

Visitor & Industry Relations Team

With a strong belief in the power of public/private partnerships, the Visitor & Industry Relations team works to strengthen South Dakota's visitor industry. Each team member plays a crucial role in developing and administering cooperative programs and services which benefit the industry.



Natasha Bothun
REPRESENTATIVE

- * Manages Interstate Information Centers
- * Leads Cultural/Heritage Tourism and Tribal Tourism efforts
- * Coordinates Giant Step and Great Getaways cooperative programs



Rick Jorgensen
COORDINATOR

- * Special projects and events



Nicole Soukup
TEAM MANAGER

- * Coordinates the Office of Tourism's marketing campaigns
- * Leads efforts to build relationships with the South Dakota visitor industry
- * Leads the development and implementation of Tourism's cooperative marketing programs
- * Facilitates the Governor's Million Dollar Challenge grants



Brad Lemmel
REPRESENTATIVE

- * Leads efforts in agritourism
- * Serves as an ambassador for the Governor's Million Dollar Challenge approved partners and Digital Revolution partners
- * Leads the Great Events cooperative campaign



Eileen Bertsch
REPRESENTATIVE

- * Coordinates the Governor's Hospitality Program - includes the Great Service Star businesses, Governor's Hospitality Certificates and George S. Mickelson Great Service Award
- * Manages the online hospitality training - includes development of the online customer service training program
- * Arranges media and travel agent hostings and press trips



Aske Whitebird
REPRESENTATIVE

- * Acts as a liaison for tribal tourism representatives
- * Sets up tribal tourism roundtable discussions

Highlights

Digital Revolution

South Dakota Digital Revolution is an innovative industry co-op program that provides partners the opportunity to place visitor-related content on the state's official travel Web site, www.TravelSD.com. That means partners are connected to more than two million annual Internet visitors a year. In addition to Web site development, content management and search engine optimization, the program opens the door for the visitor industry to cross-sell their businesses with others across their community, region and state.

Rooster Rush

The shoulder season premiere promotion, Rooster Rush, was a successful partnership between the Office of Tourism and several communities statewide. The Office provided creative templates for ads and promotional materials, and offered financial assistance to communities developing their own Rooster Rush events.

Giant Step

The Giant Step cooperative marketing program underwent a drastic change in 2009. A new 6-page layout provided partners with even more exposure and the new design allowed for all partners to be listed in each ad. The new look proved successful, as inquiries from the ads were up during the peak season of 2009.