A 2013 initiative by the Louisiana Office of Tourism resulted in Louisiana becoming the second U.S. state to receive a heralded accreditation by the Destination Marketing Association International. Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne announced, at a Jan. 27 news conference in New Orleans, that Louisiana is certified by DMAI’s Destination Marketing Accreditation Program. Accreditation by Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) recognizes organizations such as tourism and convention bureaus for efficient work, as measured by standards in 16 areas such as marketing, technology, visitor services and destination development. The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau received its accreditation in 2012 for meeting those same requirements.

The resounding acclaim Shreveport Common is generating nationally recently hit another crescendo thanks to a MIT study that touts this cultural community district as a cultural and recreation destination. “The service of our military is extremely important to our community, and we feel privileged to be able to recognize the military discount book and the Champions of Service banquet presented by the Bossier Chamber of Commerce for their work on behalf of the military,” said Stacy Brown, president of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. “The service of our military is extremely important to our community, and we feel privileged to be able to recognize the military discount book and the Champions of Service banquet presented by the Bossier Chamber of Commerce for their work on behalf of the military,” said Stacy Brown, president of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. “The service of our military is extremely important to our community, and we feel privileged to be able to recognize the military discount book and the Champions of Service banquet presented by the Bossier Chamber of Commerce for their work on behalf of the military,” said Stacy Brown, president of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

“Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau wins high honor from Bossier Chamber”

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau was named the 2013 Military Supporter of the Year by the Bossier Chamber of Commerce at its annual banquet, Jan. 28, at CenturyLink Center for its work on the military discount book and the Champions of Service Award to BAFB. “We were surprised and delighted to win such an esteemed award,” said Stacy Brown, president of the tourist bureau. “The service of our military is extremely important to our community, and we feel privileged to lend them hands to the support of the tourism industry.”

The chamber’s theme was “Opening Doors to New Opportunities.” Organizers of the banquet said it was attended by approximately 600 people. Several hospitality partners also won prestigious awards. Sherry Stuckey, director of sales at TownPlace Suites in Bossier City, won Diplomat of the Year. She attended by approximately 600 people. Several hospitality partners also won prestigious awards. Sherry Stuckey, director of sales at TownPlace Suites in Bossier City, won Diplomat of the Year. She attended by approximately 600 people. Several hospitality partners also won prestigious awards. Sherry Stuckey, director of sales at TownPlace Suites in Bossier City, won Diplomat of the Year. She attended by approximately 600 people. Several hospitality partners also won prestigious awards.

Continued on page 3
Your Bureau at Work

Christy Whitaker, executive administrative assistant, is a part of the 2014 class of Leadership Shreveport, a division of the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce. The chamber’s goal is to identify and prepare future leaders for the community.

Diana Douglas, regional convention sales manager, hosted three site visits and successfully won all three – Brain Industry Association Conference, March 2014; South Central Motorcoach Association Conference, August 2014; and National Association of Motorcoach Operators Convention, Aug. 24. She has a site visit in March with the executive director for Southern Association of School Business Officials. This group is considering Shreveport-Bossier for four different conferences between 2014 and 2016.

Suzanne Mandref, convention sales manager, hosted Kiwanis International groups from Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee during a site visit for the organization’s 2016 District Convention. Mandref will host NSAIC in March for a site visit regarding the organization’s 2014 Region 4 meeting. She will also be attending the Louisiana Society of Association Executives Annual Conference in Baton Rouge, Feb. 12-14.

Manfredi will be working with the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention, July 20-24, in Shreveport-Bossier. That event will bring approximately 2,500 delegates to town.

Erica Howard, tourism sales manager, will be attending Travel South, Feb. 23-26, in Charleston, W.V., representing Shreveport-Bossier. They will be hosting the closing dinner, Feb. 25. Travel South will be held in Shreveport-Bossier, March 22-25, 2014.

Kelly Wells, vice president of sports and tourism, was awarded the prestigious Super Sport Award during the USGAA 2014 Annual Convention, Jan. 30 in Baton Rouge. The award recognizes individuals that have “gone above and beyond for the betterment of high school sports in Louisiana.” The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau won a coveted 2014 Readers’ Choice Award from SportsEvents Media Group, the leading industry publication focusing exclusively on helping sports event planners produce excellent competitions in the United States and Canada.

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau beat out stiff competition from Niagara Falls, NY, to host the 2014 National Association of Motorcoach Operators (NAMO) Convention, Aug. 15-17, at the Shreveport Convention Center. NAMO is expected to bring in 100 new visitors to Shreveport-Bossier from across the nation.

The board members for NAMO ultimately selected Shreveport-Bossier because of its location and Southern hospitality. “We look forward to what we hope will be one of our best meetings ever, as well as introducing the members of NAMO to all of the exciting things that Shreveport-Bossier has to offer our tour groups,” said Frank Smith, convention chairman for NAMO. NAMO is a national organization comprised of more than 60 motorcoach companies offering custom charter bus options for a variety of events. Attendees for NAMO will include motorcoach owners only. The South Central Motorcoach Association will host their convention at the Shreveport Convention Center, Aug. 17-20. The South Central Motorcoach Association (SCMA) Convention is expected to draw 300 guests and is open to motorcoach owners, group leaders and operators.

“Hosting events like this is a chance for Shreveport-Bossier to showcase itself and attract more group business to the area,” said Kelly Wells, vice president of sports and tourism for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. “With the increase of new restaurants and businesses, Shreveport-Bossier has endless possibilities to attract visitors.”

Reunion Planning Workshop Attracts a Capacity Crowd

A capacity crowd of 60 reunion planners and 20 vendors attended a free workshop on the subject of planning a family, military or class reunion, which was presented by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau at the Villaggio Lakefront Event Center in Bossier City on Saturday, Feb. 8.

During the event, attendees learned how to plan a reunion itinerary, how to select a host hotel, tips for scouting event sites and more. The workshop included a “How to Plan a Reunion” presentation and a meet-and-greet with hospitality industry partners and vendors. Attendants also learned how to increase reunion attendance using social media platforms such as Facebook.

“Social media isn’t just something we do for fun in our spare time,” said Chris Jay, social media and public relations manager. We taught these reunion organizations how to use Facebook as businesses use it, to increase attendance and host a more successful event.

Research shows that a family, military or class reunion with 75 attendees will have an estimated economic impact of $70,580, including spending related to hotel accommodations, meals, shopping and transportation. If all of the reunion planners in attendance at Saturday’s workshop follow through on hosting their events locally, the workshop could help to generate approximately $4.2 million in economic impact. Due to popular demand, plans are in the works to offer a similar workshop in the near future.

Although Simplicity is simple to use, you will need some training to learn how the tourist bureau utilizes each part of the system. This training is provided at the business office, 629 Spring Street, in downtown Shreveport. Training sessions last about an hour.

If you are not already using the Simplicity Extravaganza, please contact Pat Gill, gillj@bbbt.org, about being trained and getting a login and password.

Golden Ticket

The Golden Ticket is good for conventions that utilize a minimum of $50 or more in hotel rooms per night. Qualifying groups will receive up to $1,000 to help offset the costs of meeting room rental, food, or transportation. This program is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Planners interested must fill out a request for proposal on the tourist bureau’s website, www.shreveportbossier.org/meetings/online-rfp.

This offer is not for catering only events or planners who have hosted an event in Shreveport-Bossier within the last year.

Tourist Bureau Lands National Association of Motorcoach Operators Convention

Are You Using the Simplicity Extravaganza?