



North American  
Travel Journalists  
Association

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ***NATJA Coming to Orange County, NC in 2017***

Chapel Hill, NC – (May 6, 2016) - The North American Travel Journalists Association (NATJA) announced recently that their 2017 NATJA Annual Conference & Marketplace will convene in Orange County, NC.

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau's bid was selected to host this prestigious group and it was a countywide effort. Rosemary Waldorf, Chair of Visitors Bureau said that "NATJA enjoyed experiencing Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Hillsborough on their site tour and our success in landing the conference is because of Carrboro Mayor Lydia Lavelle and Mayor Tom Stevens personally hosting NATJA CEO Helen Hernandez and pointing out the unique attributes of each town. The personal touch of Missy Julian Fox at UNC, as well as other area leaders also helped us lure this important conference."

"Orange County, North Carolina proudly weaves their history, culture, food and family into the very fabric of their communities, said Hernandez. "The beauty and historical significance of this area should be shared with everyone and who better than the members of a travel journalism association. NATJA looks forward to experiencing Orange County and its surrounding communities."

The 2017 NATJA 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference & Marketplace will convene from May 15-19, 2017. The host hotel is the Sheraton Chapel Hill. The event brings together travel journalists from throughout the US, Canada and Mexico for a combination of business meetings, educational seminars and a media marketplace. It also provides a perfect showcase for Chapel Hill and the surrounding areas through activities and events scheduled each afternoon and evening. The 2017 conference is expected to draw up to 125 attendees with the majority being professionally accredited travel journalists.

"This conference allows us to highlight Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough and Orange County as a top-notch visitor destination," said Laurie Paolicelli, Orange County Director of Community Relations and Tourism. "We are thrilled the travel journalists will get a close up and personal look at Orange County and be able to experience our communities through our people, attractions, natural beauty, farms, food, music, brews, spirits and more."

Founded in 1991 by a group of sixteen travel writers, the North American Travel Journalists Association (NATJA) is one of the largest professional associations of travel writers, photographers, editors, bloggers and tourism professionals dedicated to the highest quality of journalism excellence in promoting travel and leisure activities to the general public. The group also includes destination marketing organizations (DMOs) as well. NATJA's 2016 conference was held April 4-8 in Oxnard, California.

*As the official accredited destination marketing organization of Chapel Hill and Orange County, the mission of the Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau is to develop and coordinate visitor services in Orange County and to implement marketing programs that will enhance the economic activity and quality of life in the community. The Visitors Bureau is a department of Orange County, NC Government. For information: [www.VisitChapelHill.org](http://www.VisitChapelHill.org)*

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