

2010 Annual Report

Visit Baton Rouge

BATON ROUGE AREA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU





Message from the President & CEO

Dear Stakeholders,

It's a pleasure to lead Visit Baton Rouge, your award winning destination marketing organization. I am very fortunate to have an outstanding board and staff to champion our efforts. As an organization, we are emerging from a challenging year. With the recessional economy, corporate transient business travel was down significantly for the second year in a row. Fortunately a strong year for the film industry helped to boost our economy while our competitive set remained in deficit.

We are especially excited about the success of the inaugural Bayou Country Superfest and are hoping to see it become a signature Memorial Day Weekend event for Baton Rouge. Festival Productions Incorporated has committed to host the event again in 2011 with Visit Baton Rouge, Louisiana Office of Tourism and Mockler Beverage returning as partners.

Our partnership with the Baton Rouge Film Commission is flourishing as the film industry continues to grow in our community. A total of 26 productions were filmed in Baton Rouge in 2010 with a direct spend of over \$196,000,000!

We continue to lead the industry and we've joined the social media conversation with a great deal of success. We are engaging one on one with members of our community and visitors from around the country.

Baton Rouge is a creative capital city community. We are home to Louisiana State University and Southern University, State government, outstanding cuisine, music and a growing digital media community.

Now is the time for the travel industry to show our creativity and step up to meet the challenges and opportunities that we face. We encourage you to be a part of our \$1Billion industry. Join our efforts by inviting your friends and family to Visit Baton Rouge. Go BR and go bring it!!

Sincerely,

Paul J. Arrigo, CDME

President & CEO

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Visit Baton Rouge Vision

The Baton Rouge Area will be a nationally recognized premier destination providing a superlative Louisiana experience to all visitors.

Visit Baton Rouge Mission

The mission of the Baton Rouge Area Convention and Visitors Bureau shall be to increase visitation to and awareness of the Baton Rouge area thereby enhancing economic impact.

Visit Baton Rouge Values

The Baton Rouge Area Convention and Visitors Bureau shall conduct its business with integrity, energy, and pride through a motivated staff displaying a passion for and an appreciation of the travel and tourism industry.

Visit Baton Rouge Brand



2010 Board of Directors

Claude F. Reynaud, Jr. Chairman

Represents: Downtown Development District

Otis Washington, Vice Chairman

Represents: Office of Mayor President, Parish of East Baton Rouge

Andy Blouin, Secretary/Treasurer

Represents: Louisiana Restaurant Association-Baton Rouge Chapter

Leonard Wyatt, Immediate Past Chairman

Represents: Baton Rouge Area Chamber

Jack Chapman

Represents: Baton Rouge Lodging Association

Mark Drennan

Represents: Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge

Cherri Kieschnick

Represents: Baton Rouge Lodging Association

C. Denise Marcelle

Represents: Metropolitan Council

Jeff Holeman

Represents: Foundation for Historical Louisiana

Maury Drummond

Represents: Metropolitan Council

2010 Bureau Accomplishments and Special Recognitions

- Recognized by *Meetings and Conventions Magazine* with their 2010 Gold Service Award.
- Recognized by *Corporate and Incentive Travel Magazine* with their 2010 Award of Excellence.
- Katie Guasco, Sr. Sales Manager of Tourism Development was recognized as 2010 Member of the Year by the Baton Rouge Chapter of Women in Media.

Administration Department

The Administration Department's role is to lead and support the Bureau and all of its departments toward achieving its stated mission. Administration oversees all human resources functions, employee benefits, compliance of policies and procedures, facilities management and internal infrastructure, budget and fiscal management, adherence to public laws, consumer relations by means of visitor inquiries, etc. Administration serves as liaison to the board of directors to ensure compliance to guidelines as set forth for public entities. This department consists of the President & CEO, Vice President of Administration and Human Resources, Controller, Administrative Assistant, Travel Counselor and Couriers.

- Collected \$3,299,857 in tax revenue.
- Produced a balanced budget and clean audit while amending the budget to best utilize available resources
- Revised and implemented the Employee Policy and Procedure Manual and updated all job descriptions.

Continued Local Partnership with:

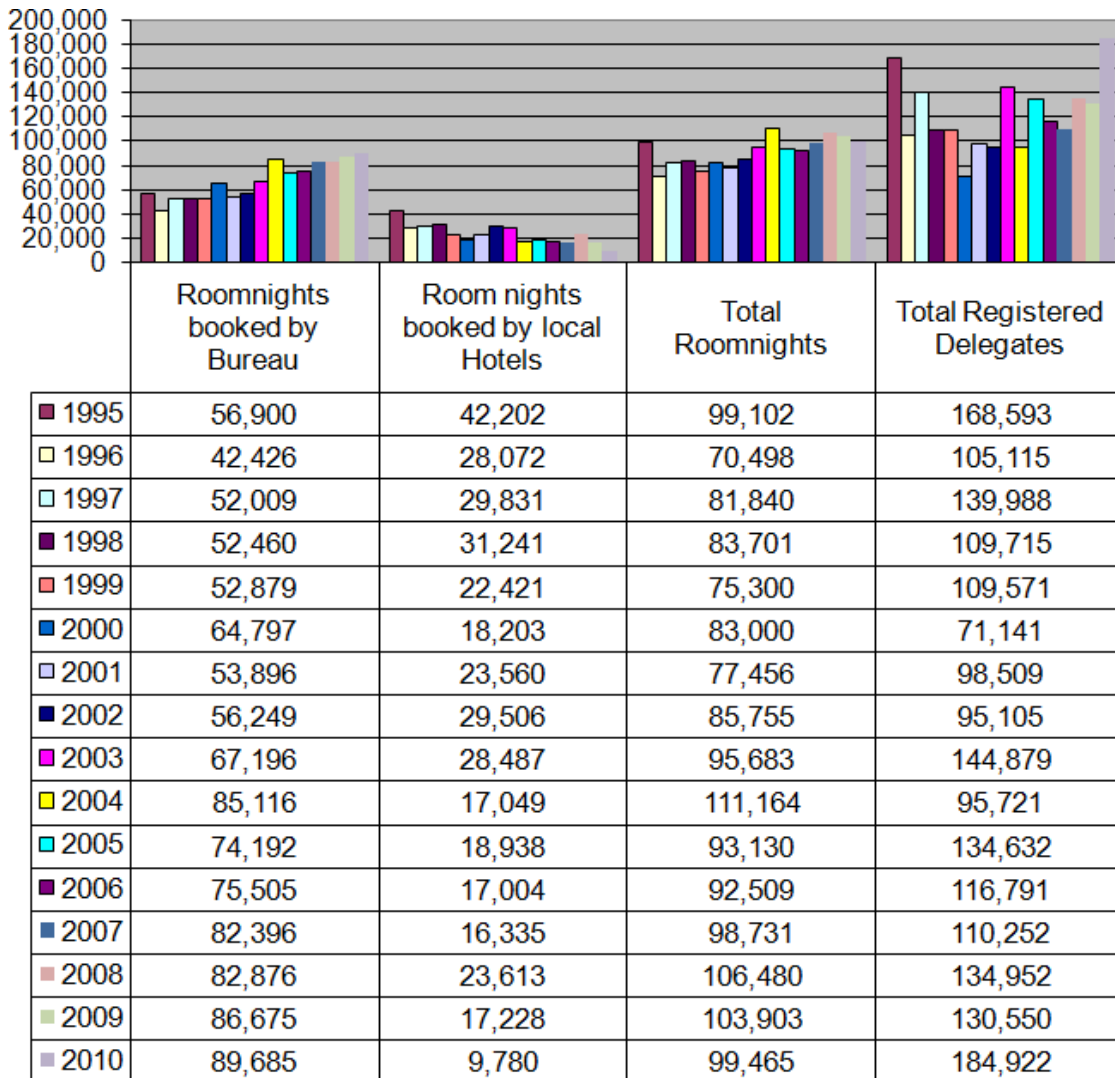
Baton Rouge Film Commission
Baton Rouge Area Sports Foundation
Baton Rouge Lodging Association
Louisiana Restaurant Association-Baton Rouge Chapter
City-Parish of East Baton Rouge
SMG (Baton Rouge River Center Management)
Downtown Development District
Downtown Business Association
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge
Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Baton Rouge Area Chamber
Baton Rouge Blues Foundation
Louisiana State University
Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation & Tourism, Office of the Lt. Governor

2010 Destination Sales Department Accomplishments

The purpose of the Destination Sales Department is to serve as Baton Rouge’s primary sales agent for conventions and trade shows of all types and sizes. This department serves as a liaison between meeting planners, hotels, attractions, city officials and other key contacts. The sales force positions Baton Rouge as a future meeting and convention destination to hundreds of potential local, regional, national and international customers.

In 2010, in partnership with the Baton Rouge Area Sports Foundation, Baton Rouge hosted the 2010 US Youth Soccer Region 3 Tournament with an estimated 20,000 room nights.

- **Visitation – 369** conventions held in **2010**, with **161,396** attendees and a total **89,685** room nights.
- **Lead Conversion – 8** person sales and services team issued **691** leads issued to area hotels in 2010.



Meeting and Convention and Group Creative

**GO»
HYBRID**

The perfect mixture of work and play comes with the territory when you're one of the fastest-growing cities in America. We've got the high-end amenities and unique meeting venues your group is looking for – like the Louisiana State Museum.

Go BR! And get it right from the word "Go."

VisitBatonRouge.com
800 LA ROUGE

**GO»
BRIGHTER**

There's a new day dawning on the banks of the Mississippi and the sun is shining on Baton Rouge. With more attractions than ever, sophisticated new shopping destinations, and the fabulous food and hospitality you know and love, one day is better than the next.

Go BR! And go broader.

VisitBatonRouge.com
800 LA ROUGE

**GO»
BREAKOUT**

From traditional breakout sessions to really unique places to break away, there's a lot more to Baton Rouge than ever before. And with a CVB staff that's there with you every step of the way, BR is the place to meet.

Go BR! And get it right from the word "Go."

VisitBatonRouge.com
800 LA ROUGE

Destination Services Department

The mission of the Destination Services Department is to provide superlative services to all groups to encourage future visitation. This department provides pre-registrations services, housing, itinerary planning and fulfillment in special requests, including brochures, nametags and welcome bags. In addition, this department coordinates the first face of Baton Rouge to the traveling public by coordinating staffing at all visitor centers, departures and registration areas. The Destination Services Department consists of the Director of Destination Services, the Destination Services Manager and 15 Visitor Information Counselors and Registration Hosts.

This department provided services for **506** organizations in 2010, exceeding their goal of **350** leads.

The following collateral pieces were distributed over the course of the year:

Visitors guides: 55,359

Flat maps: 48,847

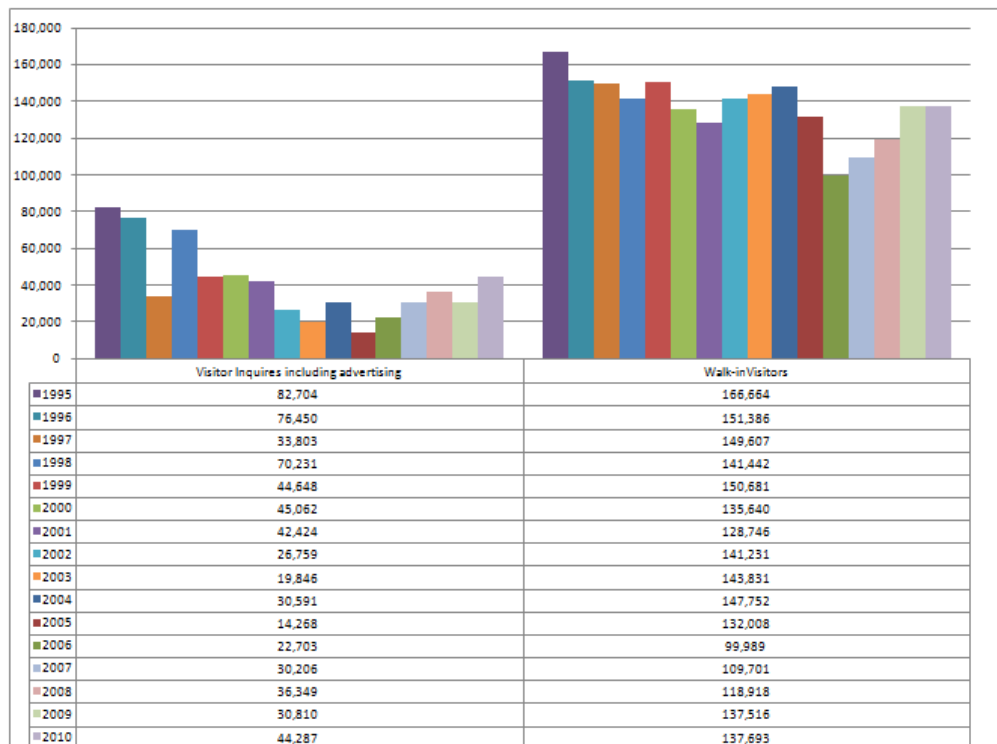
Ditty Bags: 42,551

Attraction brochures: 32,910

Plantation maps: 11,171

Year to date: **190,838** pieces of collateral distributed for the year 2010.

2009 Tourism Inquiries



Communications Department

The Communications Department of Visit Baton Rouge consists of the Director of Communications and the Communications Coordinator. The mission of the Communications Department is to create awareness and exposure for the Baton Rouge Area thereby increasing visitation creating a positive economic impact. The department's primary role is to develop and implement ongoing public relations programs locally, regionally and nationally, lead all social media efforts and to implement all advertising campaigns. The department is also responsible for all items related to graphics branding, imaging, consumer research, internet concepts and functions and collateral development for the BRACVB.

In January 2010, we began a new agency relationship with Zehnder Communications. The approach to the creative platform for the 2010 campaign was to create an emotional connection and a movement based on "go." Baton Rougeans are always on the "go" because there's so much "going on." As our city continues to grow in new and exciting ways, we invite you to "go" with us. This movement is GoBR>>. Go BR is the promotional platform that invites locals and visitors alike to be part of an ongoing relationship with the synergy of our city.

Below are some visual examples of the GoBR ad creative at work.



Consumer, Meeting and Convention, Group Tour and specialty advertising was placed in: *AAA Southern Traveler, America's Best Vacations Newspaper insert, Country Roads Magazine, Gulf Coast Wine + Dine, Louisiana Cookin', Louisiana Cookin' Sweepstakes, Louisiana Life, LASE Directory, LTPA Tour Guide, New Orleans Magazine, New Orleans Visitors Guide, Offbeat (New Orleans), Oxford American, Pathfinders Travel, Southern Breeze, Tiger Rag, Ya'll Magazine, Family Circle, Heritage, Culture & Cuisine To Go, Louisiana Culinary Trails, Texas Monthly Co-op, Texas Monthly TDA, Travel 50 and Beyond, Travel and Vacation Show Recipe Book, Travelhost of Acadiana, Travelhost New Orleans/Northshore, USA Today Houston, USA Today New Orleans/Mississippi, Vacation Fun.com, Visitor Center Distribution Program, Woman's Day, Connect Magazine, Group Tour Magazine, Rejuvenate Magazine, Student Youth Travel Association Pamphlet, Bank Travel Management, Black Meetings and Tourism, Destinations Travel, Meetings and Conventions, Meetings Mentor, Meetings South, WAFB-TV, Greater Baton Rouge Business Report, 225 Magazine, In Register, The Advocate Fun section, 225 Magazine.com, 2the Advocate.com, Google, Louisiana Cookin.com, Yahoo, Travel Ad Network, Tripadvisor, Nola.com, Meetings South Enewsletter and BlackMeetingsandTourism.com.*

Some creative promoted specific recurring events that are unique to Baton Rouge. These ads were placed as part of our general consumer campaign:



In 2010, we continued our outdoor advertising efforts with vinyl billboards on feeder interstates approaching Baton Rouge. We also maintained an in town digital billboard to promote stakeholder events to locals and visitors alike.



Participated in a successful marketing and promotional partnership with Baton Rouge Blues Festival, Pennington Balloon Championships, Fête Rouge: A Louisiana Celebration of Food & Wine, and Bayou Country Superfest.

In interactive efforts, we engaged in a search engine optimization project to increase organic traffic to our website. To compliment these efforts, we launched a paid search engine marketing campaign to drive consumers to our website. We also participated in traditional banner advertising campaigns with Louisianatravel.com and a partnership with the Travel Ad Network. Numbers below indicate the quantifiable results.

VisitBatonRouge.com received 161,878 unique visits in 2010 and a total of 375,422 visitor sessions. There are no spiders or bots in the overall visitation numbers. Over the course of 2010, we continued our very successful social media conversations with significant growth in our presence on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Videoglobetrotter and Flickr. Year-end engagement was measured by likes, followers and views:

- Facebook – 7,927 Likes
- Twitter – 4,435 Followers
- YouTube – 33,550 total views
- Vimeo – 5,745 total plays
- Videoglobetrotter – 68,344 views



We also enhanced our Facebook presence with a sweepstakes featuring a holiday shopping trip to Baton Rouge and an ad campaign to complement the Go BR campaign. Go All is Bright. Participants were asked to explain why they deserved a trip to Baton Rouge in 120 characters or less. The content was repurposed as Facebook and Twitter posts.



The holiday campaign was a great success in growing the page, generating content and creating engagement.

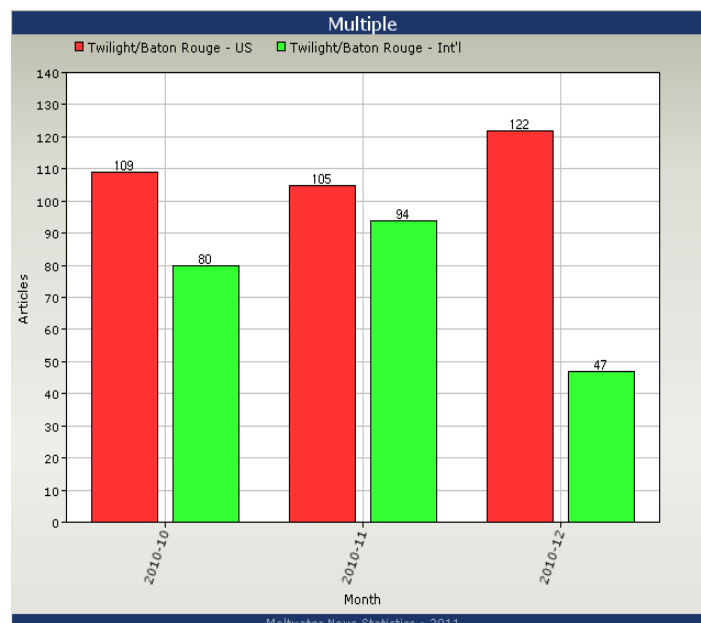
- Fan page grew by 114% in 30 days
- Ad impressions reached more than 17 million people
- Over 2,000 people interacted with the contest by entering or voting on an entry
- Additional PR was generated in local and regional media
- Total investment \$12k.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Editorial coverage of Baton Rouge tourism effectively created \$12,368,053 in ad value. The perfect storm of hosting Midwest Travel Writers Conference, Bayou Country Superfest and the studio filming of Twilight Series: Breaking Dawn combined to triple our coverage this year.

- Assisted in editorial content for and featured in *The Advocate*, *Alexandria Town Talk*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Chicago Tribune*, *CMT News*, *The Times Picayune*, *The Shreveport Times*, *Package Travel Magazine*, *Meetings South*, *The Gainesville Sun*, *Maine Antique Digest*, *Valley Morning Star*, *Convention South*, *Twin Cities Times*, *First Coast News*, *GBR Business Report*, *The Southeast News*, *The Baton Rouge Parents Magazine*, *Woman's Day*, *The Daily Reveille*, *Parish Post-Intelligencer*, *Bank Travel Management*, *Corporate & Incentive Travel*, *Living Blues*, *Southern Living*, *Texas Monthly*, *USAE*, *The Composed Gentleman*, *BroadwayWorld.com*, *Birmingham times*, *Houston Modern Luxury*, *Residential Architect*, *Tampa Tribune*, *Country Weekly*, *Mississippi Business Journal*, *Atlanta-Journal Constitution*, *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, *Oakland Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, *Inregister*, *Black Meetings and Tourism*, *The Gumbo Entertainment*, *The Southeast News*, *The Tennessean*, *Tiger Weekly*, *Animation World Network*, *Forbes.com*, *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Yahoo Finance.com*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Life & Style*, *Internet Movie Database*, *Irish Central*, *New York Magazine*, *Dallas Morning News*, *Hollywood Life.com* and *Canada.com*.

The below graphic represents editorial mention of Baton Rouge in articles about Twilight Series: Breaking Dawn. The sentiment of the articles was overwhelmingly positive and created positive overall brand awareness for the community domestically and internationally.



Collateral production:

- Updated and reprinted Flap Map
- Reprint ditty bags
- Assisted in the production of Welcome Guide
- Update and redesign of Plantation Map

Projects and Special Events

The Projects and Special Events Department consists of the Director of Projects and the Project and Design Specialist. Its primary role is the implementation of specialty marketing events including special activity promotions, industry event promotions, film and video industry related projects and merchandising as they relate to the BRACVB's overall mission.

Film and Television

- In partnership with the Baton Rouge Film Commission, more than 33,000 rooms were consumed in 2010 with a reported direct spend of \$193 million.
- In 2010, 26 film productions were shot in the Baton Rouge area as reported by the Baton Rouge Film Commission.
- Universal Studio's Battleship and Summit Entertainment's Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn were two of the largest productions filmed in Baton Rouge historically.
- Other films of note that were filmed in Baton Rouge in 2010: Dungeons and Dragons 3, The Door, Haunting in Georgia, Flypaper, Carjacked, Things We Do for Love, Zombie Hamlet and Transit.

Other Promotional Opportunities

- Partnered with Festival Productions Inc, AEG Promotions, the City of Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Office of Tourism and Louisiana State University to host Bayou Country Superfest – an unprecedented signature country music festival to be held Memorial Day weekend 2010 in LSU Tiger Stadium. With tickets sold in 48 states and 3 countries, the city seized the tourism discretionary dollar and realized an economic impact of \$35 million during a weekend that is traditionally null of activity.
- Hosted the Opening Ceremonies for the 2010 US Youth Soccer Southern Regional Championships on June 17, 2010. 12,000 players and their families descended onto LSU campus where they were greeted by Mardi Gras floats and throws, traditional Jazz Second Line Band and the world famous soccer enthusiasts, The Futboleros, before competing in a hugely successful 7 day tournament that took over the entire city of Baton Rouge.
- Developed and implemented the "Get a Kick Out of Art" program. This collaborative effort between the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Soccer Association and our organization presented a unique opportunity to marry arts and sports for the

week of the US Youth Soccer Tournament. The program which consisted of soccer balls embellished by local artisans united the arts and sports communities while introducing our guests to some of the area's best restaurants and attractions where the balls were on display. The program was so successful, regional championship organizers have requested permission to include the program in all future bids from host organizations.

Looking ahead to 2010 and beyond

Visit Baton Rouge will continue its efforts in Culinary Tourism Marketing by:

- Partnering with Baton Rouge Epicurean Society to host Fête Rouge: A Louisiana Celebration of Food and Wine
- Visit Baton Rouge is a platinum participant in the Louisiana Culinary Trails program

Partnerships

- *Seein' Red* phase V will commence in Fall 2011 as we ramp up for US Bowling Congress' return to Baton Rouge in 2012. To date there have been 87 trainings at 78 locations with 791 graduates of the program.
- Bayou Country Superfest – Memorial Day 2011 – with expected attendance of 80,000 – public/private partnership with Visit Baton Rouge, Festival Productions Inc., AEG Productions Louisiana Office of Tourism and Louisiana State University.



Destination Sales Target Markets:

- Religions Planners
- Sporting Event Coordinators
- Association Planners
- LSU and Southern University
- Reunion Planners (Military and Family)
- Group Travel
- Television and Film Professionals
- Leisure Travelers
- Travel Writers and Media
- Community and Stakeholders

Future Events and Promotions

- Hosting Louisiana Tourism Industry Summit in January 2011
- Hosting Bank Travel, February 2011
- Co-hosting 2nd Annual Bayou Country Superfest, May 2011
- Hosting South Arts, Performing Arts Exchange, September 2011
- Baton Rouge River Center Phase II Expansion, complete Fall 2011
- United States Bowling Congress, January – June 2012

STAFF

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Lori Lasseigne, Administrative Assistant
Kristen Maurel, Project & Design Specialist
Regina A. Porter, Senior Sales Manager
Jennye Snider, Senior Sales Manager
Christina Zito, Communications Coordinator

Support Staff

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Frances Bennett, Registration Hostess
Charles Bennett, Registration Host
Charles Blaylock, Visitor Information Counselor
Linda Dudley, Registration Hostess
Ruth Gillen, Visitor Information Counselor
Janell Hernandez, Visitor Information Counselor
Vincent Jeanpierre, Courier
Nick Lawless, Visitor Information Counselor
Mary L. Lieux, Visitor Information Counselor
MaryBeth Manriquez, Registration Hostess
Bobbie Ned, Registration Hostess
Dave Powell, Visitor Information Counselor
Beryl Smith, Registration Hostess
Gary Traylor, Courier

Partners

Baton Rouge Area Sports Foundation
Jerry Stovall, President & CEO
Eric Engemann, Coordinator of Indoor Sports/Sports
Meetings
Kristen Chighizola, Director of Events Management

Baton Rouge Film Commission
Amy Mitchell-Smith, Executive Director
Katie Harvey, Projects Coordinator

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