

■ Jama Jarrett

Vice President of Operations/Communications,
Charleston West Virginia
Convention and Visitors Bureau

Charleston, West Virginia > Age: 36

Resume: Jama Jarrett knows how to keep her composure under pressure. She previously worked for former West Virginia Governor Joe Manchin as deputy communications director, and, with degrees in finance, organizational leadership and communications, she parlayed her education and experience into her current role at the CVB.

Career Highlight: Jarrett was named interim president of the CVB last year when it went through staff realignment following a leadership scandal.

Inspiration: "Hearing what people have to say about Charleston, W.Va.,—good or bad—inspires me. If it's a negative comment, it encourages me to try harder; positive comments inspire me to set the bar higher."

Awards: 2011 Best in West Virginia award for Crisis Communications Campaign for the Upper Big Branch mine disaster, PRSA; 2011 Crystal Award for best overall communications campaign, PRSA

—E.C.D.

■ Tracey Bockhop

Meeting Planner, Preventive Cardiovascular
Nurses Association

Madison, Wisconsin > Age: 30

Resume: Tracey Bockhop, CMP, didn't just work in catering sales; she excelled at it, increasing annual revenue at a previous company by 250 percent three years in a row. With experience in catering and hotel sales, Bockhop jumped into her new job as meeting planner for the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association in January, three months before a 500-person meeting, with only the hotel and speakers booked. You never would have known.

Inspiration: "Now in the health care industry, I also know that the nurses attending our meetings go home to apply what they learned in practice and impact the cardiovascular health of thousands of patients. It makes my job so much more than just planning a meeting."

Advice: "Get involved in areas outside the organization you work at, get your name out there and be active in the groups you are a member of."

Awards: 2009 Rising Star Award, MPI Wisconsin; 2009 Team of the Year Award, MPI Wisconsin

—Katherine Manfredi



■ Rebecca Hunter

Manager, Meetings and Membership,
American Association of Tissue Banks
Washington, D.C. > Age: 30

Resume: Rebecca Hunter, CMP, graduated with a master's degree in tourism administration from The George Washington University in 2005, and worked as a property manager, hotel front desk associate, meetings assistant and office manager for an AV company, all before moving to association event planning at the American Association of Tissue Banks. "After 12 years, I still get excited about what tomorrow holds," she says.

Career Highlight: "In meeting donor recipient families, everyone has a story to tell and each touches your heart in a different way. The impact makes my work here feel extraordinary."

Awards: 2007 Capital Award for Corporate/Public Events for American Red Cross ISSES; 2006 Star Award, Potomac MPI; 2008 Star Award, Potomac MPI

Hidden Talent: Hunter is a tech geek, but her real love is music. She auditioned for "American Idol" in Season 2.

—K.M.

■ Christine Burns

Sales Manager, Holiday Inn in the Walt Disney
World Resort

Orlando, Florida > Age: 34

Resume: After graduating from Rhode Island's Bryant University in 2000, Christine Burns had two early marketing and sales internships at Disney World, which ignited her passion for hospitality. A full-time sales coordinator position with Disney World led her to IHG, and after two years as sales manager, Burns was selected to open a new Holiday Inn in the Walt Disney World Resort, the highlight of her career.

Advice: "Have passion for your job and you will love going to work each day. And remember all things are possible with a little faith, trust and pixie dust."

Hidden Talent: Burns is an accomplished cook, and her hotel's catering manager has asked her to make her frozen strawberry pies for special guests.

What Friends Say: Ashley Mayo, CGMP, a sales manager at the Holiday Inn at Walt Disney World, says, "Christine turns projects from average to wow. Clients rave about her attention to detail. They don't only select our hotel because of its beauty, but because of the hard work and dedication they see from Christine from the very beginning."

—K.M.