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Mississippi Tourism Association Unveils “Heart of Hospitality” Workforce Development Program

Jackson, MS – The Mississippi Tourism Association (MTA) proudly introduces the **Heart of Hospitality Workforce Development Training Program**. This initiative is designed to empower Mississippi’s fourth-largest private-sector employer with the tools needed to create meaningful, positive guest experiences in Mississippi. By focusing on workforce development, MTA wants to ensure the industry continues to thrive, drive economic growth and enhance the state’s reputation as a premier travel destination.

Heart of Hospitality includes seven free online video sessions in English and Spanish, covering essential skills such as listening and communication, connecting with guests and fostering a positive visitor experience. Participants navigate real-world scenarios, test their skills through quizzes and earn a “Certified Hospitality Expert” (CHE) designation upon completion, equipping them for success in the hospitality industry. The courses are available for anyone currently in the hospitality industry or those seeking to enter this sector.

Additional Heart of Hospitality program elements include a statewide online job bank and educational seminars to develop tourism leaders. Together with the online courses, the overall program will support tourism professionals and attract new talent to Mississippi’s \$11.5 billion tourism industry that employs a total of 133,880 people and generated \$1.1 billion in state and local tax revenue in 2023.

The job bank included in the Heart of Hospitality program connects professionals within the hospitality sector, creating a more targeted and relevant job search experience. As another free resource, it streamlines the hiring process by allowing employers to quickly post jobs and candidates to filter for roles that match their skills, interests and preferred locations.

MTA has also introduced training seminars as a new benefit for its members via Heart of Hospitality. These seminars will be scheduled across various locations or offered virtually, providing convenient access statewide. The sessions will feature expert speakers, such as Wendy Sellers, The HR Lady®, and will cover a range of topics tailored to the needs of tourism professionals, including talent attraction and retention, employee development and board management.

By participating in these seminars, MTA members can gain valuable insights and practical strategies to improve their operations and contribute to the overall success of Mississippi’s tourism industry.

Registration is free for MTA members, while non-members are welcome to attend for a nominal fee. View details on the upcoming series featuring Wendy Sellers at <https://mstourism.com/events/mta-regional-training-sessions/>.

“The Heart of Hospitality program is about celebrating the hard work, teamwork and diverse stories of Mississippi’s tourism professionals,” said Danielle Morgan, Executive Director of MTA. “Our goal is to make this resource accessible to as many industry partners as possible, demonstrating its impact and securing continued support for workforce development for Mississippi’s fourth-largest industry.”

For more information about this program, please visit <https://workforce.mstourism.com> or contact Amanda Roll, Workforce and Leadership Development Coordinator, aroll@mstourism.com.

Heart of Hospitality Links:

- HOH Landing Page: <https://workforce.mstourism.com/>
- Heart of Hospitality Training Courses-English: <https://etube.treatemright.com/mtahoh>
- Heart of Hospitality Training Courses-Spanish: <https://etube.treatemright.com/mtahohspanish>
- HOH Job Bank: <https://workforce.mstourism.com/job-bank/>

About the Mississippi Tourism Association

The voice of tourism, the Mississippi Tourism Association is a membership organization whose mission is to unite all sectors of the tourism industry through advocacy, promotion and education. MTA's vision is to transform Mississippi's economy through increased visitor spending and overall travel industry growth. For 39 years, MTA has led Mississippi's tourism education, promotion and advocacy efforts. Membership and organization details can be found at www.mstourism.com

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