

# Quarterly Report

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2025



## MARKETING

### “The Santa Barbara Effect” Brand Campaign

Throughout the summer, Visit Santa Barbara (VSB) executed a dynamic media plan featuring seasonally tailored digital, social, video and print advertisements, highlighting the abundant travel experiences unique to the Santa Barbara South Coast. The “Santa Barbara Effect” brand campaign seamlessly inspired travelers to relax and rejuvenate by showcasing signature experiences — outdoor recreation, culinary delights, wine culture, arts, wellness and the region’s signature lifestyle. Special emphasis was placed on spotlighting seasonal happenings.

To effectively drive summer visitation, VSB strategically targeted potential travelers in ZIP codes known for generating visitation to the area’s lodging properties. Advertisements were optimized to reach high-performing California audiences and expanded to attract qualified travelers from Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New York, Texas, Utah, Oregon, Washington and Washington D.C. Nationwide targeting also included major metro airport ZIP codes to capture active travelers and individuals within higher-income brackets.

As the summer quarter progressed, market softness and shorter booking windows prompted an immediate need to stimulate last-minute leisure travel, prompting strategic adjustments to the audience and media mix to maintain momentum. With limited time to develop new creative, VSB optimized existing campaigns and reallocated budget to focus on immediate visitation from Southern California and West Coast audiences. Investment in Search/SEM increased to capture last-minute bookings and social media ads shifted to stronger calls to action such as “Book Now,” “Escape This Weekend” and “Next Week in Santa Barbara.”

To maximize efficiency, broad awareness advertising was reduced, allowing greater emphasis on retargeting and engaging with audiences most likely to convert quickly. Messaging highlighted upcoming events, limited-time offers and exclusive lodging promotions, creating urgency and inspiring spontaneous travel decisions.

Despite mid-quarter strategy changes, VSB’s paid advertising efforts effectively exceeded the 2025-26 Annual Business Plan performance targets. With a paid advertising budget of \$732,215, VSB successfully boosted destination awareness and trip planning interest in Santa Barbara:

- The cost per 1,000 ads delivered was \$2.79, generating 98 million impressions
- The cost per 1,000 completed video views was \$14.64, generating 8.4 million completed video views
- The cost per website referral was \$0.41, generating 1.3 million website referrals



## Website

VSB's official destination website, SantaBarbaraCA.com, recorded a total of 1.8 million sessions and welcomed 1.1 million active users during the summer quarter. These visitors collectively viewed 2.2 million pages, reflecting continued interest in VSB's content. On average, users spent 2 minutes and 34 seconds per session with an engagement rate of 34%.\*

By continuing to craft and refresh inspiring, timely itineraries that showcase travel across the Santa Barbara South Coast, VSB reinforced its role as a trusted source for destination inspiration. Remaining attuned to emerging travel trends and optimizing for key search terms ensured content stayed fresh, relevant and discoverable. This season, the editorial team focused on stories celebrating niche, attention-grabbing themes, the captivating charm of autumn and upcoming seasonal happenings — positioning fall as a less-traveled yet deeply rewarding time to experience the region's beauty. Collectively, these efforts resulted in the publication of 22 new articles and the optimization of 243 existing pages.

In partnership with the Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce, GoGoleta.com was sunset in July 2025 to bring all South Coast travel information together in one place. The shift unites efforts to strengthen visibility for Goleta tourism businesses through a single, authoritative online hub — amplified by paid media and storytelling that highlight the region's distinct character.

*\*Metrics are directional due to user privacy settings and cookie opt-outs managed through Osano.*

## Social Media

VSB's social media presence remained active and highly engaged this summer, reaching nearly 493,000 followers across seven platforms — Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn and Threads. A total of 293 organic posts generated more than 6.6 million views\* and drove 51,900 website referrals.

To sustain a robust content calendar, VSB showcased timely events and activities alongside 19 hotel spotlights, local businesses and authentic traveler experiences. From abalone farm tours and uni guides to fall festivals, followers showed strong interest in discovering both new and seasonal offerings throughout the Santa Barbara South Coast.

While all platforms inspired travelers with a daily dose of The American Riviera®, Instagram led the pack with over 4.6 million views — the majority driven by short-form video content featuring accommodations, dining and seasonal attractions. Engagement across Instagram and Facebook totaled more than 325,000 interactions, reflecting growing enthusiasm and connection with Santa Barbara's content.

*\*Meta has discontinued reporting organic impressions, combining impressions and video views into a single "view" metric. Views in this report represent a comprehensive total of both impressions and video views across all platforms.*

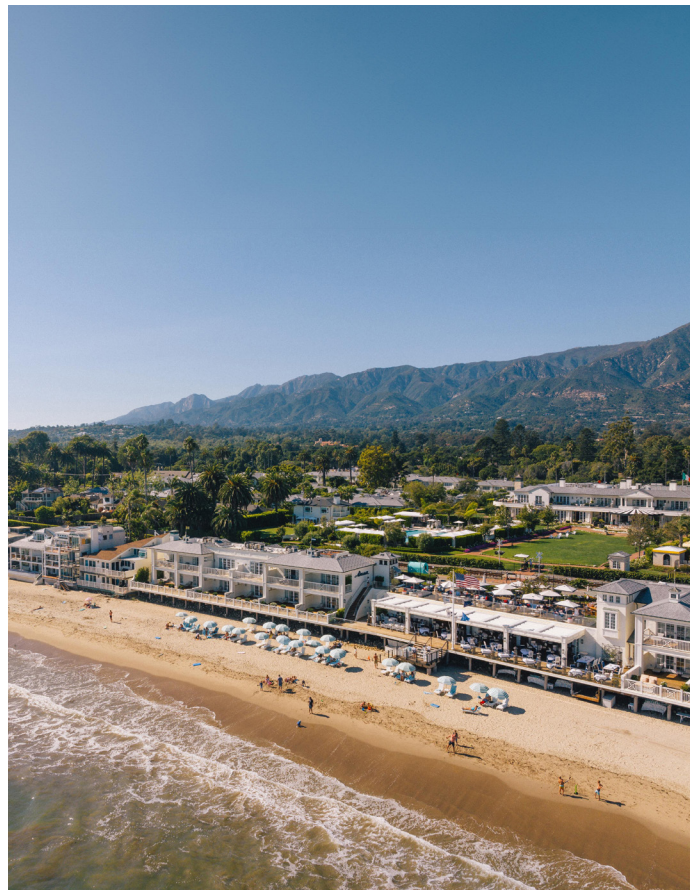
### Third Night Free Promotion

Even through the peak summer travel season, the Third Night Free Lodging promotion continued to be an effective tool for increasing non-commissioned, direct bookings and encouraging longer stays in the Santa Barbara South Coast. Over 18 diverse properties, from luxury to mid-tier and budget accommodations, offered an extra night free with a three-night booking, complemented by additional lodging discounts and exclusive offers.

To drive visibility, a comprehensive advertising approach was deployed, including targeted consumer emails through TravelZoo, Dunhill Deals and Luxury Link, as well as paid social media outreach and promotional placement on VSB's website and social channels. This quarter, efforts expanded to include cost per click (CPC) ads through TravelZoo and Dunhill Deals' qualified networks. Collectively, this multichannel strategy resulted in 45,000 referrals to participating hotels through a well-planned media investment of \$222,000.

### Airline Partnership

To inspire travelers to choose Santa Barbara Airport, VSB partnered with Southwest Airlines and Delta Airlines to promote convenient nonstop flights from Sacramento, Oakland, Las Vegas, Denver, Atlanta and Salt Lake City. The paid social media campaign, designed to showcase both the ease of travel and the captivating experiences awaiting visitors in the Santa Barbara South Coast, delivered outstanding results. Through a series of engaging social media ads and pre-roll video placements aboard Southwest flights, the campaign resulted in 8.9 million impressions, 22,000 completed video views and generated 79,000 link clicks to airline booking sites — all achieved with a \$51,000 paid media investment.



### Partner Advertising Program

VSB delivered substantial value to industry partners by extending marketing dollars and creating high-impact opportunities for South Coast Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) lodging properties and VSB members to broaden their reach among prospective travelers to the Santa Barbara South Coast. VSB delivered 1.5 million impressions for 18 partners through tactical marketing programs, including digital, native, social and newsletter ads. Revenue from the partner advertising program for the summer quarter totaled \$17,282. In addition, the VSB In-Kind Sponsorship program, designed to enhance the promotion of local events, provided significant benefits to the industry. Through these efforts, support valued at \$3,000 was provided to Rescue Rhythms. ❁

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

### What The Media Are Saying

“The red-tiled roofs of its Spanish Colonial architecture and pristine beaches that stretch along the coastline make for scenes worthy of a postcard, but it’s the world-class wines, innovative farm-to-table cuisine, and quirky creative community that keep this city in a constant state of evolution.”

**Sunset Magazine Online, August 2025**

“With stunning scenery, world-class food and wine, and endless ways to explore or unwind, it’s a destination that doesn’t disappoint. You’ll leave dreaming of your next trip back.”

**VUE Atlanta, September 2025**

“Just ten minutes north of Santa Barbara, Goleta is a lesser-known coastal escape on the Santa Barbara south coast that offers serene beaches, picturesque natural spaces the area is known for and a much quieter, laid-back atmosphere without the crowds.” **TravelPulse, August 2025**

“Known as ‘The American Riviera’, Santa Barbara shines brightest in the fall shoulder season.”

**McClatchy Media, September 2025**

### Top Media Coverage Highlights

- **Sunset Magazine Online** (342,060 Unique Visitors per Month) created an “[Ultimate Guide to Santa Barbara](#),” a richly detailed insider’s roadmap to the region’s standout restaurants, coastal experiences and boutique stays across the South Coast.
- The **2025 Sunset Travel Awards** named Montecito as one of five attractions in the “[Where to Go: Beautiful Beaches](#)” category for destinations, calling it “the glamorous neighbor to Santa Barbara.” The magazine featured stories in print and online (230,047 print circulation, 342,060 UVM), as well as a separate [travel directory](#).
- **Forbes Travel Guide** (450,170 UVM) dove deeply into local libations in its “[Wine Lover’s Guide to Santa Barbara County](#),” exploring tasting rooms, restaurants and resorts that make wine country tick.
- Describing it as “the ultimate SoCal staycation,” **NBC’s “California Live,”** airing on KNBC in Los Angeles (1.67 million UVM) and KNTV in the Bay Area (1.23 million UVM), shined a spotlight on Santa Barbara in a [travel segment](#) that included wine tasting, poolside relaxation and the Courthouse summer film series.



## Top Media Coverage Highlights Continued

- **TravelAge West** (140,786 UVM) showcased [“Where to Eat, Sleep and Play With Kids in Santa Barbara, California,”](#) highlighting the area’s family-friendly accommodations, restaurants and activities.
- **Observer** (821,534 UVM) spotlighted Montecito’s flourishing dining scene in a [story](#) featuring beloved institutions like Lucky’s and Tre Lune alongside acclaimed newcomers such as Caruso’s, Alma Fonda Fina and Bar Lou.
- New direct flight markets were targeted in a five-page travel feature in **VUE Atlanta** magazine (45,000 circ.), plus stories on Summerland, SB and Montecito for **Salt Lake Magazine** (38,305 UVM) and **Utah Style & Design** (13,928 circ., 5,000 UVM).
- **Meetings Today** (64,659 circ., 12,957 UVM) brought Santa Barbara’s meetings offerings to the forefront, [outlining](#) the city’s key differentiators and why incentive meeting planners should consider Santa Barbara for their next event.
- **The LA Food Podcast** (20,000 subscribers) deemed Santa Barbara “California’s most underrated dining city,” [recapping 72 hours](#) of eating and drinking throughout the city. The accompanying social clip on Santa Barbara’s best restaurants reached 130,000 [Instagram](#) views and nearly 40,000 [TikTok](#) views.

## Quick Hits

- **Travel + Leisure** (971,624 circ.): [“On Point,”](#) Santa Barbara sea urchin round-up
- **AARP** (15.2 million UVM): [“5 Charming Beach Towns to Visit in California”](#)
- **Lonely Planet Online** (4.45 million UVM): [“The 9 best winter sun destinations in the USA”](#)
- **ESSENCE** (1.4 million UVM): [“The Black Girl’s Guide To Travel: Underrated ‘Second Cities’ That Rival Popular Destinations”](#)

## Quick Hits Continued

- **TravelPulse** (312,920 UVM) [“Best Sailing Destinations in the US”](#) (picked up by 116 other outlets totaling 491,752 circ., 48 million UVM)
- **FamilyTravel.com/Tribune Content Agency** (ran across 18 news outlets totaling 18.6 million UVM): [“Taking Your Pets”](#)
- **Time Out Los Angeles** (12.57 million UVM): [“14 family-friendly road trips from Los Angeles for Labor Day weekend”](#)
- **TravelPulse** (312,920 UVM) [“US Coastal Towns that Still Feel Undiscovered”](#)
- **So Scottsdale! Magazine** (20,000 circ.): [“Coasting Through Cali”](#)

## Media Relations and Familiarization (FAM) Trips

VSB began the first quarter on a strong note, supporting the generation of 390 media placements through strategic pitching, hosted media visits and collaborative efforts with partners. Coverage ranged from South Coast-focused travel features to expansive magazine stories in regional direct-flight markets. Collectively, these stories reached a potential audience of more than 14 million broadcast viewers and print readers, as well as travel and lifestyle outlets averaging over 1.3 billion unique visitors per month.

The public relations team hosted 28 press visits for journalists and content creators representing outlets including Condé Nast Traveler, USA Today and Johnny Jet, as well as regional publications such as 7x7, Sunset and Westways. VSB networked with Bay Area media at Visit California’s San Francisco media reception and conducted separate media desksides in the East Bay and San Diego. ❖

## GROUP & TRAVEL TRADE SALES

### Group Sales

Group sales converted \$3.4 million in new contracts this quarter, up from \$2.7 million in definites and assists during the same period in 2024. A total of 46 programs were contracted, compared to 38 in Q1 2024. Contracts reflected an impressive 26% year-over-year increase in ADR, rising from \$334.50 to \$422.17. The average group size this quarter was 173 room nights, an 18% decrease from 210 room nights during the same quarter last year.

To drive more short-term demand, VSB hosted 10 site inspections and two FAM trips. One meeting planner FAM included SITE Southeast members who visited Santa Barbara after their chapter retreat in Los Angeles. VSB team members escorted the clients in a VIP charter and hosted them for unique experiences, guided tours and hotel activities. The second FAM was in conjunction with the Ritz-Carlton Bacara, Santa Barbara, entertaining the top insurance and financial planners in the Marriott Luxury Brands portfolio. VSB joined the clients for the three-day event, presented the attributes of Santa Barbara meetings from the general session stage and served as a main sponsor for the closing night gala experience.

Trade shows this quarter included Smart Meetings Smart Woman Summit in Tampa; Destination California in San Diego; HPN Annual Conference in Las Vegas; PCMA CEMA Summit in Austin; SITE Chicago's Grand Slam in Chicago, SITE Southeast Leadership Summit in Los Angeles, Connect Marketplace in Miami; ASAE Annual Convention in Los Angeles; SITE NorCal in Santa Cruz; and MPI Northern CA in San Francisco. VSB sponsored golf carts at the MPI Sacramento Sierra Chapter Annual Golf Tournament, hosted six clients at the Blackbird Uncorked event and

participated in DMO alliance events, including a client dinner in Chicago, client luncheons in San Diego and Pasadena and a private Visit California (VCA) reception during ASAE in Los Angeles. The sales team also executed multiple client events in Dallas, including a salon experience and a pickleball event. Additional proactive sales took place with SITE Chicago, SoCal and NorCal chapters and MPI Northern and Southern CA Chapters.

Local networking events for the sales team included Battle of the Brands, the Downtown Santa Barbara Improvement Association (DSBIA) Launch Event and The Ritz-Carlton Bacara's 25th Anniversary Celebration, as well as tours of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Rancho San Fernando Rey and the Chumash Museum. The team also participated in a quarterly hotel sales meeting at the Santa Barbara Zoo featuring a special "Spiritual Santa Barbara" presentation by Beth McDonald Consulting.



### Leisure Sales & Travel Trade

In partnership with VCA, VSB hosted a successful ‘SoCal Road Trip’ FAM, welcoming six buyers from Japan. Clients experienced the Funk Zone, historical Santa Barbara landmarks, the scenic waterfront and local restaurants and hotels. The team also organized two individual FAMs from both TLN Voyages and Vienten Tours, strengthening international trade relationships. The team attended Connect Marketplace in Miami, where they participated in two days of scheduled appointments while also networking with the 1,100 buyers in attendance.

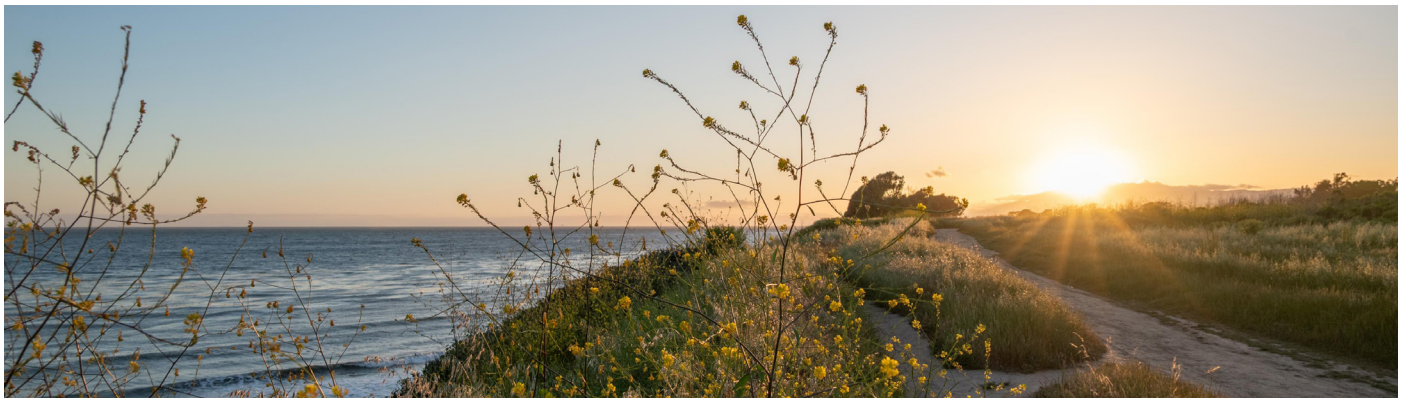
Additionally, VSB facilitated a presentation by Expedia for local hotel partners interested in promotional opportunities to drive bookings. Cat Lopez, VSB Business Development Manager, joined the board of the Central Coast Tourism Council, where she collaborated with other regional DMOs to share insights, gain competitive knowledge and stay informed on emerging industry trends. Building on the growing partnership between Visit Greater Palm Springs and Visit West Hollywood, the team collaborated on a new SoCal Luxury itinerary designed to promote multi-city travel and expand both fly-drive and FIT opportunities across the three destinations. In July, a Travel Trade e-newsletter was distributed to 6,953 travel advisors and garnered an open rate of 36%. ❖

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The department continued its mission this quarter to strengthen connections across the local hospitality industry through membership growth, educational programming and networking opportunities. From welcoming new members and hosting immersive Lunch & Learn sessions to offering timely trainings, efforts remained focused on fostering collaboration, professional development and community engagement throughout the Santa Barbara South Coast.

#### Membership Update

Total membership revenue for the 2025–26 renewal period reached \$126,286 — a 7% year-over-year increase — while membership cancellations declined by 63%. Fifteen new member additions included celebrated dining and lifestyle establishments such as Bossie’s Kitchen, Marisella, 1926 Bar at Hotel Santa Barbara and Bungalow West, along with wellness and retail destinations like Float Luxury Spa Beachfront, Santa Barbara Yoga Collective, Drishti House and Idyll Mercantile. VSB also welcomed innovative businesses including Autio, Expond and Cultured Abalone, as well as the return of The Ellwood in Goleta. Together, these members reflect the creativity and depth of the local community and continue to strengthen the Santa Barbara South Coast’s reputation as a vibrant, world-class destination.





## Member Events

July's Lunch & Learn session combined art and education through a painting-with-wine workshop and wine education presented by the Santa Barbara Vintners. In August, members gathered at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park for a citrus-inspired session led by Apples to Zucchini Cooking School, featuring a locally sourced lunch and a hands-on lemon vinaigrette class. The September Lunch & Learn took members beneath the waves at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum for a special viewing of *Redwoods of the Sea: Life in the Channel Islands Kelp Forests*, featuring Ralph A. Clevenger's striking underwater photography. Each event provided opportunities for members to connect, learn and celebrate the people and places that make Santa Barbara a distinctive destination.

The team also hosted two networking events to strengthen member relationships. In July, Spa Majorelle at Hotel Californian welcomed members for an afternoon of relaxation and connection, featuring wine, light bites, guided breathwork sessions and optional chair massages. In September, members gathered at CAYA Restaurant at The Leta Santa Barbara Goleta for a lively evening of networking, enjoying coastal-inspired dishes from Chef Elisabetta Penso, signature cocktails and raffle prizes — including a complimentary stay and dining experiences. Both events gave members the opportunity to collaborate and experience two of the region's premier hospitality venues firsthand.

## Educational Trainings

VSB partnered with the California Hotel & Lodging Association (CHLA) to host a complimentary webinar on immigration compliance, featuring Fisher Phillips Partner Davis Bae. The session provided hospitality employers with timely updates, best practices and actionable steps to remain informed, compliant and prepared for potential worksite visits or audits.

Additionally, 59 VSB members earned their certification as Santa Barbara Ambassadors through the ongoing *I Am Santa Barbara* training program for front-line hospitality professionals. Onsite sessions were also offered at Hotel Santa Barbara, The Ritz-Carlton Bacara, Santa Barbara and J. Wilkes Tasting Room. The program empowers local businesses and their employees to become better informed about the destination and all it has to offer visitors.

Through these initiatives, VSB continues to build a stronger, more connected hospitality community — one that celebrates local innovation, supports workforce excellence and enhances the overall visitor experience. The department's ongoing programs and partnerships play a vital role in advancing the destination's long-term success and reinforcing Santa Barbara's position as a premier place to visit, work and thrive. ❖

## TRAVEL TRENDS JULY - SEPTEMBER

Accommodations Employment	Summer (Q1) 2024 vs. 2025		
	Summer 2024	Summer 2025	% Change
Santa Barbara County	5,200	5,200	0%

Santa Barbara South Coast TBID Hotel Performance	Summer (Q1) 2024 vs. 2025		
	Summer 2024	Summer 2025	% Change
Occupancy	79.5%	78.5%	-1%
Average Daily Rate (ADR)	\$399.93	\$397.62	-1%
Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)	\$317.76	\$312.21	-2%
Demand (Room Nights)	383,074	380,243	-1%
Supply ( Room Nights)	482,144	484,260	0%
Gross Revenue	\$153,204,558	\$151,192,651	-1%

Airline Passenger Volume	Summer (Q1) 2024 vs. 2025		
	Summer 2024	Summer 2025	% Change
Santa Barbara Municipal Airport	211,419	223,623	6%

Weather at Santa Barbara Municipal Airport	Summer (Q1) 2024 vs. 2025		
	Summer 2024	Summer 2025	% Change
Average High Temperature (°F)	74.2	73.8	-1%
Total Precipitation (Inches)	0	0	0%
Days of Precipitation	0	0	0%



### About Visit Santa Barbara

Visit Santa Barbara (VSB) is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization jointly funded by the City of Santa Barbara, the County of Santa Barbara, the South Coast Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) and by a membership of hospitality-related businesses. As the official destination marketing organization for the Santa Barbara South Coast, VSB is contracted by the City of Santa Barbara to market the area nationally and internationally as a premier destination for leisure and business travel.

VSB’s Board of Directors is composed of business owners and professionals who have the experience and willingness to serve the community beyond the scope of their demanding work schedules. Their volunteer responsibilities include steering company policy, building relationships with local government, interpreting the needs and interests of the community, shaping how VSB delivers upon its mission and influencing the organization’s future evolution.

### Our Mission

We inspire overnight travel to the Santa Barbara South Coast in order to enhance the community’s economy and quality of life.



# 2025-2026 Board of Directors

- Rebecca Anderson**, Lotusland
- Warner Anderson**, WA Event Management
- Jens Baake**, Acme Hospitality Group
- Jason Baker**, Expond
- Leslie Brickell**, Residence Inn by Marriott Santa Barbara Goleta
- Bradley Cance**, The Ritz-Carlton Bacara, Santa Barbara
- Michael Cohen**, Santa Barbara Adventure Company
- Chris Cline**, Hotel Santa Barbara
- Amada Cruz**, Santa Barbara Museum of Art
- Rick Fidel**, Rosewood Miramar Beach
- Treg Finney**, Mar Monte Hotel
- Andrew Firestone**, StonePark Capital
- Dan Glaeser**, CalPrivate Bank
- Christopher Hastert**, Santa Barbara Airport
- Councilmember Mike Jordan**, City of Santa Barbara
- Trevor Large**, Fauver, Large, Archbald & Spray LLC
- Kristen Miller**, Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce
- Warren Nocon**, Hotel Californian
- Tom Patton**, Ramada by Wyndham Santa Barbara
- Councilmember Luz Reyes-Martín**, City of Goleta
- Woody Sears**, Autio
- David Sigman**, Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club
- Tim Snider**, Fess Parker Winery & Vineyard
- Ben Sprague**, Earl Warren Showgrounds



# Visit Santa Barbara Staff

## ADMINISTRATION

**Kathy Janega-Dykes**, President/CEO

**Jennifer Reyes**, Executive Assistant

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

**Noelle Buben**, Director of Community Partnerships & Events

**Aleah Elisara**, Community Partnerships Manager

## MARKETING

**JessyLynn Perkins**, Director of Marketing

**Carly Hopkins**, Creative Manager

**Shantel Adams**, Digital Marketing Manager

**Taylor Faltas**, Content Manager

**Lela Brodie**, Social Media Marketing Manager

**Casey LaHonta**, Research & Analytics Manager

**Emily Lauderdale**, Web Marketing Manager

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

**Karna Hughes**, Director of Public Relations

**Anna Naughton**, Public Relations Manager

**Brooke Holland**, Public Relations Manager

**Dani DeVries**, Public Relations Manager

**Whitney Wisser**, Public Relations Associate

## MEETINGS AND TRAVEL TRADE

**Beth Olson**, CDME, Director of Sales

**Catherine “Cat” Puccino**, Director of National Accounts

**Amy Esnault**, Group Business Development Manager

**Catherine Lopez**, Business Development Manager

**Mark Feldman**, Sales Representative, Northern California

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