

ALABAMA MOUNTAIN LAKES TOURIST ASSOCIATION SPEAKERS BUREAU

**NORTH
ALABAMA™**
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TOURIST ASSOCIATION

The Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association Speakers Bureau offers knowledgeable professionals available to do informative and entertaining presentations relating to the tourism and travel industry. This service is available free for AMLA members who wish to offer a presentation to their local civic clubs, community organizations, government groups, hospitality and accommodation organizations, or general community awareness town meetings.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Tami Reist, AMLA President/CEO, E-mail: Tami@northalabama.org



During her more than three decade long career in the tourism and travel industry, Tami has lived by the theme expressed by the famous American heroine Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." This theme is carried forth in all of her speaking engagements across the country and has had proven results in her professional accomplishments.

Tami is the President/CEO of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA). Her duties include planning, implementing, directing, and evaluating all promotional programs as well as overall development of the tourism and travel industry within the 16 northernmost counties of the State of Alabama. The region currently generates more than \$3.7 billion in travel expenditures on an annual basis.

Tami is a board member for a number of tourism and travel-related and civic organizations including: Governor Appointee to the Scenic Byways Committee, Alabama Tourism Chair for the Appalachian Regional Commission, Southeast Tourism Society Legislative Council, the Alabama Bicentennial Commission, Alabama Travel Council, Alabama Council of Association Executives, Alabama Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, and numerous other local and state travel related groups. Tami is also an instructor at the Southeast Tourism Society's Marketing College and has been a contributing presenter to the tourism and travel field of study at Mississippi State University. Among her many recognitions are the ATHENA Leadership Award from the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, the Alabama Travel Council Partnership Award, the Southeast Tourism Society Dorothy Hardman Spirit Award, and *This is Alabama* and *Birmingham Magazine's* Women Who Shape the State honoree.

Melea Hames, AMLA Social Media Manager, E-mail: Melea@northalabama.org



A 1995 Auburn University graduate, Melea has been a social media manager in the tourism industry for more than a decade at Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association. At AMLA, Melea is responsible for creating content on Visit North Alabama's social media platforms, writing blog posts on the website, coordinating the North Alabama Ambassador Program, and speaking at various events and meetings about social media. Melea is also the host of Unexpected Adventures in North Alabama, AMLA's new podcast, produced by Relic Agency. The podcast won a 2022 Muse Award - Silver in the Audio/Podcast category and a w3 Gold Award.

Prior to working for AMLA, Melea received her Masters at UNA in Secondary Education and taught middle school English and coached middle school cheerleaders for three years. She also taught English at Calhoun Community College for 8 1/2 half years. Before that she worked in public relations for an advertising agency in Atlanta, a minor league baseball team in Columbus, Georgia, and for Auburn University in the development office. Just last year, Melea created her very own social media marketing agency called M and M Social. She loves to read, write, travel, walk in the park (she walked over 600 miles in 2020), see live music, and go to Auburn games.

Craig A. Johnston, AMLA Director of Workforce Development Training & Advocacy, E-mail: Craig@northalabama.org



Craig is an experienced senior leader in various areas of corporate and community leadership, leadership coaching, training & development, and business & quality management. Craig is driven by the idea that training builds knowledge, knowledge builds power, and knowledge with action builds success. His passion for the growth, development, and success of people within their role, their community, and beyond is what drives his success. Prior to joining AMLA, he served as President & CEO / Executive Director of the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce and continues to serve the Chamber and community as a member of the Chamber Board of Directors. His passion and work ethic are clearly shown through the various programs, community events, training activities, and leadership development he has delivered throughout his career. Craig also founded a ministry called Life Center Fellowship in Moulton, AL in 2020.

As Director of Workforce Development Training & Advocacy for AMLA, Craig is focused on setting and achieving the organization's long-term vision to help develop the workforce within the tourism industry. He is responsible for the development and implementation of various training programs and certifications to help improve the overall competencies, effectiveness, and behavioral results that directly impact the tourism industry in North Alabama.

Craig attended Mobile University and has achieved numerous training certifications/designations over the years. He received his Flawless Delivery certification from Calhoun Community College and is working on his TMP – Travel Marketing Professional – certification from Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College.

To schedule a speaking engagement or for more information, contact:

Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association, Craig Johnston (800) 648-5381 / (256) 350-3500 / Craig@northalabama.org

TAMI REIST SPEAKING TOPICS



WORKING WITH YOUR TOURISM PARTNERS

A solid, informative overview of establishing working relationships between your tourism organization and supporting tourism-related organizations within your sphere of influence. Examples of real-life programs that have a proven success record including surveys, educational programs, working hand-in-hand with government agencies, and more.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAILS

Keeping abreast with the changing tourism demographics and the growth in nature-based activities. Trails can attract tourists to communities of all sizes and are interesting to those travelers who are taking shorter vacations that are closer to home.

SMALL COMMUNITY TOURISM -- CASE STUDIES

Centered around actual "boots-on-ground" experiences with helping small or rural communities with developing a base for tourism growth. Includes examining and recognizing local tourism assets, program implementation, and potential benefits. Real life examples will help stimulate ideas for your community and help you marshal your community forces you may not even realize are there.

HOTEL MARKETING 101

An excellent course for all of your front-line hotel employees. Course outline includes: Building Relationships is a key; GM 10 Commandments; S.M.A.R.T. Goals, Internal Sales & Marketing for All Associates; Front Desk - Selling to Groups; Tips for a Successful Sales Call; Lead Referral Form; Networking Opportunities; and much more.

FOUR COURSE HOSPITALITY TRAINING

A step by step approach to creating memorable experiences for your visitors. The 4 courses of hospitality are: Approach (appetizer), Initial greeting (soup/salad), Interaction with the customer (main course), and Departure (dessert). An excellent presentation for front line hospitality workers in the tourism and travel industry, such as those working at accommodations, attractions, welcome centers, convention & visitors bureaus, restaurants, and retail shops.

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Great ingredients make for a great marketing program. When it comes to marketing your travel business, it's important to develop a proper mix of promotion ingredients. From reaching adventurers, foodies and business trippers, to how your services and experiences you are offering will affect your program, this presentation will help you serve-up a successful marketing effort.

CUSTOM PRESENTATIONS -- Tami is frequently asked to speak on a theme that will work in conjunction with a particular gathering's topic or an area's particular need within the tourism and travel field. Please feel free to let Tami know of your interest.

MELEA HAMES SPEAKING TOPIC

SOCIAL MEDIA 101 CLASS

The Social Media 101 class familiarizes participants with the basics of the popular social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest. Participants will learn the importance as well as practical ways to utilize the social media platforms for their attractions, events, hotels, restaurants, etc. Participants will also receive a Time to Get Social book to take with them.

CRAIG JOHNSTON SPEAKING TOPICS

LUNCH & LEARN TOPICS

Centered around highly impactful skills that make the workplace more engaged and successful, Lunch & Learn Topics include subjects that help to quickly enhance your daily performance as an individual and as a leader. These are usually around one hour in length. Topics Include:

- KEEPING THE TEAM MOTIVATED
- INCREASING YOUR HAPPINESS AT WORK
- HIRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE
- WORKPLACE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

BACK TO BASICS / LEADERSHIP BASICS TRAINING TOPICS

Training sessions can vary from a few hours to a full day or more based on the need or depth of the training subject matter. The BACK-TO-BASICS and LEADERSHIP BASICS Training series includes many different topics such as:

- BACK-TO-BASICS: PROFESSIONALISM & WORK ETHIC
- BACK-TO-BASICS: BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS
- BACK-TO-BASICS: CUSTOMER SERVICE & RETENTION
- LEADERSHIP BASICS: CONFLICT RESOLUTION
- LEADERSHIP BASICS: TEAM BUILDING & MOTIVATION
- LEADERSHIP BASICS: COACHING & PROVIDING FEEDBACK
- LEADERSHIP BASICS: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

CUSTOM PRESENTATIONS & TRAINING COURSES

Craig speaks often on themes or subject content based on a specific events, gatherings, or organizations. Customer topics and/or training classes may be developed to meet your specific needs. Please contact Craig to discuss your ideas.

To schedule a speaking engagement or for more information, contact:
Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association
Craig Johnston (800) 648-5381 / (256) 350-3500 / Craig@NorthAlabama.org
www.NorthAlabama.org / www.amla4tourism.com