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**SOMEBODY'S GOTTA CUT THROUGH IT. MIGHT AS WELL BE US.**



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Photo by Bill Straus Photography

# LEADERSHIP VISIT

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Discovery and collaboration are the focus of Commerce Lexington Inc. Leadership Visits. Our charge is to capitalize on the opportunity to unite energized Central Kentucky leaders, both elected and volunteer, and inspire bold and systemic improvements to our city and region.*

**slido**

During the Leadership Visit, we'll be utilizing a mobile audience engagement tool called **SLIDO**. During each session, you'll be able to ask questions and provide immediate feedback right from your mobile device.

### STEP #1:

Go to **www.slido.com** on your mobile device.

### STEP #2:

In the Enter Code Here box, type keyword **mspvisit** and tap the search button.

### STEP #3:

Once you've entered the event, select the appropriate session & ask questions or rate the session.



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

On behalf of Commerce Lexington Inc. and its Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for participating in the 2017 Leadership Visit to Minneapolis-Saint Paul presented by the McBrayer law firm. I realize that it is a huge sacrifice for you to leave your family and job for three days, but your commitment to this endeavor makes a difference in improving our community and region.

These inter-city visits are designed so that you not only have plenty of time for networking and interacting with other participants, but also with opportunities to share ideas and best practices picked up while we experience these cities. There have been a lot of great programs and initiatives created right here in Lexington following our Leadership Visits, including things like the wildly-popular Thursday Night Live, the rapidly-growing EMERGE Conference for emerging leaders, Commerce Lexington's Minority Business Development Program and Access Loan small business financing initiative, the most recent Courageous Conversations, and others that you see highlighted in this section.

While representatives of the business community have been involved in many of these impactful projects following Leadership Visits, it's important to note that even more have come to fruition due to individuals like you who participated in one of the trips, took an idea, and applied it to something that ultimately enhanced Lexington. The beauty of these trips is that the ideas are not owned by an individual or organization. Rather, all participants are encouraged to take what they see and explore the possibilities here at home.

Although the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region is much larger than the Lexington MSA, there are quite a few similarities between the two. Both are among the most educated areas in the country, have very low unemployment rates, and are recognized among the top knowledge-based, entrepreneurial, and innovation-driven cities. This trip provides an exciting opportunity to see how the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region harnesses the power of innovation and education to create better economic opportunity and an outstanding quality of life.

Building off our Courageous Conversations session last year in Charleston, our final day in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area will further explore the biases that all people have and help participants better understand that "Everyone Has a Story." This will be a very important session to shed some light on the pitfalls of perceptions that may be negatively impacting your business and our community.

Thank you again for participating in this trip, and I look forward to interacting with many of you this week.

Sincerely,



**CARLA BLANTON**

**2017 BOARD CHAIR  
COMMERCE LEXINGTON INC.**

**OWNER,  
CARLA BLANTON  
CONSULTING**





Photo by Bill Straus Photography

# LEADERSHIP VISITS SINCE 1974

2017.....	<b>Minneapolis-Saint Paul, MN</b>	1995 .....	Greenville, SC
2016.....	Charleston, SC	1994.....	Tampa, FL
2015.....	Kansas City, MO	1993.....	Charlotte, NC
2014.....	Charlotte, NC (with GLI)	1992 .....	Austin, TX
2013.....	Omaha, NE	1991.....	Annapolis, MD/Washington, DC
2012.....	San Antonio, TX	1990 .....	Boca Raton, FL
2011 .....	Greenville, SC	1989 .....	Tucson, AZ
2010.....	Pittsburgh, PA (with GLI)	1988 .....	New Orleans, LA
2009 .....	Madison, WI	1987.....	Charleston, SC
2008 .....	Austin, TX	1986.....	Nashville, TN
2007 .....	Boulder, CO	1985 .....	Tulsa, OK
2006.....	Oklahoma City, OK	1984.....	Chapel Hill, NC
2005.....	Providence, RI	1983.....	San Antonio, TX
2004.....	Charleston, SC	1982 .....	Minneapolis, MN
2003 .....	Baltimore, MD/Washington, DC	1981 .....	Scottsdale, AZ
2002.....	Raleigh, NC	1980.....	Orlando, FL
2001 .....	Ann Arbor, MI	1979 .....	Savannah, GA
2000.....	Nashville, TN	1978.....	Jacksonville, FL
1999.....	Portland, OR	1977.....	Tampa, FL
1998 .....	Mobile, AL	1976 .....	Houston, TX
1997.....	Madison, WI	1975 .....	Washington, DC
1996.....	Richmond, VA	1974.....	Charleston, SC



# COMMUNITY IMPACTS

**Note:** This is a partial list of impacts. Visit [www.commercelexington.com/impact.html](http://www.commercelexington.com/impact.html) for a more detailed list.

## COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS:

Spawed by the 2016 visit to **Charleston, South Carolina**, which featured a session entitled “Courageous Conversations” at the iconic Mother Emmanuel Church, the Courageous Conversation movement has been occurring in a smaller group format among several key ethnic and faith-based organizations, spearheaded by representatives of the Lexington Police Department. More community-wide discussions on a variety of topics occurred in 2017 through efforts like Together Lexington and Blue Grass Community Foundation’s On The Table.



## EMERGE CONFERENCE:

Commerce Lexington Inc.’s EMERGE conference just completed its fourth annual event, with more than 400 people attending in March 2017. This conference for young professionals was created following our visit to **Omaha, Nebraska**, in 2013.



## FCPS FACILITIES TAX:

The facilities tax that resulted in nearly \$300 million for Fayette County Public Schools gained momentum following the visit to **Oklahoma City** (2006). Without the availability of a local option sales tax here, Lexington officials knew a different approach was necessary to enhance our school system. An increase in the property tax rate ultimately passed in 2007, with many school renovations done and new schools being built.

## ACCESS LOAN PROGRAM:

Since its inception in 2001, more than \$15.8 million in loans has been facilitated for the start or expansion of small, minority- and women-owned businesses in the region. This program was created after visiting **Nashville, TN** (2000).

## COMMITMENT TO TRAIL SYSTEM:

Upon visiting cities like **Oklahoma City, Boulder, Austin, and Madison**, participants have seen the impact that a quality bike/walking trail system can have on the health of a community and as a recruitment tool for new companies/employees. Lexington has greatly expanded its trail system and added bike lanes around the city.

## MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

Local support for minority- and women-owned businesses has improved in Lexington starting with the visit to **Greenville, SC**, in 1995, with the creation of CLX’s Minority Business Development program, later the Access Loan Program (**Nashville, 2000**), and later the Minority Business Accelerator program (2013). Improvements in area procurement initiatives following the visit to **Baltimore** (2003) have yielded known linkages of procurement for minority businesses of approximately \$12.4 million since November 2005 from a variety of private businesses and construction companies, LFUCG, Blue Grass Airport, the University of Kentucky, and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

## THURSDAY NIGHT LIVE:

Lexington’s wildly popular Thursday Night Live events run by the Downtown Lexington Corp. in the summer months was an idea replicated from **Greenville, SC**, in 1995.



## RIVER BLAST FESTIVAL:

River Blast festival held at Fort Boonesborough State Park in Richmond, which began in 2014, was organized by Bluegrass Tomorrow to create more awareness and access to the opportunities of the Kentucky River. The idea for the festival initially came from the inter-city visit to **Providence, RI**, in 2005.

## DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING SIGNAGE:

New downtown pedestrian way-finding signs began to be installed in mid-2015, following a recommendation from participants on the **San Antonio** trip (2012) and a subsequent Leadership Lexington group project entitled VisionLex, which collaborated with the DDA and DLC and worked through logistics with VisitLEX, Kentucky Utilities, and LFUCG.

## DOWNTOWN PARKING SIGNS:

In 2015, the Lexington Parking Authority installed new signs and street markings to provide better visibility for parking garages and public parking areas. According to LexPark Executive Director Gary Means, the 6-foot “Blue P” markings were replicated from **Greenville, SC** in 2011.



# STAY CONNECTED

Commerce Lexington Inc. Leadership Visits contain a heavy dose of brainstorming combined with informational sessions and networking receptions. Below you'll find a number of ways that you can add to the conversation and share your experiences and ideas during the trip. If you have any questions about any of these communications methods, contact Mark Turner at [mturner@CommerceLexington.com](mailto:mturner@CommerceLexington.com). These methods not only help connect those on the trip, but they also engage those back in Lexington who want to know what you are experiencing in Minneapolis-Saint Paul.

Digital version of this Briefing Book available for viewing or download at [www.commercelexington.com/minneapolis-2017.html](http://www.commercelexington.com/minneapolis-2017.html)



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LIKE US at [www.facebook.com/LeadershipVisit](http://www.facebook.com/LeadershipVisit) and post your ideas from & photos of Minneapolis-Saint Paul and make comments.



Follow updates at [www.instagram.com/CommerceLex/#](http://www.instagram.com/CommerceLex/#) and post photos of Minneapolis-Saint Paul using the hashtags [#bgvisit](#) and [#lexky](#).



**TEXT ALERTS**

Sign up to receive **TEXT ALERTS** from Commerce Lexington, such as key agenda reminders & changes by texting keyword [mspvisit](#) to **511511**.

## KEY ATTENDEE INFORMATION

### HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

Loews Minneapolis Hotel  
601 1st Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55403  
Phone: (612) 677-1100  
Web: [www.loewshotels.com/minneapolis-hotel](http://www.loewshotels.com/minneapolis-hotel)

### DRESS CODE:

We encourage everyone to be comfortable during the trip. Casual or smart casual is appropriate. Evening events on Wednesday and Thursday are business casual, with coat and tie optional. Please remember to wear your nametag to all sessions and events.

### TIME ZONE:

Minneapolis, Minnesota is on Central Time.

### MEALS & REFRESHMENTS:

Meals and refreshment breaks included are indicated in the agenda. If you have any food allergies or requests that you did not submit on your attendee form, please see Katie Hardwick.

### KEY CONTACTS:

If you have a question or concern that comes up during the trip and you need assistance, you may contact either of the following CLX staff members:

**Katie Hardwick:** (859) 351-5554  
**Lynda Bebrowsky:** (859) 333-5558

