



ANNUAL REPORT

Alaska Travel Industry Association

2018-2019

ATIA Mission

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) promotes Alaska as a top visitor destination, communicating and promoting Alaska's tourism industry as one of the state's major economic forces. ATIA is the respected voice of the industry, promoting industry growth while caring for the environment, recognizing cultures, and supporting Alaska's unique quality of life.

Letter from the Chair

Greetings Alaska Travel Industry Association Members –

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your 2018/2019 ATIA Board of Directors Chair. It has been an honor to represent the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) and the tourism industry in this capacity, and to be part of a phenomenal year for the association, its members, and an incredible year of forward momentum for our industry. The Board of Directors, ATIA staff, and local ATIA chapters collaborated to accomplish incredible milestones through hard work, dedication, creativity, and new initiatives.



Extraordinary events took place during the 2018/2019 term that involved all the various aspects of tourism and ATIA. The ATIA Board of Directors focused on creating awareness of the tourism industry by reinvigorating the *Tourism Works for Alaska* campaign. Throughout this campaign we magnified a statewide message promoting awareness for the voice of tourism and the positive financial impact tourism has on the economic vitality of our great state.

Using myriad efforts, we amplified the tourism message so that it was heard by all Alaskans, including the administration and legislature. After years of engagement, Alaska's tourism marketing initiative will now be funded by the Vehicle Rental Tax, increasing our statewide marketing budget for FY 2020 with a \$7.42 million grant. Additionally, the ATIA Marketing Committee has shifted focus to new and creative ways to attract consumers from the global and domestic market to Alaska, benefiting ATIA members and tourism organizations across the state.

The ATIA Board of Directors also proudly welcomed Alaska's Lieutenant Governor, Kevin Meyer, to the Board of Directors, personally contributing to tourism efforts across the state. Tourism Policy and Planning focused on issues impacting Alaska organizations, both on statewide and federal levels. Membership worked to engage past, present, and new members while focusing on Chapter inclusions across the state to ensure a uniform voice and message. Finally, we completed the 2018/19 year in Juneau by hosting over 650 members at a spectacular annual convention.

After such a successful year, I look forward to the ongoing efforts of our Board of Directors and staff as new energy continues to fill our industry. I am grateful to have been part of such an incredible Board of Directors, representing our favorite industry in Alaska.

Elizabeth Hall
2018/2019 ATIA Board Chair
COO John Hall's Alaska Cruises and Tours

Letter from the President

Fiscal Year 2019 was a busy year for ATIA. Between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, ATIA carried forward an agenda of association development, advocacy, and promotion.

Networking and professional development opportunities are a top member benefit, and in FY 2019 we launched members-only Professional Learning Series webinars. These online events gave members across the state the opportunity to learn from industry professionals on topics ranging from risk management to contracts and hiring. We look forward to continuing this program - and adding new learning opportunities - in the months ahead.



In FY 2019, ATIA also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Alaska to transition the Alaska Host, Alaska Native Cultural Host, and Alaska Tour Guide training programs to ATIA for management and administration, providing an additional training benefit to our members.

Legislatively, ATIA's FY 2019 priority focused on reinvesting Alaska's Vehicle Rental Tax (VRT) revenue in statewide destination marketing, as outlined in statute. We kicked off our advocacy in October 2018, with a gubernatorial forum during our annual convention. Candidates supported VRT reinvestment in tourism marketing, which resulted in a \$7.42 million state capital grant for statewide destination marketing in FY 2020.

ATIA hosted our first annual Land Managers Forum in April 2019. This event, attended by industry leaders and representatives from federal, state, and Alaska Native corporation landowners, built relationships and understanding on issues important to our industry, from access and permitting to critical infrastructure needs. With member input, ATIA also created a ranking process to evaluate infrastructure priorities we should support as an association. We look forward to hearing what statewide or regional infrastructure or planning projects you think are important to a strong and vibrant tourism industry.

ATIA continued to implement Alaska's statewide destination marketing program. Industry contributions through the Travel Alaska cooperative marketing program raised \$1.8 million. This, combined with the \$3 million State of Alaska capital grant for FY 2019, enabled ATIA to attend travel trade events, expand media outreach, increase visitation to TravelAlaska.com, produce an Official State Vacation Planner, and promote Alaska as the destination of choice.

As we look to a new year, thank you for your support of ATIA - and for sharing Alaska with our millions of visitors from across the world.

Sarah Leonard
President & CEO

ATIA Sustaining Partners, 2018-2019

We would like to thank and recognize our [Sustaining Partners](#), all of which play a key role in the growth of ATIA programs, resources, education, advocacy, and more.

DENALI LEVEL

Alaska Airlines
Holland America Line

ARCTIC LEVEL

Alaska Collection by Pursuit
Alaska Railroad Corporation
Explore Fairbanks
UnCruise Adventures
Visit Anchorage

ORCA LEVEL

Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau
Northern Alaska Tour Company
Premier Alaska Tours
Travel Juneau
White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad

GOLD LEVEL

Alaska Coach Tours
Alaska Skylar Travel
Cruise Line Industry Association - Alaska
Skagway Convention & Visitors Bureau

JADE LEVEL

Alaska Alpine Adventures
Alaska Business
John Hall's Alaska

Membership

ATIA is the state's leading industry organization for travel-related businesses and supporters. ATIA's members continued to enjoy exclusive benefits such as the ATIA Annual Convention and Trade Show, online courses offered through the ATIA E-Learning Center, and participation in local chapters.

In FY 2019, ATIA launched two new online programs: a Professional Learning Series education program and informal Coffee Chat monthly interviews with ATIA staff members who shared details and insights into ATIA programs.

We also hosted our fourth annual Family Assistance Foundation training, which teaches participants to meet logistical and practical needs of people affected by crisis. To date, ATIA has more than 100 member/volunteers who are able to respond to an Alaska-based crisis.



636
Members
(June 30,
2019)

5 Chapters

- Anchorage
- Fairbanks
- Juneau
- Ketchikan
- Arts, Culture & Heritage

- Professional Learning Series

→ **6** sessions

- Attendees

→ **162**

- Communities represented

→ **63**



2018 ATIA Annual Convention & Trade Show

The Great Escape | Fairbanks, Alaska | October 8-10, 2018



● Attendees → **598**

● Businesses Represented

● Trade Show Booths → **45**

↳ **308**





[Adventure Green Alaska](#) (AGA) is ATIA’s voluntary certification program for sustainable tourism businesses operating in Alaska. Since 2009, AGA has recognized and promoted Alaska tourism businesses who practice economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability.

Applications for certification or re-certification are reviewed bi-annually by the AGA Review Committee.

In FY 2019, AGA applied to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) for recognition of its certification criteria. GSTC is an independent organization that establishes and manages the global baseline standard for sustainable tourism. ATIA is working toward recognition by GSTC in 2020, which will establish AGA as one of the only North American-based sustainable tourism certification programs with standards recognized by GSTC.

2018-2019 CERTIFIED AGA BUSINESSES



As the voice for Alaska’s tourism industry, it is ATIA’s mission to advocate for a healthy tourism sector.

During FY 2019, ATIA reinvigorated Tourism Works for Alaska, a broad-based education campaign designed to raise awareness about the role of tourism in Alaska’s economy.

Activities included:

- New, region-specific logos
- Updated engagement plan, website, and communication materials
- Tourism Works for Alaska legislative event (February 2019)
- #TourismWorksForAlaska social media campaign during National Travel and Tourism Week (May 2019)
- Initiated planning for Trend 2019 Fashion Show



Statewide Tourism Marketing

In FY 2019, ATIA received a \$3 million capital grant from the State of Alaska to manage Alaska's statewide destination marketing program. This program, leveraged by more than \$1.8 million in cooperative marketing partner purchases, shares Alaska with the world through advertising, online content, earned media, printed materials, and personal interaction with tourism professionals.



* Expenses include TravelAlaska.com website, advertising, public relations, trade and international, North to Alaska, Vacation Planner and data management

- #1 In website engagement (Source: TwoSixDigital, Q2 2019)

- 7 Travel Trade events attended

- 304 New Alaska Certified Expert graduates

- 375 Articles published, (\$67 million value)

- 393 Participating Businesses

- 445,423 Facebook followers

- 1,940,000 Paid advertising impressions



ATIA Foundation

The ATIA Foundation reinvests in the future of the Alaska tourism industry. Alaskans pursuing a degree related to tourism or seeking continuing education opportunities can qualify for scholarships. Scholarship funds are raised through memberships and at the ATIA Annual Convention.



\$33,576

Total ATIA Foundation funds raised in FY 2019

\$25,000

Awarded in FY 2019

2019 ATIA Foundation Scholarship Recipients



Stuart Relay, Valdez
\$2,000 - Holland America Line Scholarship



Karl Pfeiffenberger, Seward
\$1,000 - Alaska Collection by Pursuit Scholarship



Wesley Dumm, Kodiak
\$1,000 - Alaska Airlines Scholarship



Eliza Oldham, Eagle River
\$1,000 - Alaska Railroad Corporation Scholarship
\$1,000 - ATIA Anchorage Chapter Scholarship



Rafael Bitanga, Kodiak
\$1,000 - Chuck West Memorial Scholarship



Claire Arend, Anchorage
\$1,000 - Cruise Line Industry Association Alaska Scholarship
\$1,000 - Premier Alaska Tours Scholarship



Tristan Reily-Orth, Ester
\$2,500 - Kris Geldaker Memorial Scholarship
\$500 - Alaska Collection by Pursuit Scholarship



Tyler Stewart, Anchorage
\$500 - Alaska Collection by Pursuit Scholarship
\$500 - ATIA Anchorage Chapter Scholarship



Ellie Wells, Anchorage
\$1,000 - Premier Alaska Tours Scholarship
\$500 - ATIA Anchorage Chapter Scholarship



Madison Cox, Skagway
\$2,000 - White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad Scholarship
\$500 - Tim McDonnell Mentorship Scholarship



Michelle Eliassen, Chugiak
\$1,500 - All Alaska Tours Scholarship
\$1,500 - Holland America Line Scholarship



Shilo Cederberg, Anchorage
\$500 - Premier Alaska Tours Scholarship



Tori Inglangasak, Kaktovik
\$1,000 - ATIA Rural Scholarship

4 1-year scholarships funded through member pledges were also awarded:

Ian Ludwig, Fairbanks - \$1,500
Ellie Wells, Anchorage - \$1,000

Payton Johnson, Chugiak - \$500
Jacob Tammillo, Fairbanks - \$500



ATIA Staff*

President & Chief Executive Officer

Sarah Leonard

Vice President

Jillian Simpson

Director of Partnerships & Travel Trade

Tanya Carlson

Director of Finance and Administration

Andrea Rayt

Communications and Public Relations Manager

Julie Jessen

Member Services Manager

Laurie Booyse (not shown)

Sales Manager

Skye Hostetler

Administrative Manager

Alicia Reando

*Tay Clayton, far right

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AlaskaTIA.org

2018-2019 ATIA Board of Directors

Executive Committee

BOARD CHAIR

Elizabeth Hall, John Hall's Alaska Cruises & Tours

TOURISM POLICY & PLANNING CHAIR

Patti Mackey, Ketchikan Visitors Bureau

VICE CHAIR

Dan Oberlatz, Alaska Alpine Adventures

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS CHAIR

Scott Habberstad, Alaska Airlines

SECRETARY/MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Holly Johnson, Wings Airways & Taku Glacier Lodge

MARKETING CHAIR

Colleen Stephens, Stan Stephens Glacier & Wildlife Cruises

TREASURER/FINANCE CHAIR

Bill Pedlar, Knightly Tours

MARKETING VICE-CHAIR

Linda Springmann, Holland America Line

PAST CHAIR

Dennis McDonnell, Alaska Coach Tours

ATIA PRESIDENT & CEO

Sarah Leonard, Alaska Travel Industry Association

Board Members

John Binkley, CLIA/Alaska Cruise Association,
Riverboat Discovery

Jamey Cagle, Allen Marine Tours

Brett Carlson, Northern Alaska Tour Company

Kory Eberhardt, A Taste of Alaska Lodge

Carol Fraser, Aspen Hotels of Alaska

Deb Hickok, Explore Fairbanks

Kirk Hoessle, Alaska Wildland Adventures

Josh Howes, Premier Alaska Tours

Craig Jennison, TEMSCO Helicopters

Dave McGlothlin, Holland America Group

Bonnie Quill, Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau

Julie Saupe, Visit Anchorage

Tennelle Peterson Wise, Grande Denali, LLC

Lt Governor Kevin Meyer, *Ex Officio*