

## Media Coverage – Virginia Beach CVB “One Beach, One World” FAM Tour

### CONVENE Magazine

Following the FAM tour in Virginia Beach, freelancer Maureen Littlejohn wrote an article, “One Beach, One World’ in Virginia,” which was featured in the July 2011 issue of PCMA’s *Convene* magazine and on [www.pcma.org](http://www.pcma.org) – a combined total circulation of over 45,000.

<http://www.pcma.org/Convene/Issue-Archives/July-2011/Plenary/Convene-On-Site-Virginia.htm>

## PLENARY

Virginia Beach • Kidney Week • Tipster: Smart Snacks

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CONVENE ON SITE

# ‘One Beach, One World’ in Virginia

**T**HE VIRGINIA BEACH CONVENTION & Visitors Bureau hosted a corporate social responsibility (CSR) fam trip on May 18-20 that had both a big and a small impact. Which means that while the “One Beach, One World” event — in which 17 meeting professionals and several trade journalists took part — was big on experience, it resulted in a small carbon footprint.

The trip was jammed with green options from the start, with most of the planners bussed in from Washington, D.C., on a luxurious coach. During meals over the two days, chefs showcased their prowess with home-grown ingredients, venues demonstrated their environmentally friendly practices, and some participants even got to talk with a local farmer and sample strawberries straight from his field.

On a tour of the 300,000-square-foot Virginia Beach Convention Center, planners learned that the facility last year became the first convention center in the United States to earn LEED Gold certification for Existing Buildings, in keeping with LEED standards, the convention center has saved more than \$420,000 in utility costs since it opened in 2007, and diverted more than 211 tons of waste from the landfill to the local recycling center.

A key component of the fam trip was an educational session on CSR held at the center. Panelists included Cornelius Healey, senior vice president of health-insurance company Amerigroup; Amy Frost, owner of J&A Racing; and Christopher Wood, director of social responsibility for ASAE, the Center for Association Leadership.

After the panel, participants were led into another room at the convention center for a Give Back Marketplace. Each of us was given five bags to fill with toiletries from participating Virginia Beach properties and enterprises, including the Hilton Oceanfront Hotel, Westin Virginia Beach Town Center, Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel, and Holiday Inn & Suites North Beach. After the bags were filled, a representative from Potter’s House homeless shelter thanked participants and explained how the volunteer-run facility helps local people in need with lunches and hygiene kits. “These bags you just filled will go out at 2 p.m. today,”



she said. Added Al Hutchinson, the Virginia Beach CVB’s vice president of convention sales and marketing: “If a meeting group wants to give back to our destination in any way, our team is here to help them set up whatever they’d like to do.”

Before we left the convention center, the Virginia Beach CVB sponsored a drawing, with the winner — Heather Eggleston, manager of meetings for the National School Boards Association — receiving a check for \$300 to donate to the charity of her association’s choice.

Other highlights included a sunrise breakfast at Neptune Park by the boardwalk; a tour of the Virginia Beach Aquarium; lunch at Croc’s 19th Street Bistro, with sustainably caught tuna and fresh salad greens straight from the restaurant’s garden; a meal at the coloniality themed Founders Inn and Spa; a tour of Grommet Island, the only 100-percent handicap-accessible oceanfront playground in the country; and a tour of the 1,300-seat Sandler Center.

And a progressive dinner — bacon-wrapped shrimp at waterside Rockafeller’s restaurant, locally caught grouper at the Cavalier Hotel, and delicious crème brûlée and coffee at the oceanfront Virginia Beach Resort Hotel & Conference Center — demonstrated that when it comes to being green, Virginia Beach is a beautiful and on-the-move place to meet. ■

— Maureen Littlejohn

**CITY BY THE SEA:**  
During a recent fam trip, Virginia Beach — with a cosmopolitan urban center and a beautiful oceanfront — showed off its CSR offerings.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
[www.visitvirginia-beach.com](http://www.visitvirginia-beach.com)

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PCMA THE MAGAZINE OF THE PROFESSIONAL CONVENTION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

# convene

July 2011

**Best Seller**

The story of bookstaps America's success — and what any trade show can learn from it, p. 40



**Media Coverage – Virginia Beach CVB “One Beach, One World” FAM Tour**

**Successful Meetings Magazine**

Following the FAM tour in Virginia Beach, senior editor Andrea Doyle wrote an article called “Making a Big Impact on a Small Group,” which was featured in the July 2011 issue of *Successful Meetings* magazine and on [www.successfulmeetings.com](http://www.successfulmeetings.com). Andrea Doyle also authored a post on Meetings Strategy, a blog on [successfulmeetings.com](http://successfulmeetings.com), “Seeing CSR Passion Projects Through.” The combined circulation totaled nearly 55,000.

**Magazine Article:** <http://www.successfulmeetings.com/Event-Planning/conference-management/Articles/Seeing-CSR-Passion-Projects-Through/>

**Blog:** <http://www.successfulmeetings.com/Event-Planning/Conferences/Articles/CSR--Making-a-Big-Impact-on-a-Small-Group/>

**CSR**

WHEN IT COMES TO CSR EVENTS, BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER. HERE'S WHY.

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**READER ROI**

Putting a name and face to a recipient can make a CSR project even more impactful.




## Making a Big Impact on a Small Group

By Andrea Doyle

**M**ore often than not, corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs skew toward “the bigger, the better”—painting schools used by hundreds, cleaning beaches or parks enjoyed by thousands, or collecting supplies to send to innumerable troops overseas or to victims of natural disasters. These programs fill an incredible needs gap and benefit tremendous numbers of people the world over. But sometimes, CSR projects that benefit just a handful of people—one military family with a dad serving in Iraq, one couple who lost their home to Hurricane Katrina, or one little girl whose parents can’t afford furniture for her bedroom—can leave a more nuanced imprint on a group. Because the beneficiaries of these programs have names and faces that the attendees can connect with, the impact can be significantly more substantial.

“The impact of a large group doing something for a few allows them to do that much more,” says Alan Ranzer, managing partner at Impact 4 Good, a Bethesda, MD, company that specializes in organizing CSR events at meetings. “Connecting a large client group to one family makes the group feel that much closer to the family. The personal nature of programs that give back to a few can make their impact remarkably strong, memorable, and lasting.”

**Extreme Makeover**  
When independent global safety organization Underwriters Laboratories (UL) chose San Diego for its meeting, the group wanted to incorporate a CSR event into the program. Louise Olson, president of Oak Park, IL-based Zest Events, an independent meeting management firm that was responsible for planning the UL meeting, turned to San Diego’s ACCESS Destination Services for help. The result was Extreme Military Makeover, a team-building event for 70 attendees who came to the aid of a young military wife who found herself unable to keep up with home maintenance while her husband was deployed on his third tour in Iraq. She was only told that she and her three children were being treated to



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Successful Meetings Magazine (continued)



**“The personal nature of programs that give back to a few can make their impact remarkably strong, memorable, and lasting.”**

Alan Ranzer,  
Managing Partner, Impact 4 Good

Clockwise from top left: At the “Give Back Marketplace,” hosted by the Virginia Beach CVB, meeting professionals and suppliers worked together to fill backpacks for the homeless, a home from the Make It Right project in New Orleans’ Lower Ninth Ward, the UL team awaits instructions before their project in San Diego, a New Orleans family outside their new home in the Lower Ninth Ward.

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a trip to Legoland for the day. While they were gone, the UL group replaced her fences, landscaped the lawn, caulked, painted, and installed shelves in the garage.

“When working with a smaller group, they receive so much more,” says Jennifer Miller, general manager of ACCESS Destination Services San Diego and Los Angeles. “With this particular program, we were able to redo their whole yard and beautify their house.... You can make a bigger impact.”

ACCESS does research to find out what a company’s particular CSR philosophy is before making a recommendation on projects. Being an active member of the community makes it easy to ascertain who needs what. Miller says the average cost per attendee to take part in a CSR teambuilding activity is \$100 to \$200.

“The members of the group were beyond thrilled to be helping this family. This was a multinational group, and many had never held a shovel or hammer before. They were happy to be doing something that helped someone else. No one dragged their heels,” explains Olson. “The woman we were

helping was visibly affected throughout the program. She broke down in tears several times and told the group, ‘There is hope. There is somebody out there who really does care.’”

**Walking the Walk**

CVBs are another go-to resource for planners interested in coordinating more intimate CSR events, and bureau staffers are often involved in area projects themselves. In Virginia Beach, Mahatma Gandhi’s famous adage, “Be the change you want to see in the world,” is framed and adorns a wall in the office of Al Hutchinson, vice president of convention sales and marketing for the CVB. “That quote is at my core. It’s what I believe in. As a city department, it is our responsibility and obligation to help change lives in our community,” says Hutchinson.

Four years ago, CVB staff members learned of a local family that didn’t have the funds to buy a bedroom set for their daughter. “Here was this young girl sleeping on the floor,” explains Hutchinson. “As a staff, we came together and donated money and furniture to the



Photo: Alan Ranzer/Impact 4 Good (top left), W. Stanek Media (top right), Steve Hill

to make a positive  
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to tackle projects with a slightly larger recipient pool. Back in Virginia Beach, for example, 18 meeting professionals completed a CSR project during a site visit in May coordinated by the CVB. The project took place at a mini-trade show, where every exhibitor had different personal care products. Each meeting professional filled backpacks with items like toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, washcloths, soap, and shampoo. They had a few minutes to speak with the exhibitors as they filled the bags. One hundred fifty bags were assembled and delivered that day to The Potter’s House, which provides support to area homeless.

**Do’s and Don’ts**

Emogene B. Mitchell, president of Arlington, VA-based Mitchell’s Meetings & Events—and a planner on the Virginia Beach trip—feels that it is up to meeting professionals to make organizations aware of CSR activities that are available.

“Planners need to take the lead,” she says. “The first thing many organizations ask about is the expense. It’s important to demonstrate that the

benefits of such an activity far outweigh the financial outlay.” She is in the midst of planning a program for a client that will participate in its inaugural CSR event in September.

Nina Zapala, director of public relations for Anson-Stoner, a Winter Park, FL-based advertising and PR agency, says when promoting a CSR activity, care must be given to the way it is packaged. “Under no circumstance do you want to appear as if you are exploiting those you have helped. From a PR standpoint, it is a good idea to tap into community leaders to see how the program has helped. Connect with the nonprofit that benefited to get a true news angle. Media outlets are always ready to hear stories from nonprofits.”

She adds that as budgets are getting slashed across the board for education, senior citizen programs, homeless outreach, and the like, the work corporations do to give back is more important than ever. SM



## Media Coverage – Virginia Beach CVB “One Beach, One World” FAM Tour

### Black Meetings & Tourism Magazine

Following the FAM tour in Virginia Beach, freelancer Chera O’Neal wrote an article titled “Virginia Beach, Live the Life,” which was featured in the July/August 2011 issue of *Black Meetings & Tourism* magazine and on [www.blackmeetingsandtourism.com](http://www.blackmeetingsandtourism.com). The magazine’s circulation is nearly 30,000.

<http://digital.copcomm.com/title/4613>

# SITE REVIEW #1

## VIRGINIA BEACH LIVE THE LIFE


By **CHERAY O’ NEAL**

**‘Live the life’** is this oasis’s mantra and for sure it lives up to it. Virginia Beach is beautifully nestled in the mid Atlantic coast and is something to brag about. With major ocean-front resort development materializing, on top of its already flourishing existence, there are infinite opportunities for all, especially meeting planners. Virginia Beach is the ultimate destination where productivity meets affordability and hospitality ranks #1. Its evidence stems from a grand community that genuinely yearns and supports in making Virginia Beach top on anyone’s list. Meeting planners soak this up; it would be one of the best tasting treats you could have.

The Hilton Oceanfront Hotel towers in comparison. The hotel features 290 state-of-the-art guest rooms and suites, most with walkout balconies with unparalleled views of the Atlantic Ocean, coastline and surrounding landscape. From use of design motifs to Cherry furnishings inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement, The Hilton lends an air of warmth and comfort.

Featured amenities include a 32-inch flat-screen color television with premium cable channels, on-demand movies, high-speed Internet access, two telephones with voice-mail capabilities, work desks, fitness gym, all the gems and comforts of home. Relaxing spa services, shopping @31 Ocean, and live entertainment from Neptune’s park, make attending meetings during the day priceless.

The Hilton can accommodate everything from a gorgeous pre room set up, to the Courtney Terrace, the Peacock Ballroom, Albermarle Meeting Room, or the Ferebee Boardroom ranging from 273 sq. ft. to 7,140 sq feet of perfect function space. They even have online booking opportunities where planners can submit their requirements and receive an instant quote, and if desired, confirmation. If willing, you can save 30% on any event during off



peak times. They are top notch when it comes to catering and audiovisual services. To top it off, a personalized group web page is provided for your attendees to obtain information about the group online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Who can beat that?

This glorious hotel also boasts two award-winning restaurants: Catch 31 - largest raw bar and fresh seafood selections, and Salacia - Virginia’s only AAA Four-Diamond Steakhouse. There’s also the unique Sky Bar – the area’s only seasonal roof top bar and infinity pool. Just 20 minutes from the Norfolk international airport, one minute from the convention center and three steps away from the ocean, this is a sure winner.

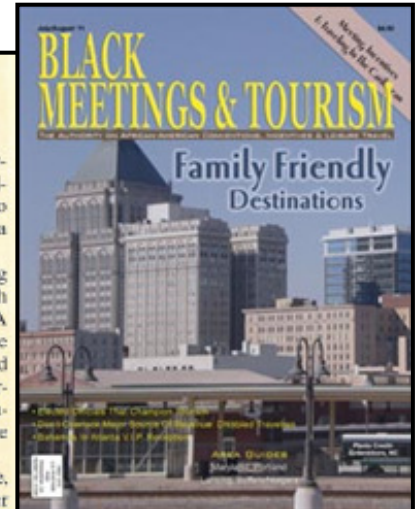
Renowned for its architecture, ambience, style, leisure and ideal Beach location, The Cavalier Oceanfront is a grand option. Four hundred rooms for guests, view balconies, 1,500-sq. ft. fitness center, outdoors pool, complimentary high-speed wireless Internet service, and game room are just some of the amenities. Meeting planners are you drooling yet? The Cavalier Hotel is a superb choice for all occasions from meetings to special events. Elegant surroundings, gracious service, and attention to detail make any banquet, meeting or seminar an unforgettable experience. With full-featured exhibition halls, multiple breakout rooms and Hampton Road’s largest hotel ballroom anywhere from 20-2,000 will be grandly accommodated. With audiovisual capabilities as well as amazing catering services available, The Cavalier team staff ensures a successful event.

Some Virginia Beach mentions: The Sonoma’s Wine and Bistro (fusion/eclectic) 90 seats of elegant casual dining. Service as delicious as the menu. Rockafeller’s restaurant legendary cuisine and beach cottage lifestyle on Rudee Inlet, Contemporary Art Center, and A.R.E. Health Center & Spa, absolutely the massage worth dying for.

With all this on your side, meeting planners will definitely bake in all Virginia Beach’s delight and live the life. Plan your next meeting here, you will leave abundant.

For more information contact Al Hutchinson at the Virginia Beach CVB at (800) 700-7702.

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### Meet Naturally Newsletter (ASAE)

Following the FAM tour in Virginia Beach, senior writer Kristin Clarke wrote two articles that were featured in the July/August 2011 issue of *Meet Naturally*, a newsletter published by ASAE’s Convene Green Alliance with a circulation of 1,200. She authored an additional article centered on Virginia Beach, which will be featured in the September issue of *Meet Naturally* and is currently writing a fourth piece that is slated to run later this fall.

<http://www.securewebcc.com/sites/S38/index.php?p=2062#1>

<http://www.securewebcc.com/sites/S38/index.php?p=2062#3>




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### In the Know

#### Exotic Species Offer Unique Green Choice for Menu Planning




Mark it down as another unique way that meeting planners can create buzz and “wow” using sustainability-minded food planning. In this case, an exotic waterway species called the *bullfish* or *cownose ray* has threatened the native oysters and clams it eats in the Chesapeake Bay, and it has not inspired much culinary interest—until now.

Enter the state of Virginia and its bevy of marketing experts. In a remarkable story of successful rebranding, the invasive species was renamed the “Chesapeake Ray,” was intentionally highlighted in new recipes developed by high-end chefs, was heavily advertised with its new label to appeal to local and visiting “foodies,” and, as a result, has become a bestseller on menus in Virginia Beach and other Hampton Bay-area locales. “Eat a Ray, Save the Bay” as a marketing mantra has gained real favor among customers, businesses, and now green meeting planners in the region.

Laura Wood Hbar is co-owner of [Croc’s 19th Street Bistro](#), a Virginia Green-certified restaurant in Virginia Beach that has been recognized by the National Restaurant Association for its many eco-friendly attributes and community leadership. She serves one of her Chesapeake ray recipes as a crunchy, fried oyster-like starter with Key West and cocktail sauces on the side. “It’s been selling great since I put it on the menu in January,” says Hbar, who explained the exotics challenge to a recent group of green meeting media. “People really seem to like it.... They like that it’s locally caught, and few of them have tried it before they come to this area.”

#### Fair Trade Growth Strong


Meeting planners are among the growing number of professionals buying Fair Trade-Certified coffee, tea, cocoa, produce, and other goods as the trend toward ethical sourcing in the workplace continues to strengthen. Farmers and manufacturers of Fair Trade-Certified items are paid fair prices and wages, have safe work conditions, conserve the environment, and use community development funds to empower and uplift their communities.



Fair Trade product sales continue to rise “dramatically,” although certified goods make up only a very small slice of the overall retail economy in the United States, according to the 2010 Almanac, released in April 2011 by the nonprofit third-party certifying organization Fair Trade USA. Currently, more than 9,500 Fair Trade-Certified consumer products are available from 700-plus businesses at more than 60,000 stores nationwide.

“As consumer demand for ethically produced goods increases, we’re able to chip away at the cycle of poverty that grips farming communities around the world,” says Fair Trade USA President and CEO Paul Rice. “Through their participation in Fair Trade, farming families have earned more than \$220 million in additional income since 1998, \$56 million of which will be invested specifically in community development programs that provide access to education and life-saving health care.” Download the full almanac for free [here](#).

#### Green Venues Marketing Bike- and Pedestrian-friendly Features



Encouraging meeting attendees to walk, take a shuttle or public transit, or even bicycle to organization events has become a more important element of meeting management for myriad reasons—cost savings, health considerations, eco-impacts, and increased mental alertness among them.

Convention centers such as the LEED Gold-certified [Virginia Beach Convention Center](#) are adding more bike racks and lanes, adjusting bus routes for optimal ridership, and installing attractive walkways and signage to encourage visitors to choose less-polluting transportation options than cars. Hotels, universities, meeting facilities, restaurants, and entire cities and towns have begun specifically marketing their bicycle- or pedestrian-friendliness and competing to win recognitions such as [Bike Boston’s awards](#) to the Elliot Hotel and Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel, and multi-level certifications such as those to the cities of Minneapolis, Minneapolis, and Austin, Texas, by the League of American Bicyclists’ Bicycle-friendly Business (BFB) Program. For a list of BFB-honored meeting facilities and businesses, visit the [BFB site](#).

**CGA Newsletter Articles**

[Back to Meet Naturally June 2011](#)

- [1. Spring Greetings](#)
- [2. In the Know](#)
- [3. Exotic Species Offer Unique Green Choice for Menu Planning](#)
- [4. Fair Trade Growth Strong](#)
- [5. Green Venues Marketing Bike- and Pedestrian-friendly Features](#)
- [6. Global Meet & Greet: Event Greening Forum Launches in South Africa](#)
- [7. Face to Face: What has been your biggest challenge in greening your meetings, and how have you dealt with it?](#)
- [8. Cool Tool: National Association of Broadcasters Show Boosts Green Efforts for 2010](#)
- [9. LEEDing the Way: LEED-certified Convention Centers](#)
- [10. Eat Your Greens: Local Beet Salad with Goat Cheese](#)

**asae**  
The Center for Association Leadership

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