

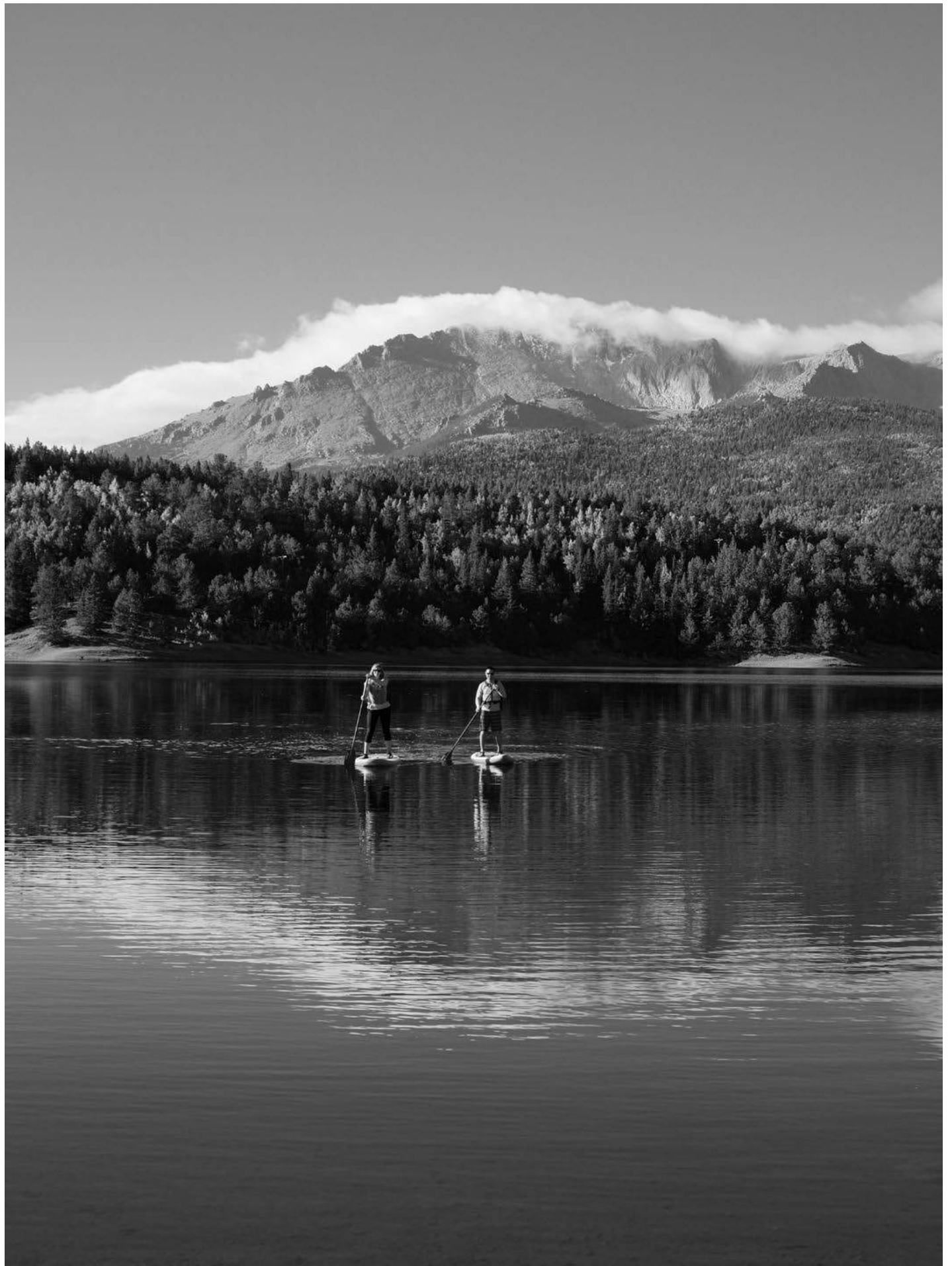


# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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We bring more people to Colorado Springs at Pikes Peak









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DOUG PRICE

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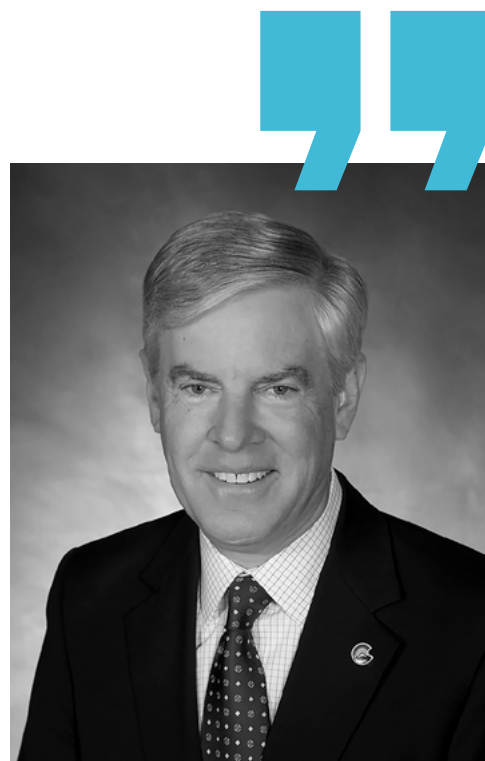
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STAFF &  
GOVERNANCE

# A MESSAGE FROM DOUG PRICE

PRESIDENT & CEO



2016 was our 4th straight year in which the Lodgers & Automobile Rental Tax (LART) increased over the previous year. Collections in 2016 outpaced 2015 by 15.6%. The Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau is proud to significantly contribute to the economic vitality of Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region.

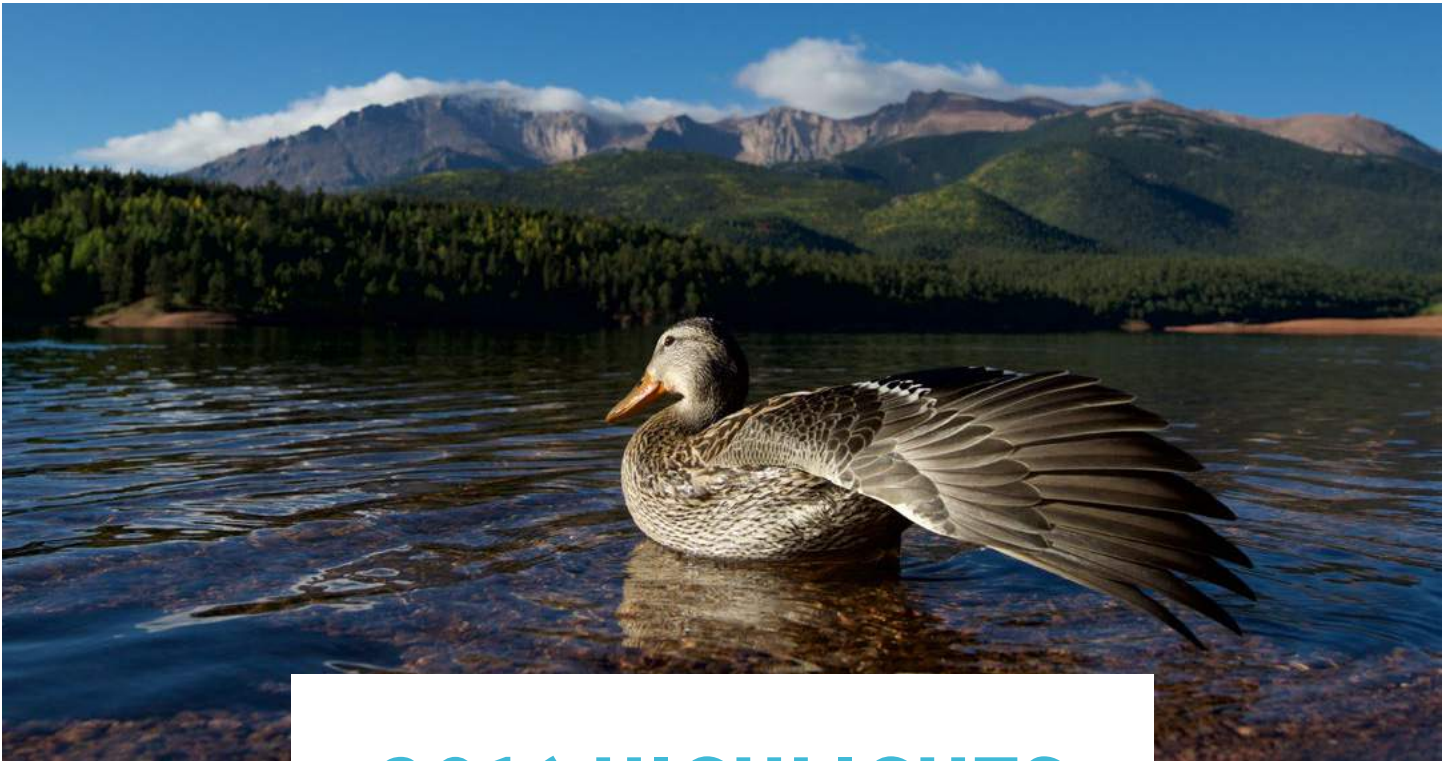
This momentum has generated significant investments in our region, including several new hotels on the horizon, a plan to rebuild Flying W Ranch and the development of the Ring the Peak Trail. The capital campaign will soon begin for the Pikes Peak Summit House and solid progress is being made on the new Visitor Center at the U.S. Air Force Academy and on the UCCS Sports Medicine & Performance Center. Airlines are making a commitment to our region with Frontier Airlines recently announcing non-stop flights to Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Washington D.C. and Chicago this summer and Tampa Bay and Ft. Myers this fall. Another welcome addition is the new American Airlines service to Chicago.

The imminent groundbreaking of the U.S. Olympic Museum, the centerpiece of the City for Champions projects, will bring fresh attention to Colorado Springs and solidify our designation as Olympic City USA. The fall 2017 completion of the I-25 Cimarron interchange will provide an additional front door into our revitalized downtown to the east and mountains to the west.

2017 promises to be an exciting year, with the return of professional cycling to the state and to our city. The Colorado Classic will begin in Colorado Springs on August 10, move to Breckenridge on August 11 and culminate in Denver on August 12 and 13. This premier event features both men's and women's teams and will highlight the beauty and vitality of Colorado to the world on NBC platforms. Ticket sales have begun for the 2018 U.S. Senior Open at The Broadmoor, which will be celebrating its 100th anniversary next year.

There is no better time to set the course for a sustainable future of the tourism industry, an

economic development engine that consistently provides a strong return on investment and helps to make Colorado Springs one of the best places in which to live. The CVB, along with many community partners, participated in the Destination Next project, which provided an objective assessment of the strengths and opportunities for our organization and industry. 2017 will see the start of a regional Tourism Master Plan that will have a strong connection with the recently unveiled Colorado Tourism Roadmap. The synergies of these two strategic documents will chart the course for sustainable funding and responsible growth in the years to come.



## 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

### LART PERFORMANCE

The Lodgers & Automobile Rental Tax (LART) performed well beyond expectations due to strong consumer confidence, focused sales efforts, targeted marketing campaigns, high hotel occupancy rates and increased average daily rate.

### PROMOTIONAL FUNDING

2015 research showed Colorado Springs tourism promotion as underfunded compared to its competitors. In response, the CVB restructured its partnership dues to lay the foundation for a LART increase ballot initiative.

### OLYMPIC CITY USA

Colorado Springs is Olympic City USA. The OCUSA Task Force is creating brand recognition through athlete programs, enhancing civic pride, creating sustainable economic development and tourism promotion.

### CITY FOR CHAMPIONS

City for Champions projects moved forward, with fundraising for the U.S. Olympic Museum, proposal review for the U.S. Air Force Academy Visitor Center and planning sessions for the UCCS Sports Medicine & Performance Center.

### FLYCOS

Passenger traffic increased 10.6% in 2016 due to strong inbound and outbound marketing and the return of Frontier Airlines. Frontier started with a daily flight to Las Vegas and subsequently expanded to Phoenix and Orlando.

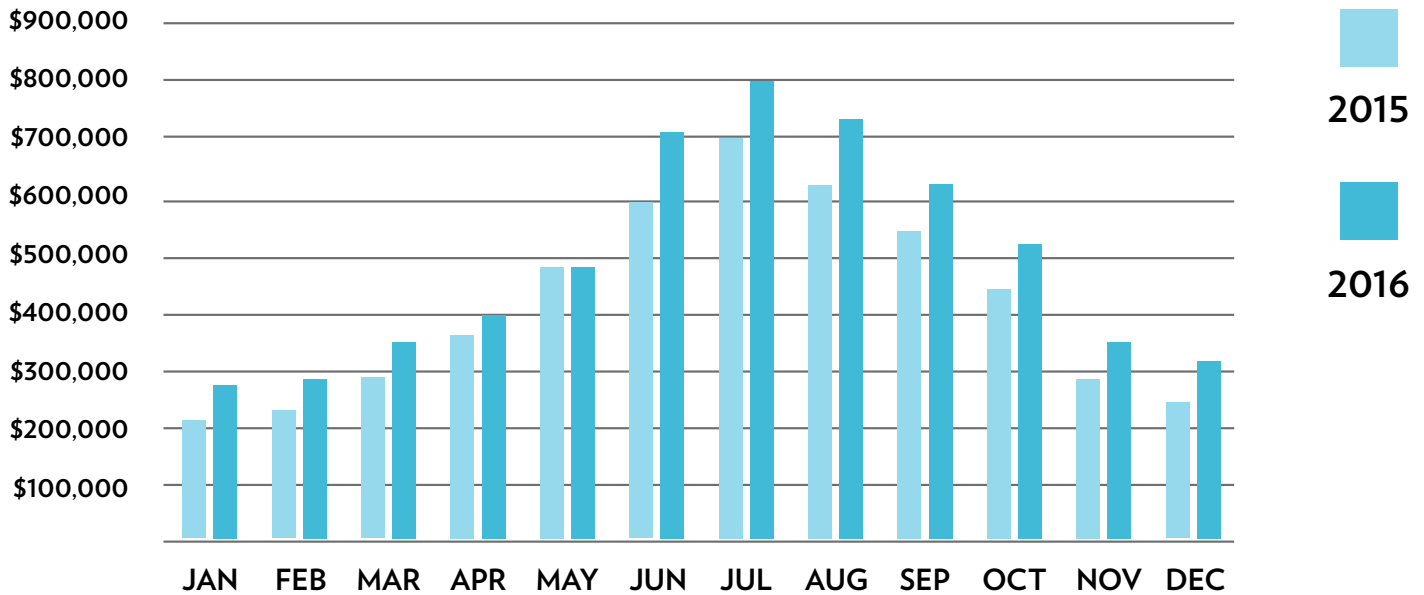
### LONGWOODS RESEARCH

The CVB invested in Longwoods travel research, which revealed that the number of overnight and day visitors to Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region topped out at 20.1 million people in 2015.

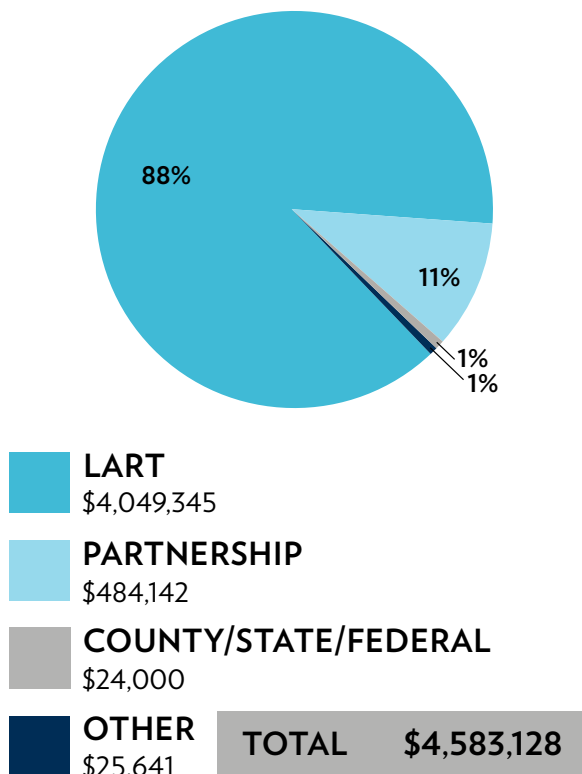
# Performance Statistics

## 2016 LART BY MONTH

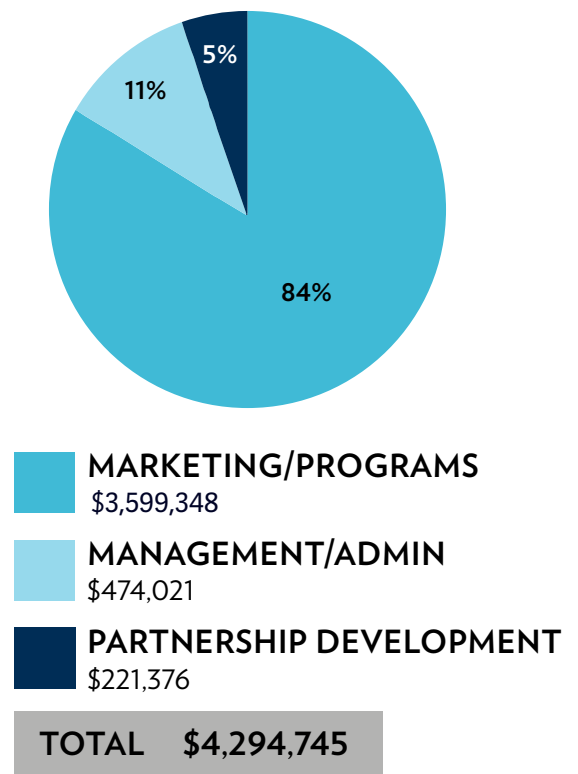
**2015** | **2016**  
\$5,056,916 | \$5,846,258 +15.6%



## 2016 FUNDING SOURCES

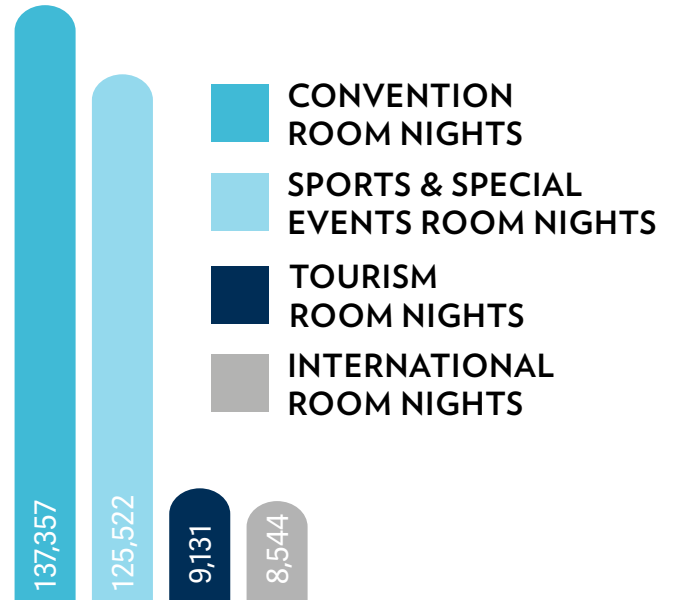
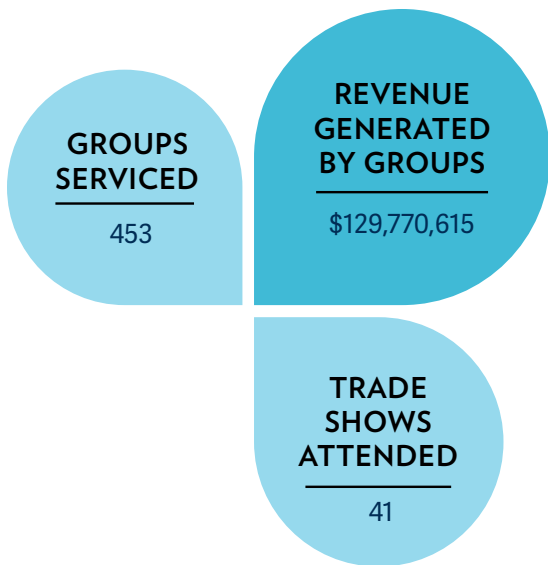


## 2016 EXPENDITURES

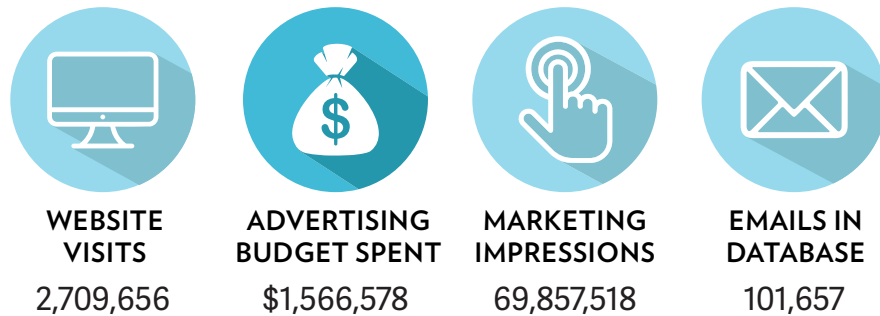


# Performance Statistics

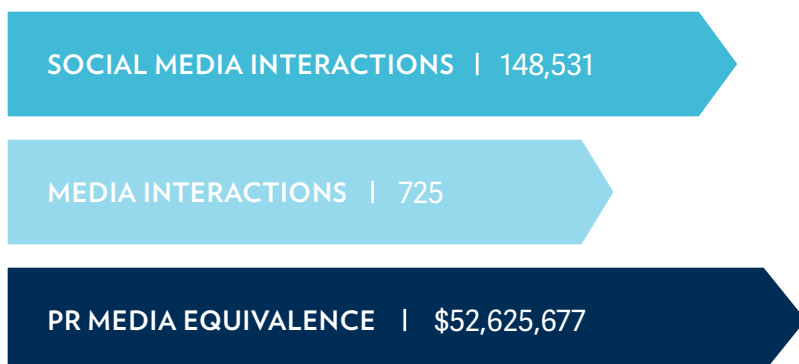
## GROUP SALES & SERVICING



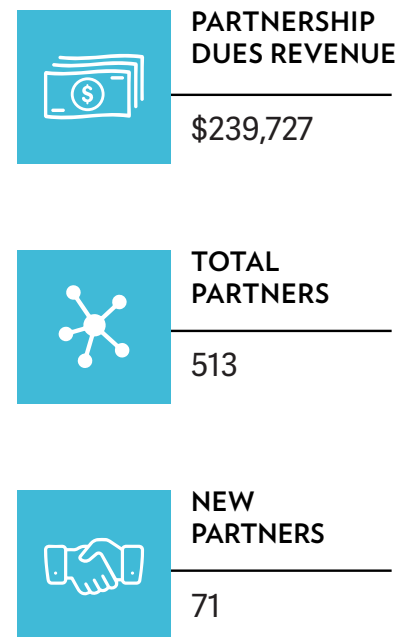
## MARKETING



## PUBLIC RELATIONS



## PARTNERSHIP





# Department Initiatives

## MARKETING & PR



### ADVERTISING

The CVB ran a variety of campaigns to inspire leisure travel. Target markets included Families, Outdoor Enthusiasts, Arts & Culture Travelers, Craft Beverage Aficionados and travelers who live in cities with non-stop flights to Colorado Springs. The CVB made more placements in digital media compared to previous years. Within digital, placement of native ads (those that are formatted to match the host website) was expanded and re-targeted banner ads to consumers who showed a level of interest in the region were added to the mix. Print advertising was reduced, but still plays a key role in publications with editorial content focusing on the Pikes Peak region.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Proactive outreach to travel writers and online influencers achieved broad exposure for the region in publications and on websites such as USA Today, Dorado, Afa.com, Redbook, Teavelocity and MSN. The CVB hosted domestic travel writers and bloggers from California, Colorado and Indiana. International writers also visited from Japan, Germany, Canada, Italy, China and France to learn and write about the region.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube continued to perform well in branding the region and driving traffic to VisitCOS.com. Engagement was driven by professional and visitor scenic photography, event ticket giveaways, trip sweepstakes and guest Instagram take-overs. The CVB continued to use and promote #VisitCOS to drive brand awareness and engagement on all CVB social media channels.

### Awards & Accolades



**MOST CARING CITY**  
by Knowzen.com



**GARDEN OF THE GODS  
BEST FREE ATTRACTION**  
by 10Best.com



**MOST AFFORDABLE CITY**  
by Mint.com



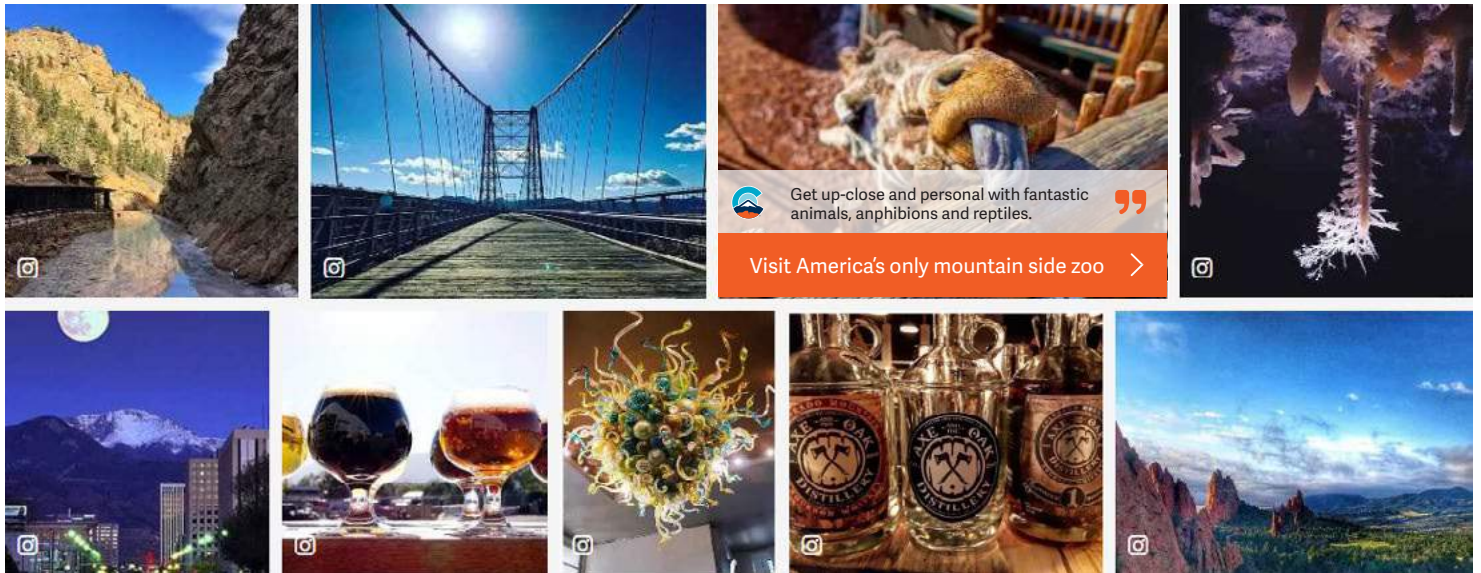
**MOST DESIRABLE  
PLACES TO LIVE**  
by Livability.com





## CROWDRIFF

The CVB is harnessing the power of User-Generated Content (UGC) with the help of CrowdRiff, software that curates posts from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and places them in photo galleries on [VisitCOS.com/visitcos](http://VisitCOS.com/visitcos). The software also engages with users, generating more online conversations and brand awareness.



## COLORADO SPRINGS FILM COMMISSION



The Colorado Springs Film Commission is housed within the marketing department of the CVB. The Film Commission provides annual support to regional film festivals and assists incoming productions with permits, location recommendations and access to local film professionals.

A Netflix feature-length production, "Our Souls at Night," filmed in Colorado Springs, Old Colorado City and Florence in September and October 2016. The film, starring Robert Redford, Jane Fonda, Bruce Dern and Judy Greer, is adapted from a book by Kent Haruf set in a small Colorado town.

The production received a \$1.4 million incentive rebate from the Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media and generated more than \$17 million in economic impact in the region for lodging, food, equipment rental, transportation, local crew and miscellaneous services. Hundreds of locals attended casting calls to be chosen as extras, including one CVB employee. The film is scheduled for a 2017 release.

[FILMCOLORADOSPRINGS.COM](http://FILMCOLORADOSPRINGS.COM)

## TV & FILM PRODUCTIONS

### *Over the Years*



ANIMAL PLANET



WIFE SWAP



ICE CASTLES



COP CAR



EXTREME HOME  
MAKEOVER



OUR SOULS  
AT NIGHT

## Department Initiatives

### GROUP MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS & EVENTS



#### MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

Whether it's the Space Symposium attracting more than 9,000 space experts from 30 countries to The Broadmoor or a 15-person board meeting at a more intimate venue, Colorado Springs welcomed a wide variety of meetings and conventions in 2016. CVB meeting & convention staff attended 26 trade shows to establish and develop relationships with corporate, association, religious and government meeting planners. They also used sponsorships, social media, city familiarization trips and special events to help meeting planners learn about the benefits of meeting in Colorado Springs and having attendees fly directly into the Colorado Springs Airport.

#### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

The CVB partners with the Colorado Tourism Office to promote the region to Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, France and China. The Brand USA website, VisitTheUSA.com, is another important partner providing exposure to visitors from around the world. Each year, CVB staff attends international trade shows such as Go West Summit, ITB, World Travel Market and U.S. Travel Association's International PowWow (IPW). Colorado Springs hosted Go West Summit 2015 and Denver will host IPW in 2018.

#### DOMESTIC TOURS

Motorcoach tour operators are adding Colorado Springs and other cities within the Pikes Peak region to their itineraries more than ever before. Our group-friendly lodging, attractions and restaurants make this a popular destination for those who enjoy group travel, scenic beauty and unique experiences. Trade shows sponsored by industry trade groups such as the American Bus Association, Travel Alliance Partners and National Tour Association allow our staff to market to this important segment of the travel industry.

#### GROUP SERVICING

After a meeting or event has booked their lodging and venue, our convention servicing coordinator takes the reins to assist planners with important details such as attendee marketing, ground transportation, catering, photography, entertainment, outings and off-site events.

#### *Meetings, Conventions & Events*

BROUGHT TO COLORADO SPRINGS

CHRISTIAN &  
MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

COLORADO  
WILDLAND FIRE & INCIDENT  
MANAGEMENT ACADEMY

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

COLORADO  
JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

5TH BATTALION/7TH  
CAVALRY ASSOCIATION

CHERWELL SOFTWARE

COLORADO ACADEMY  
OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS



## **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

Kathy Reak, Senior Director of Convention Sales, was chosen as the 2016 recipient of the Meeting Professional International Rocky Mountain Chapter's Industry Legacy Award in honor of Sandy Gerety.

## **SPORTS & SPECIAL EVENTS**

Colorado Springs is a popular destination for sporting events. Event planners find that our top-quality facilities, mild climate, affordable lodging and unique attractions create a winning game plan. The U.S. Olympic Committee, Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center, Olympic Training Sites and 23 National Governing Bodies form the foundation of the Olympic City USA brand and are instrumental in creating our unrivaled sports ecosystem. The CVB is a member of the National Association of Sports Commissions and staff attends sports conferences and trade shows to promote Colorado Springs as a premier sports destination, generate new business and maintain relationships with national sports organizations.

## **WEDDINGS, REUNIONS & DAY MEETINGS**

When it comes to a get-together for friends, families and colleagues, Colorado Springs has a variety of unique event venues to host weddings, family reunions and day meetings. CVB staff members help these event planners with venue selection, lodging, catering, photographers, florists, transportation and activities to create an event that is memorable and successful. These services are available to both visitors and those living in the Pikes Peak region.

# *Awards & Accolades*

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**2016 AWARD  
OF EXCELLENCE**  
Corporate & Incentive Travel



**2016 GOLD AWARD**  
Meetings & Conventions Magazine



**2016 PLATINUM  
CHOICE AWARD**  
Smart Meetings Magazine



**FINALIST: BEST OF THE BEST  
2016 DESTINATION  
MARKETING ORGANIZATION**  
Colorado Meetings & Events Magazine



**2016 READERS  
CHOICE AWARD**  
Sports Event Magazine



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## *Department Initiatives*

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### **VISITOR SERVICES**



#### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

There are a variety of ways that the CVB connects with potential visitors. In addition to the website, information is delivered through the Acacia Park Visitor Info Hub in downtown Colorado Springs (open Memorial Day – Labor Day), touchscreen kiosks positioned in The Gazette lobby on Pikes Peak Avenue and on both levels of the Garden of the Gods Visitor & Nature Center and the Visitor Information Center at 515 S. Cascade Avenue, also known as the VIC. In 2016, the VIC welcomed 20,147 guests who were helped by our friendly and knowledgeable corps of volunteer information specialists.

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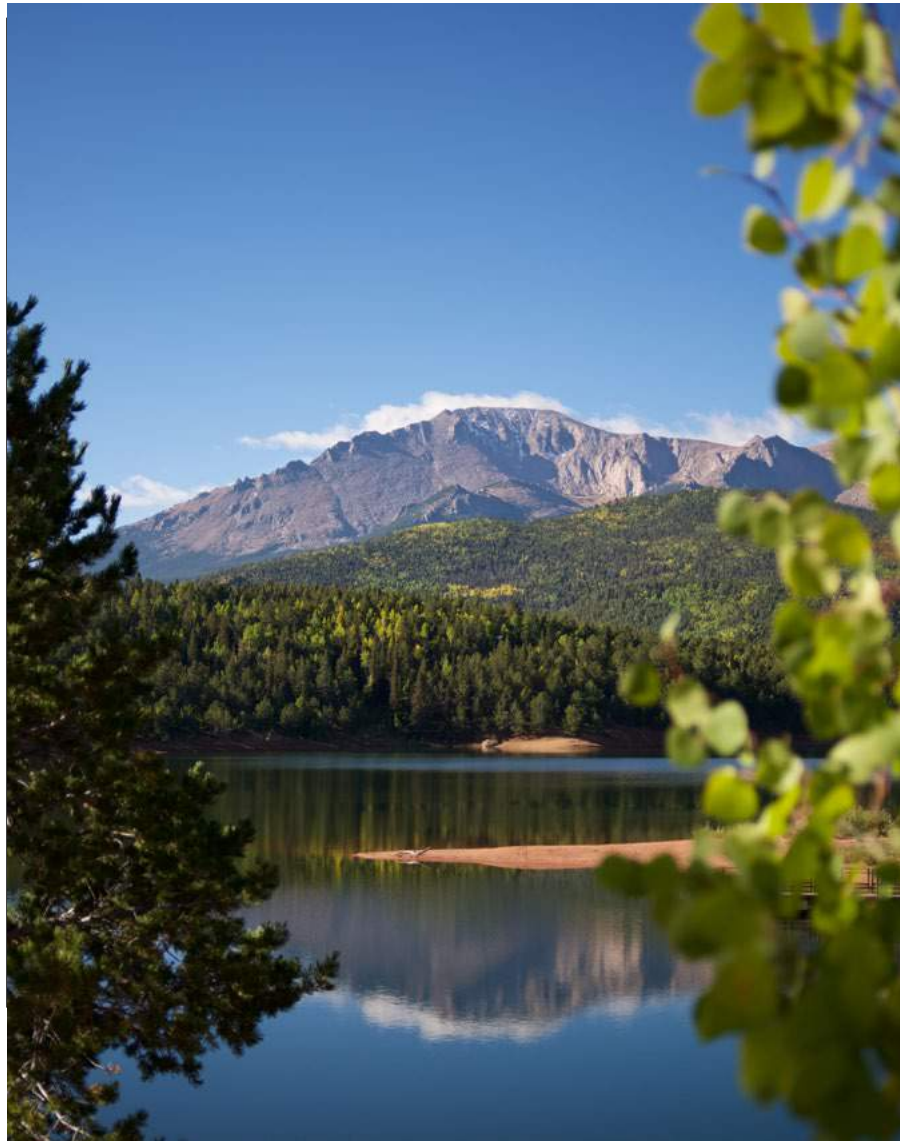
#### **PUBLICATIONS**

Though the Internet is the go-to source for travel information, visitors and residents still have an appetite for printed publications. Each year, the CVB partners with Pikes Peak Country Attractions Association to publish the Official Visitor Guide for Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region. In 2016, the OVG Joint Venture printed 475,000 vacation planners and visitors downloaded nearly 50,000 online guides. The CVB produced 12,000 pocket-sized Dining, Shopping & Entertainment Guides for VIC guests and meeting attendees.

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#### **MYCOS**

The CVB launched a new ambassador program to educate tourism employees. MyCOS is a half-day session that covers the history of the region as well as the attractions, venues and retail outlets in Colorado Springs.



# Department Initiatives

## PARTNERSHIP & EVENTS



### THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIP

We are always stronger together than apart and have arrived at a critical juncture in sustaining the vitality of the tourism industry in the Pikes Peak region. As the initial step of a long-term initiative to remain competitive within leisure and group travel, the CVB restructured its dues based on data from a Tourism Economics study that showed our region lagging its competitive set in tourism promotion investment. The best path forward is to increase the LART in the coming years. For that to be successful, it is important for elected officials, the business community and citizens to see strong private investment by the tourism industry. Additional information about the dues restructure can be found on [VisitCOS.com/funding](http://VisitCOS.com/funding).

### PARTNER EDUCATION

In each quarter of 2016, the CVB held a Partner Benefits Class, free of charge and open to all CVB Marketing and Community Partners. The class provides an overview of how Partners can maximize their CVB benefits to reach the 20.1 million visitors to the region each year.

### ANNUAL EVENTS

Each year, the CVB hosts two main events:

**1 THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING** was held at the Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center. Six Team USA athletes joined as guests of sponsoring businesses as excitement was building for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

**2 THE TOURISM AWARDS CELEBRATION** was held at Hotel Elegante and featured "A Bountiful Harvest," with the spotlight on our craft beverage industry. 13 CVB Marketing Partners provided tastings of their locally crafted beer, cider, wine, spirits and coffee.

### MIXERS

The quarterly mixers in 2016 provided CVB Partners with the opportunity to network and visit venues and attractions.

- 1 GARDEN OF THE GODS VISITOR & NATURE CENTER**  
Partners enjoyed touring the expanded and renovated attraction, including the new GeoTrekker movie presentation.
- 2 CAVE OF THE WINDS MOUNTAIN PARK**  
Guests enjoyed cave tours and adrenaline-inducing rides on the Terror-dactyl, Wind Walker Challenge Course and Bat-A-Pult.
- 3 WESTERN MUSEUM OF MINING & INDUSTRY**  
An educational and fun "Motherlode" scavenger hunt took guests through this fascinating museum.
- 4 PIKES PEAK INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY**  
Guests enjoyed go-karts and a timed race car obstacle course.



Despite VisitCOS.com achieving double digit growth each year since its 2013 redesign, the site went through a complete redesign that started in 2016 and launched, on time and on budget, on February 28, 2017. Built by Tempest, a digital agency specializing in the

travel industry, the site's purpose is to inspire travel to Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region for business, sports and pleasure. Visitors also use the site to order and download visitor guides, register for the enewsletter and request hotel proposals for group events.

## THRIVING IN A MOBILE WORLD

With more than 60% of web traffic coming from cell phones and tablets, the new site was built with a mobile-first strategy, including responsive design, more images and larger buttons. Not only would this improve the user experience, it would also dramatically increase search engine optimization.



VisitCOS.com is the best tool for planning family vacations, outdoor adventures, sporting competitions, tours, weddings, reunions, meetings and conventions.



In 2016, VisitCOS.com received more than 2.7 million page visits and more than 7 million individual pageviews. That is a 27% increase from the previous year.

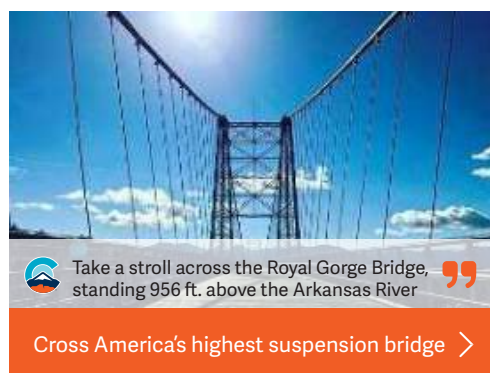


Photo galleries, powered by CrowdRiff, inspire travel to the region by highlighting authentic experiences of residents and visitors.

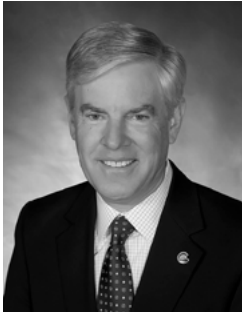


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## Staff & Governance

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### CVB EXECUTIVE TEAM & STAFF



**DOUG PRICE**  
President & CEO



**JIM CASSIDY**  
Chief Financial Officer



**PAM SHERFESEE**  
Vice President of Sales



**AMY LONG**  
Chief Innovation Officer



**CHRISTY LONG**  
Director of  
Visitor Services

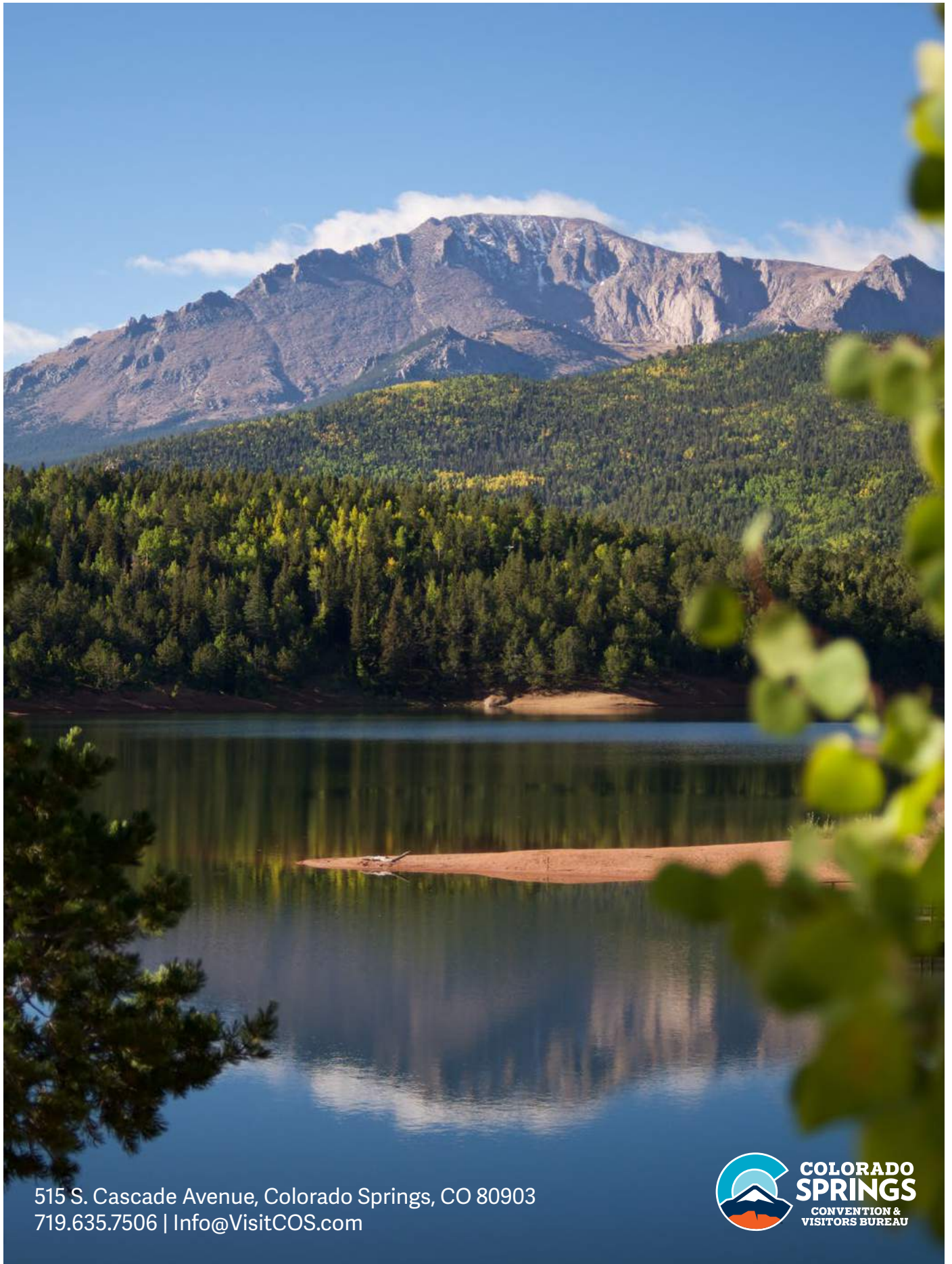
**RIO ANDRASKO** | Sales Manager, Sports & Special Events  
**DINA CHIARAVALLLOTI** | Group Services Coordinator  
**SARAH CONDE** | Sales Coordinator  
**KIM GRIFFIS** | Director of Partnership Development  
**KELLY GORMAN** | Partnership Coordinator  
**FLOY KENNEDY** | Director of Travel Industry Sales  
**DORIS MCCRAW** | VIC Information Specialist

**CHERYL MCCULLOUGH** | Director of Sports & Special Events  
**DENISE NOBLE** | Marketing Coordinator  
**CHELSEY OFFUTT** | Director of Communications  
**KATHY REAK** | Senior Director of Convention Sales  
**GABY STEPHENSON** | Executive Assistant  
**MELISSA WILLIAMS** | Marketing Manager

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**ANDY NEINAS** | **Chair** - Owner, Echo Canyon River Expeditions  
**STEVE KANATZAR** | **Vice Chair** - Owner, The Airplane Restaurant  
**PETER UDALL** | **Treasurer** - International Vice President/Executive Officer, The Navigators  
**SHELBY PYWELL** | **Secretary** - General Manager, The Mining Exchange, A Wyndham Grand Hotel  
**BARRY BROWN** | Vice President of Sales & Marketing, The Broadmoor  
**DAN GALLAGHER** | Director of Aviation, Colorado Springs Airport  
**ALICIA MCCONNELL** | Director, Training Sites and Community Partnerships, United States Olympic Committee  
**ED OKVATH** | General Manager, Hotel Eleganté  
**DR. ERIC OLSON** | Director of Sport Management & Professor of Marketing, University of Colorado Colorado Springs  
**TOM OSBORNE** | President/CEO, The Sports Corp  
**ANDY VICK** | Executive Director, Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region  
**PAT VICTOR** | General Manager, Hilton Garden Inn - Airport  
**BRIAN BINN** (non-voting) | Chief, Development and Strategic Engagement, United States Air Force Academy  
**SUSAN DAVIES** (non-voting) | Executive Director, Trails & Open Space Coalition  
**JILL GAEBLER** (non-voting) | City Council President Pro-tem, Colorado Springs City Council  
**DEANNE MCCANN** (non-voting) | Economic Development Manager, El Paso County



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