



2019 VISITOR CENTERS SEMINAR



PRE-EVENT FAM ACTIVITIES—Agenda

Monday, March 18th

12:00pm– 4:00pm: Early Registration

Early Arrival Activities:

2:00pm-3:45pm: **Mini-FAM Tour of Abingdon** *hosted by Abingdon CVB*



Take an exclusive guided tour of Abingdon, named one of the coolest small towns in America by Budget Travel Magazine. Go behind the curtain at Barter Theatre, the State Theatre of Virginia, learn the fascinating origins of the famous Virginia Creeper Trail, and get a glimpse of Abingdon's surprisingly pivotal role in the Revolutionary War.

1:15pm

Motorcoach loads and departs The Bristol Hotel

1:30pm

Motorcoach loads and departs The Courtyard Bristol

2:00pm– 3:45pm:

Mini-FAM—Abingdon

3:45pm

Motorcoach loads and departs for Heartwood reception

***Aren't able to attend the Mini-FAM?
That's ok, join us for an evening at Heartwood!***



4:00pm-6:00pm: **Reception & Tour of Heartwood** *hosted by Friends of Southwest Virginia*

During last year's seminar, Friends of Southwest Virginia Executive Director Chris Cannon, shared an overview of Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway and the challenges the facility has faced since opening in 2011. Currently closed for a 3-month renovation, Heartwood will reopen on March 15th with a new brand, new interpretive spaces, and - most importantly - a renewed emphasis on telling the story of SWVA's unique arts, music, food and people.

Planned exclusively for you, please join us for one of the first events to be held after the ribbon cutting - an evening of SWVA food, drinks, music, dance and fun!

Heartwood

One Heartwood Circle
Abingdon, VA 24210

Just off Exit 14 on I-81 in Abingdon

6:00pm:

Return to hotels for dinner on your own.

Many restaurants are within comfortable walking distance of the hotel. Ask your Bristol colleagues for recommendations.



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Tuesday, March 19th

SEMINAR PROGRAMMING: PART I

- 7:00am-8:00am:** Continental Breakfast *(Sponsored by VTC)*
- 7:00am-8:00am:** Registration Table Open
- 8:00 am:** Welcome & Greetings
- 8:30 am:** *Speakers & Presentations*
- 9:45am-10:15am:** *Break*
- 10:15 am:-12:30pm:** *Speakers & Presentations*
- 12:30pm:** Welcome from Bristol Representatives
- 12:30pm-2:00pm:** Lunch in downtown Bristol *(Sponsored by Discover Bristol)*

DISCOVER BRISTOL FAM: PART I

- 2:00pm:** **Downtown Walking Tour**
The state line between Virginia and Tennessee runs right down the main street of our Historic Downtown. Enjoy the rich history of cultural and musical landmarks as well as local artisans that are featured downtown. And don't forget the shopping...from antique to modern, shops big and small, you'll find the unique.
- 4:00pm:** **Birthplace of Country Music Museum Tour**
The Birthplace of Country Music Museum, a 24,000 sq. ft. facility, in affiliation with the Smithsonian Institute, tells the story of Bristol's musical heritage. The museum documents Bristol's story as the Birthplace of Country Music and the Bristol Sessions through permanent, technology-infused exhibits, a special exhibits gallery, educational programs, multiple film experiences and a theater dedicated exclusively to live, year-round music performances.
- 6:00pm:-7:00pm** **Reception at The Birthplace of Country Music Museum**
- 7:00 pm:** **Return to hotels for dinner on your own**





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Wednesday, March 20th

DISCOVER BRISTOL FAM: PART II

(Please check out and store your bags prior to boarding shuttles)

8:00am: Board shuttles and depart for the Bristol Motor Speedway



8:30am-10:30am: **BREAKFAST** and guided tour of Bristol Motor Speedway

Fans from all 50 states and nearly two dozen other countries flock to Bristol Motor Speedway every year. Built in 1961, the world famous half-mile track, also known as The Last Great Colosseum, is a favorite amongst race fans. Experience a more intimate view through a sampling of a track tour, such as a visitor might receive.

11:00am: **Arrive at The Virginia Welcome Center-Bristol**

Take a peek at VTC's newly renovated center and check out our unique partnership with the Birthplace of Country Music Museum. Grab a cookie and a cup of coffee while you're there too!

11:30am: **Board motorcoaches for the EXIT 7/Sugar Hollow Driving Tour**

12:30 pm: **Arrive at the Bristol Hotel**

SEMINAR PROGRAMMING: PART II

12:30pm **LUNCH** *(Sponsored by VTC)*

1:30 pm: **Speaker & Presentation**

2:15pm: **VTC Presentations:**
2018 Trailblazer Award
Newly Certified Tourist Information Centers (CTICs)

2:30pm-2:45pm: **Closing remarks & Adjourn**