix analysis for all LRCVB meeting & convention sales bookings made in 2013





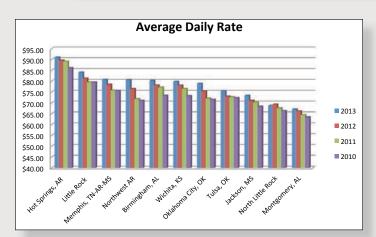


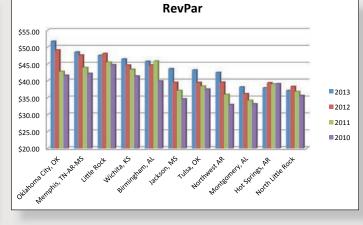


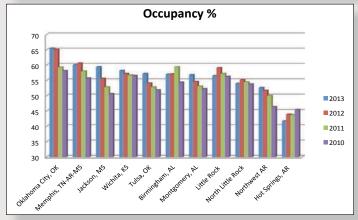


### **Smith Travel Research**

2013 Competitive Market Hotel Information											
	Oc	с %	% ADR RevPA			PAR	Percent Change from YTD 2012				12
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	Осс	ADR	RevPAR	Room Rev	Room Avail
Memphis, TN-AR-MS	60.1	60.6	80.70	78.57	48.48	47.64	-0.9	2.7	1.8	2.8	1.0
Oklahoma City, OK	65.5	64.9	78.89	75.50	51.67	49.00	0.9	4.5	5.4	5.7	0.2
Tulsa, OK	57.2	54.0	75.48	72.95	43.18	39.40	5.9	3.5	9.6	11.2	1.5
Wichita, KS	58.2	57.1	79.83	78.15	46.42	44.65	1.8	2.1	4.0	5.7	1.6
Northwest AR	52.6	51.4	80.58	76.83	42.43	39.46	2.5	4.9	7.5	10.6	2.8
Birmingham, AL	57.0	57.2	80.33	78.00	45.75	44.61	-0.4	3.0	2.6	4.1	1.5
Montgomery, AL	56.8	54.7	67.05	66.30	38.11	36.25	4.0	1.1	5.1	10.4	5.0
Little Rock	56.5	59.4	84.07	81.02	47.51	48.10	-4.8	3.8	-1.2	1.2	2.4
Jackson, MS	59.4	55.5	73.39	71.13	43.56	39.51	6.9	3.2	10.3	11.4	1.0
North Little Rock	54.0	55.3	68.70	68.63	37.10	37.98	-2.4	0.1	-2.3	-1.4	1.0
Hot Springs, AR	41.7	43.7	90.97	89.68	37.91	39.22	-4.7	1.4	-3.3	-3.3	0.0
									Sour	ce: Smith Tra	vel Research











# SALES & SERVICES

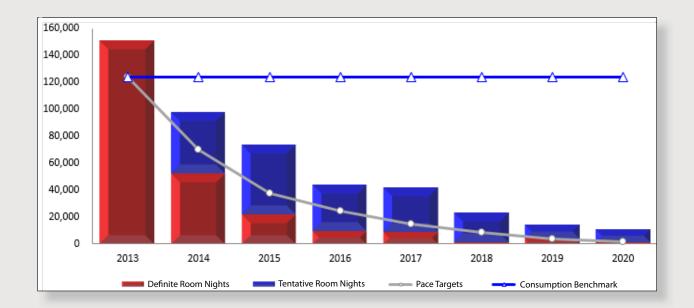


### **TAP Report**

A new sales analysis tool was introduced in 2013 using the Trends, Analysis, Projections organization called the TAP Report. This extensive report utilizes historical data to develop and apply algorithms to current booking data allowing us to more accurately communicate, forecast, identify, compete and close potential business and achieve definite room night booking goals.

Little Rock Room Nights	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Definite Room Nights	151,360	52,597	22,078	9,585	8,926	1,639	4,384	1,639	252,208
Pace Targets	123,809	70,007	37,486	24,676	14,955	8,702	3,863	1,334	284,832
Variance	27,551	(17,410)	(15,408)	(15,091)	(6,029)	(7,063)	521	305	(32,624)
Consumption Benchmark	123,809	123,809	123,809	123,809	123,809	123,809	123,809	123,809	990,472
Pace Percentage	122%	75%	59%	39%	60%	19%	113%	123%	89%
Total Demand Room Nights	310,608	165,186	89,001	39,889	14,705	4,242	9,031	1,639	634,301
Lost Room Nights	159,248	112,589	66,923	30,304	5,779	2,603	4,647	0	382,093
Conversion Percentage	49%	32%	25%	24%	61%	39%	49%	100%	40%
Tentative Room Nights	0	45,589	51,491	34,818	33,323	22,133	9,850	9,050	206,254

Source: The TAP Report







# Marketing and Communications

The Marketing and Communications division of LRCVB oversees the following disciplines: Destination marketing and advertising; graphic design; special event promotions; visitor information centers and collateral distribution; public relations; retail operations; website and online marketing; sponsorship oversight; and assistance with Sales & Services marketing efforts.

### 2013 Year in Review

2013 was a very busy year for the division as Little Rock was indisputably on a roll. Much focus was spent on two important initiatives – launching the destination's new brand strategy, incorporating the tagline "...with a Southern accent" and hosting three major press tours/conferences. Nearly 90 travel journalists from across the United States visited Little Rock in 2013, the largest number ever hosted in a single

year. In addition, our aggressive advertising and public relations efforts, the momentum surrounding the upcoming Robinson project, and the continued development within the destination led to numerous awards, accolades and increased publicity.

# Brand Development and Launch

As is often the case with any product or organization, nothing is more important than developing its brand and brand strategy. For more than a year, the LRCVB worked with a committee of tourism partners, Duane Knapp of Brand Strategy, Inc., and MMGY Global, to develop the new Little Rock brand. Early stages of this process included research to better understand what key audiences thought about the destination, highlight the destination's strengths and weaknesses, and identify areas of true differentiation.

Central to this process was the need to develop an authentic brand promise, one that was both aspirational and attainable, and that the destination could realistically deliver to its visitors. The brand promise will be the foundation for the creative strategy



and hospitality training moving forward. Little Rock's brand promise: "Discover the pleasant surprise of Little Rock. Enjoy our charming hospitality, sincere service, genuine people and engaging experiences. Welcome to our brand of new Southern style as you experience our culture and history."

It was very important to be able to develop messaging, and a graphic identity, to help communicate and leverage our brand across multiple platforms. After much thought and consideration, we selected our new logo and creative messaging around the tagline "...with a Southern Accent." In our brand strategy, the use of "accent" is not intended to refer to the manner in which we speak, but to be used as a synonym for

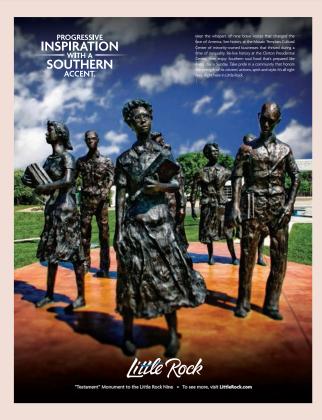


"flair" – in a manner unique to Little Rock. Our new creative is built around a single, strong visual "hero shot," and copy is written in the form of a personal story that highlights many of our destination attractions and key selling points. The visual is always identified in order to build awareness of "...the pleasant surprise(s)" easily found in Little Rock. Below is a sampling of some of the creative concepts that have been developed thus far:

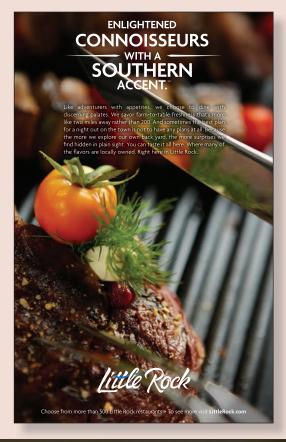




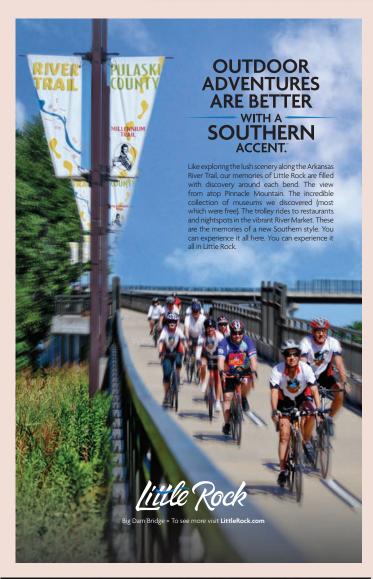
















# SIGNIFICANT ACCOLADES



















- January, Trip Advisor, Capital Hotel named one of America's Top Hotels
- April, Whiskey Magazine, Rock Town Distillery named Best American Whiskey
- June, Mensa International, Museum of Discovery named "Top 10 Educational Science Museums in America"
- June, The Daily Meal, Rock Town Distillery named one of the "Top Craft Distillery Tours in the US"
- July, Leisure Group Travel, William J. Clinton Presidential Center named Tripworthy Museum
- August, Trip Advisor.com, Traveler's Choice 2013 Best Luxury Hotels in the United States Capital Hotel #15
- August, Forbes.com, Central Arkansas (No. 32) of 200 MSAs "Best Places for Business and Careers"
- September, Southern Living Magazine, Little Rock Central High students named "New Heroes of Civil Rights"
- September, The SpareFoot Blog, Little Rock ranked #2 in "The Tidiest Towns in America"
- September, Outside Magazine, Little Rock listed as an "18 Perfect Places to Live for Biking, Running Trails"
- December, Forbes Travel Guide, Capital Hotel named "10 Luxury Hotels' Dazzling Holiday Trees"
- December, Food Traveler, Little Rock dining and culinary feature

### **Media Attention**

LRCVB hosted 3 major press tours/conferences with nearly 90 journalists in 2013:

- Travel South in February
- Geiger Press Tour in April
- Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) South Central Region in June

Traditionally, media coverage takes months, or even years, to develop after hosting these type of conferences. However, by the end of 2013, more than 40 stories in magazines, newspapers and online outlets have already been generated, creating a tremendous amount of positive coverage for the destination. Some highlights include travel features in the following outlets:

- The Boston Globe, Sam and Bill: "Larger than life personalities left their marks on Arkansas"
- The Orlando Sentinel & The Sacramento Bee, "The Arkansas Traveler is what you should want to be"
- The Dallas Morning News, "Little Rock gets its wake-up call; the sights of Little Rock, AR; Little Rock Cemetery is the 'Westminster Abbey' of Arkansas"
- The Oklahoman, "With many areas revitalized, Little Rock, Ark., is ready to welcome new visitors"
- Minneapolis Star Tribune, "Little Rock: A hub of big activity"
- St. Louis Post Dispatch, "From Clinton to culture to nature"
- Lexington Herald-Leader, "A visit to Little Rock, Ark. seems like a capital idea"
- Associated Press/Kansas City Star, "5 free things to do and see in Arkansas"
- El Nuevo Herald (the Spanish language version of the Miami Herald; the Sunday edition has the largest Spanish language circulation in the US), "Arkansas: Land of Giants"
- Edge Media largest digital network of LGBT news and entertainment, "Little Rock: An improbable oasis"
- AAA Southern Traveler, "Hail to the Chiefs: Elect to visit these presidential libraries for a new understanding of our country's past leaders"
- Slice (Oklahoma City), "A Home for All Seasons" (P. Allen Smith, Moss Mountain)
- Birmingham Magazine, "Little Rock(s)! The top 5 reasons to visit Arkansas's Capital"
- StarkInsider.com/Examiner.com, "Does SoMa, Little Rock Out Cool SoMa, San Francisco?"





Website Marketing
The website redesign that I

The website redesign that launched in March, 2012, continues to benefit us with increased visitation. The growing dependency of the Internet makes the destination website the true information highway for the overall success of destination marketing organizations. The department will continue to add enhancements and micro sites for niché audiences. Currently, we operate the following websites:

- LittleRock.com
- RiverMarket.info
- LittleRockMeetings.com
- DineLR.com
- ShopTheRock.com
- RiverLightsintheRock.com

**LittleRock.com** increased in number of visits to 787,917. Of those, 569,421 were unique visitors (non-repeating). That is a single year increase in web traffic of more than 50%.

70.9% of visits were first time visitors, and they spent an average of nearly 3 minutes (02:53) on the site, and viewed 3.5 pages on average.

**RiverMarket.info** saw an increase of nearly 25% in traffic this year; with 175,128 visits and nearly 510,000 page views. **LittleRockMeetings. com** saw an increase in traffic of nearly 14%, with more than 37,500 visits, and more than 123,000 page views. Nearly 82% of this traffic came from new users.

Additionally, we continue to see an increase in mobile media, with approximately half of the overall web traffic coming from mobile devices, including tablets and smart phones.

### **UNITED STATES**

STATE	VISITS
United States	760,894
Arkansas	350,439
Texas	104,702
Oklahoma	51,683
Tennesee	26,680
Louisiana	26,215

### INTERNATIONAL

COUNTRY	VISITS
United Kingdom	3,867
Canada	3,507
Unknown	2,616
Germany	1,653
India	1,502
Italy	1,191
Australia	1,116
France	1,082
Brazil	860



# **Top Facebook Posts of 2013**







### Social Media and e-Newsletters

The LRCVB continues to see growth in multiple social media efforts. In addition, LRCVB manages YouTube and Flickr galleries to display destination videos and photographs. New for 2013 was the creation of Little Rock and River Market Instagram accounts. Multiple hashtags were introduced to encourage social sharing and message tracking. The bureau also produces two monthly newsletters highlighting events and activities for Little Rock, and the River Market District, specifically. Subscribers currently total 4,391 and 1,507 respectively.

### SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS

FOLLOWERS	% CHANGE OVER 2012	
Little Rock Facebook (35,376)	+ 10%	
Little Rock Twitter (3,000)	+ 50%	
River Market Facebook (17,729)	+ 20%	
River Market Twitter (5,860)	+ 50%	



### **Visitor Information Centers**

The LRCVB strives to provide exceptional visitor experiences with a focus on true hospitality. Our Little Rock Visitor Information Centers continue to service a large number of guests, enhancing their experience by providing accurate, and helpful, destination information. The LRCVB has staffed locations at the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport, Shop the Rock in the River Market District, Statehouse Convention Center and Robinson Auditorium. The LRCVB also provides support for the visitor information center at Historic Curran Hall. Visitor information center representatives are true ambassadors for the destination and in many cases the first contact, or touch point, experienced by a visitor.

### **Airport VIC**

 2013
 2012

 Visitors Serviced
 40,525\*
 46,804

 Phone Calls
 620
 361

\*VIC booth was displaced for several months due to airport construction





### **Shop the Rock**

	2013	2012
Visitors Serviced	5,880	7,573
Purchase Only	8,668	6,571
Purchase & Visitor Information Provided	2,153	1,999
Total Visitors Serviced	16,701	16,143*

\*Closed for approx. 2 months for relocation inside Ottenheimer Market Hall

### **Curran Hall**

2013 2012

Visitors Serviced 9,287\* 11,593\*

\*Numbers reported also include special events and meeting attendance

### **Collateral Distribution**

The LRCVB publishes a variety of collateral materials to assist visitors in future planning and as helpful guides while visiting the destination. The LRCVB also distributes multiple partner and third party brochures at our VICs, as well as ensuring coverage of Little Rock-related materials in all

statewide and area visitor information centers. The LRCVB also offers direct fulfillment services from phone, email and online requests and works with the convention services team to provide collateral materials for on-site meetings and conventions. Through all of the division's distribution efforts, more than 470,000 pieces of collateral were distributed in 2013.

The department created three new updated brochures:

- Dining & Entertainment Guide
- Arts & Attractions brochure
- Quapaw Quarter Historic Home Tour brochure (combining 3 older brochures into a new dynamic guide with all new photography.)





# LRCVB SIGNATURE EVENTS



LRCVB supports a variety of local festivals and events in order to enhance the economy through increased visitor travel into, and throughout, the City of Little Rock. There is an event funding application used to evaluate support provided, based on specific criteria. The LRCVB also directly manages several signature events.

Little Rock Restaurant Month celebrates dining in the city each August. The month-long event nearly doubled in size in 2013 with more than 100 restaurants offering culinary specials and great deals. LRCVB secured over 35 interviews/TV segments/and media appearances, highlighting local restaurateurs, with a publicity value of more than \$420,000 and over 8 million gross impressions.

**Hospitality Marketing Mixers**, hosted by LRCVB, are typically held quarterly for area hospitality partners to discuss what's happening in Little Rock, destination development initiatives, co-op and packaging opportunities and industry news.

**National Travel and Tourism Week** promotes the value of the travel and tourism industry. Each year LRCVB showcases new destination amenities and reminds people in the community, and hospitality industry, of the features central Arkansas has to offer. This year, members of the LRCVB management team painted a large welcome mural on an underpass in the River Market district.

The ever-popular **Farmers' Market** continues to grow, operating 26 weeks per year. Approximately 40 local farmers and 150 other specialty vendors participated in 2013. Enhancements made during 2013 to improve the vendor and visitor experience included widening of aisles for better access, cool mist fans to keep things comfortable during hot summer months, improved signage, and additional programming, including the market's first Fall Festival.

The Garden Gourmet Chef Series was created in 2011 to feature local chefs at the Farmers' Market, celebrating sustainable food and culinary traditions, with a showcase of Little Rock chefs demonstrating their use of fresh, local ingredients. Patrons enjoy complimentary tastings, highlighting seasonal selections, while learning more about the Market, its farmers, the chefs, and ways to eat and shop locally.







## LRCVB SIGNATURE EVENTS

**Movies in the Park** continues to be a patron favorite, held each Wednesday night in June and July. The free family event provides options from animated favorites to comedy and acclaimed drama features and averages about 2,500 viewers per show.

Jazz in the Park was a new creation in 2013 that offers free weekly concerts featuring local artists performing in Riverfront Park each Wednesday evening in June and July, prior to Movies in the Park. Interest in this event exceeded expectations, with an average of 300 people attending each weekly concert.

**Cruisin' in the Rock** The free family events took place four times during the year. More than 600 vehicles were displayed, and attendance was estimated at more than 4,000 owners and spectators.

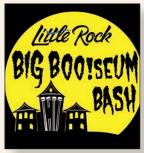
Two new events for bicycle enthusiasts were developed in 2013; **Bike Month Dash** and **Bash in May** featuring a scavenger hunt for competitors and families throughout Riverfront Park and downtown. More than 100 people attended. In October, the first **Biketober Fest** event was held. The one-day, "all things bike related" event was a huge success, featuring custom-built bikes, a BMX stunt show and other demos. Attendance for this event was approximately 500 people.

**The Big Boo-seum Bash**, held each Halloween in conjunction with the Greater Little Rock Museum Consortium, featured nine of our top museums, and provides a safe environment for kids and families to enjoy fun Halloween activities and treats, with more than 900 patrons attending.

**Big Jingle Jubilee Holiday Parade** This free community event is hosted each year by LRCVB and held the first Saturday in December, in conjunction with the lighting of the State Capitol. This year's event was a bit of a challenge, and was postponed one week due to weather conditions. Though the Capitol lighting was unavailable, the turnout for this holiday kick-off event remained strong.

In 2013, Little Rock was selected to host the **U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree** on its whistle stop tour to Washington, D.C. LRCVB partnered with Pulaski Tech's new CulinaryArts and Hospitality Management Institute, Bass Pro Shops, and Kum 'n Go convenience stores, as well as Parkview High School's music department to provide a huge serving of Christmas cheer to the more than 1,000 people who attended this family-friendly event.









### DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN 2013



# **DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN 2013**

### Arkansas's first full service Marriott Hotel

Little Rock's largest convention hotel was officially flagged as Arkansas's first full-service Marriott Hotel in May. A subsidiary of Fairwood Capital, LLC of Memphis, Tennessee, became the new lease holder for the property and announced that Davidson Hotels and Resorts of Atlanta would manage the 418-room property. An estimated \$16 million has been contractually allocated for a remodel and upgrade of the property, beginning in early 2014.

### First Security Amphitheater

Riverfront Park's Amphitheater officially became First Security Amphitheater in May, 2013, after the installation of a new permanent roof. Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Amphitheater is central Arkansas' premier outdoor concert venue. As part of the River Market complex, the First Security Amphitheater is home to all types of events and shows throughout the year, including Riverfest, Movies in the Park, POPS! On the River and the annual Easter Sunrise Service. The amphitheater stage was also renamed Riverfest Stage. A partnership between Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Little Rock, Riverfest and First Security Bank made the new roof possible.

### New Residence Inn in River Market

The 107-room Residence Inn by Marriott opened in May. Located at 219 River Market Avenue, this hotel is in the center of the downtown entertainment district. The property is the third limited service hotel within the River Market district, and offers one and two bedroom suites, a pool, fitness center and 700 sq. ft. of meeting space.

### **CALS Children's Library**

Set on a six-acre site, the \$12 million, 30,000 square foot Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library & Learning Center opened in July. The center includes a computer lab, teaching kitchen, large activity area, individual and group study rooms, theater, and a community room in addition to a collection of more than 21,000 books, DVDs, and CDs.

#### South on Main

South on Main is a revolutionary cultural experience that includes a restaurant and performance venue featuring the best of Southern cuisine and culture. The programming is related to the content of the Oxford American magazine, making it the place where the Oxford American goes "from the page to the stage".







## DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN 2013

#### Pulaski Technical College Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management Institute

The new 60,000 square foot culinary school and hospitality management institute officially opened in September. The facility kitchens include state-of-the-art equipment for a variety of classes such as candies and chocolates, soups and stocks, a butchery lab for meat preparation, several multipurpose kitchens, a wine classroom and mixology lab, computer labs, and the Celebrity Chef Theater with stadium-seating for up to 130 people. In addition, the facility has a full dining room and offers hands-on cooking classes for guests.

#### **Esse Purse Museum**

This unique museum is one of only three brick-and-mortar museums in the world dedicated to the purse. The museum opened in October under the leadership of collector and curator, Anita Davis. Offering more than just a fashion history, Esse shows the evolution of the 20th-century American woman, not only through the bags she carried, but also by exploring their contents. The name Esse ("to be" in Latin), which means essential nature or essence, embodies what you'll find in the museum; a purse is not just a utilitarian bag in which a woman carries her essentials, but an extension of her personal space.

### **Public Sculpture Additions**

Over the past several years a great deal of public sculpture has been added throughout the destination. Riverfront Park and the Vogel Swartz Sculpture Garden contains the largest collection of public sculpture in Little Rock, and in 2013 the park and garden added six new pieces valued at \$130,000. Collectively, there are 65 individual pieces in Riverfront Park valued at well over \$2 million.

### Orbea moves to Main Street

Orbea on Main is a joint venture between Orbea and a local cycling retailer, Spokes. The 3,500-SF facility is a retail showroom for all products distributed by the company, as well as selected items from its partners. Orbea is a Spanish bicycle manufacturer, and Little Rock is its North American headquarters. The Main Street showroom will also be used for product launches, media interactions, dealer events and video creation.

### Arkansas's first Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World

Opening in November, the long awaited Bass Pro Shops is the outdoor outfitters first in Arkansas. Bass Pro Shops has become one of America's premier retailers, with destination outlets across North America and Canada, serving more than 75 million sportsmen a year. The location off Interstate 30 and Interstate 430 is the most highly traveled intersection in the state. In addition, an outdoor outlet mall will be forthcoming, adjacent to Bass Pro, in 2015.

#### River Lights in the Rock

Three bridges spanning the Arkansas River became illuminated in 2013, thanks to a gift from Entergy Arkansas and the Entergy Charitable Foundation. They provided the contribution in celebration of 100 years serving Arkansas. Additional support for the project was provided by the William J. Clinton Foundation, the Pulaski County Bridge Authority Public Facility Board, Philips Lighting, Koontz Electric, the cities of Little Rock and North Little Rock, Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau, the North Little Rock Visitors Bureau, the Mayors tourism committee and the Downtown Little Rock Partnership. Total project cost was approximately \$2.4 million. The permanent illumination of the Clinton Presidential Park Bridge, the Main Street Bridge and the Junction Pedestrian Bridge dramatically changes the downtown skyline. LRCVB will be the technical operator of the bridge lights and plans to create special light shows and displays throughout the year.

### Arcade Building opens on President Clinton Avenue

The new 60,000 sq. ft. Arcade Building is home to the state of the art, 325-seat, Ron Robinson movie theater and the nationally renowned Little Rock Film Festival, as well as the acclaimed restaurant Cache and a variety of retail stores.







## FUTURE OUTLOOK



# FUTURE OUTLOOK

Following a tremendous year in 2013, the future looks just as bright in Little Rock. There are countless development projects already in the works, or announced to begin, in the coming years. The largest of these being the major renovation and expansion of Robinson Auditorium, and the reconstruction of the adjacent Broadway Bridge downtown. With financing now approved, coordination and final design efforts continue between the design and construction teams, the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, and the owner's representatives.

2014 will mark the 10th anniversary of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and celebration plans are already underway. As a travel destination we cannot understate the value the Presidential Library has had in terms of increased visitation, investment, development, and amplified awareness both nationally and internationally. The library continues to welcome more than 300,000 visitors each year and we expect that number to increase this year in recognition of its 10th anniversary.

Multiple hotel properties have been announced in the city, including two in the River Market District. These announcements demonstrate the strength of our destination and help fuel continued growth and development throughout Little Rock.

Shopping is always a visitor favorite and Little Rock has developed a large array of shopping options over the past few years. With Bass Pro Shops opening in November, 2013 the soon to follow outlet mall at the Gateway Town Center is sure to assist with visitor growth in coming years at the state's most heavily traveled interstate junction.

The Main Street Revitalization Plan that was unveiled in 2012 continues to draw national attention with multiple award recognitions. Some of the outlined streetscapes and water quality demonstrations have now been fully funded and construction will begin in 2014. Additional projects have also been announced to help bring new life to the city's Main Street. Several developments were completed in 2013, including the Mann on Main building and the KLofts apartments. In the works for 2014 is the further development of the "creative corridor" through relocating the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Ballet Arkansas to the 500 block of Main Street, near the Arkansas Repertory Theater.

In west Little Rock the landscape and access will soon completely change with the completion of the Big Rock Interchange. There are several hotel developments in the works and new retail, entertainment and dining establishments continue to add to the overall destination experience.

For the LRCVB, we will focus on the final year of our three year marketing and strategic plan, as well as develop our new plan for the future. On the sales front we will continue to leverage our relationships with 3rd party meeting professionals, continue to develop our awareness through outside sales representation in Chicago and Washington DC, and look for opportunities to identify local leadership that can assist in convention bookings via our Hometown Hero program. In 2014 we will be hosting a Helms Brisco Super Regional conference as part of our overall marketing strategy to have more decision makers experience the destination first-hand. In addition, we will continue to focus on the implementation of our new brand strategy, including citywide hospitality brand training. We will also continue to provide the leadership to ensure that the Robinson Auditorium renovation becomes the crown jewel for the destination's performing arts community and will be enjoyed by the public for generations to come.



