

MONTANA
LODGING AND
HOSPITALITY
ASSOCIATION



2023 Conference & Trade Show
October 24-26
Fairmont Hot Springs Resort

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Conference Agenda

Tuesday, October 24

- 5:00 pm Registration Opens—*Registration Area*
- 5:30 pm-6:00 pm **First Time Attendee Orientation—Room 108**
- 6:30 pm **Conference Welcome/Trade Show Grand Opening— Convention Center**
“The ‘90s: Groove, Grunge & Good Times!” This evening will be the bomb — food, fun, and networking with your MLHA peers and visiting with our Trade Show vendors! Wear your best ‘90s attire and compete for the Best Costume Award sponsored by Lambert Hotels, and complete in the vendor scavenger hunt for a chance to win a cash prize sponsored by Boothill Inn & Suites.
- 9:00 pm **“Beers with Peers” Social—Patio**
Top off the evening with a casual social gathering on the patio, featuring a complimentary Anaconda microbrew. In case of inclement weather, we’ll gather in the Rocky Mountain Foyer.

Wednesday, October 25

- 7:30 am Registration Opens—*Registration Area*
- 7:30 am-9:00 am **Continental Breakfast with Trade Show Exhibitors—Convention Center**
 • **Platinum & Gold Sponsor Spotlight**—*Learn more about MLHA’s preferred partnership with HUB Insurance, and get to know our valued Gold Sponsors!*
- 8:00 am-9:30 am **TBID Meeting** sponsored by **Visit Billings—Ponderosa Room**
- 9:30 am-11:00 am **General Manager Best Practices Roundtable Discussion—Ponderosa Room**
General Managers, come ready to participate in this roundtable discussion on the broad issues concerning hotel management.
- Sales & Marketing Council Annual Meeting—Room 103**
All sales and marketing professionals are invited to attend this meeting to network and share ideas about engaging in MLHA.
- 11:00-11:15 am **Break in Trade Show** sponsored by **Studio Provision – Convention Center**
- 11:15 am-12:00 pm **General Session I—Bitterroot/Sapphire Rooms**
Melissa Weddell - Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research, University of Montana
“The Changing Landscape of Montana Tourism”
Dr. Weddell serves as the ITRR director and holds a faculty position in the Department of Society & Conservation in the Franke College of Forestry and Conservation at the University of Montana. Her educational background includes a PhD in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management from Clemson University, an MBA from Southern Illinois University, and a bachelor’s degree in small business management and entrepreneurship from Ball State University. Melissa’s research focuses on fostering the responsible development of rural recreation and tourism destinations, positively impacting both users and local economies, to ultimately enhance the quality of life for all.
- 12:15 pm-1:45 pm **Luncheon Featuring MLHA Trade Show Exhibitors—Convention Center**
 - Vendor Slideshow/Introductions
 - Presentation - MLHA Allied Business Member of the Year Award
 - Montana Travel Assn./Voices of Montana Tourism Update - Dax Schieffer, Executive Director*Enjoy hearing more about our valued Allied Businesses who help make this conference possible, and take a last opportunity to cruise the trade show and thank our vendors.*



2:00 pm-3:30 pm



- General Session II—Bitterroot/Sapphire Rooms**
William B. Henry - Motivational Speaker & Transformation Coach
“Am I the Leader I Think I Am?”
In the ever-evolving world of business, leaders must self-reflect to ensure that they are doing the work to create a culture that invites others into their environment. It is essential for leaders to understand that employees do not leave their jobs, but they leave their managers. This fast-paced, interactive keynote will challenge participants to think outside of their personal lens and begin to see the world through a different lens. Buckle up and let’s grow together!

Conference Agenda

Wednesday, October 25 (continued)

3:30-3:45 pm

Break—Rocky Mountain Foyer

3:45 pm-5:00 pm

General Session III—Bitterroot/Sapphire Rooms

Robert Kelly - Smith Travel Research

“U.S. & Montana Hospitality Update: Trends & Forecasts”

After a few years of volatility in the hotel industry, we're starting to see signs of something new: normalization. Robert will take a look at hospitality trends over the last year for the total US, as well as a breakdown of performance in Montana and its submarkets. And no STR update is complete without a look ahead, so he'll also review pipeline and forecast data on both national and local levels.



6:00 pm-9:00 pm

MLHA Awards Dinner Banquet—Cutthroat/Grizzly Rooms

Please join us dressed in formal wear to enjoy a reception, elegant dinner, and entertainment featuring the Cutler Brothers Productions Improv Comedy Show. Awards for Lodging Person of the Year, Sales & Marketing Person of the Year, and the MLHA Emeritus Award will be presented.

Thursday, October 26

8:00-9:00 am

Continental Breakfast—Cutthroat Room

9:00 am-11:00 am

MLHA Membership Meeting/Conference Closing—Grizzly Room

Don't miss the conclusion of the Conference, the MLHA Annual Membership Meeting led by MLHA Chair Tim Giesler. The session will include:

- The Montana Dept. of Revenue Alcohol Beverage Control Division—Insights into new regulations affecting the lodging industry.
- MLHA State of the Association Updates.
- Recognition of newly-elected Board Members and Officers.
- Updates from General Manager Roundtable, Sales & Marketing Council.

MLHA wishes to extend our heartfelt gratitude to MLHA Board Member and Conference Chair Erica Kimble, as well as the MLHA Conference Committee, for the leadership they have dedicated this past year to plan and implement this gathering.

Nametaq Sticker Designation

The vendors have requested we designate your positions at your properties/businesses to better visit with you when you come to their booths. You will notice stickers on name badges—below is what they stand for. If we made an error on your name badge, please visit the registration desk and we will get you a new sticker.



GM/Owner/
Operations



Sales &
Marketing



Housekeeping/
Front Desk



Accounting/HR
Tourism/Other



Events/Food &
Beverage



Featured Conference Speakers

William B. Henry, MBA, Motivational Speaker/Transformation Coach

william@bebetterworld.org

William specializes in having DEII conversations around leadership development, strategic planning, employee engagement, and culture building. He has more than 20 years of experience enhancing the performance of individual executives, teams, and organizations. His background encompasses a wide range of programs and initiatives for organization design, cultural change and personal development. His unique approach to leadership and organization development began during his 20 years in the blood banking industry where William served as Regional Director of Human Resources, Executive Director of the Rocky Mountain Region, Regional Director of Blood Operations, and Vice President of Production Planning. William is also the founder of Be Better World LLC, a self-empowerment movement geared toward developing professionals and youth to deal with the real time issues that stand in their way and how to take the next steps to success. His stance takes a different approach as he works directly with clients to implement strategies and teach skills that can be carried through every phase of life. Be Better World is gaining national attention and his motto is "We All Play A Role."

Robert Kelly, CHIA CAHTA, Smith Travel Research

rkelly@str.com

Robert is a Sales Executive at STR serving Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and most recently Texas. He joined STR in 2017, working in research and support before joining the sales team in July 2021. He works with all types of hospitality clients, including ownership groups, management companies, independent hotels and CVBs, and frequents lodging conferences around the country as a featured speaker – including STR's Hotel Data Conference.

Robert earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science from Ole Miss. He resides in Gallatin, Tenn., near the STR North America Headquarters, with his fiancé Rachael and their two cats Nora and George.

Melissa Weddell, PhD, Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research

melissa.weddell@mso.umt.edu

Melissa values working with federal, state, and local organizations to develop management plans that educate the public and assist with the responsible development of rural recreation and tourism destinations that benefit users and boost local economic commerce. Through her research, she understands the unique local concerns in developing natural areas, encouraging recreation, and attracting tourism while working collaboratively to provide inclusive recreation that improves the quality of life.

Dr. Weddell holds a doctorate in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management from Clemson University, an MBA from Southern Illinois University, and an undergraduate degree in Small Business Management & Entrepreneurship from Ball State University. In her downtime, she enjoys mountain biking, paddling, and adventures in the backcountry with her husband and furbabies.
