



# site Chicago

Proudly Serving Illinois, Michigan & Wisconsin

## In This Edition

- Holly Trolley Recap
- Fall Education Event Recap
- Wisconsin Event Recap
- Young Leaders Recap
- 2025 AGM Preview and Invitation
- 2025 Michigan Shamrock Social
- Membership Call-Out
- Thank You to Our Sponsors

Chapter News Flash    December 2024

## Wrapping up the Year & Unwrapping New Opportunities



# Holly Trolley Recap



Our 10th Annual Holly Trolley event was a resounding success! Attendees enjoyed a festive evening of holiday cheer, touring iconic Chicago spots while indulging in seasonal treats and drinks. The trolley provided a unique opportunity for our industry professionals to network and build valuable connections in a relaxed and festive atmosphere. We extend our sincere gratitude to our generous sponsors for making this memorable event possible.



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# Brewing Connections in Milwaukee in October



Cheese curds, great networking, and incredible prizes – this event at Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee was a huge success!

A big thank you to our generous SPONSORS:

Andy Meece, Andaz Maui  
 Jacqueline Vuckovic, Melia Hotels International  
 Joanna Coulon, Sunseeker Resort  
 Leslie Johnson, Visit Milwaukee  
 Lauren Hyps, Fort Myers  
 Charlene Marsalli, Old Republic  
 Colleen Brzozowski, Hard Rock Hotel

We appreciate your support!

# Paws & Bricks: Building Love through CSR

Our Fall Education Event on September 17, **Paws & Bricks: Building Love through CSR**, was such a wonderful evening of connection and education for our #incentivetravel community!

The event emphasized the therapeutic joy of interacting with puppies and the creativity of Lego building, all while supporting charitable causes, featuring guest speaker Adam Tanguay, Go Team Events.

We enjoyed the calming presence of puppies while channeling our creativity into Lego projects, with proceeds going to support animal shelters and children's charities. From our Red Box raffle sales and SITE Chicago match, we donated \$3,000 to One Tail at a Time!

And don't worry, it's not too late to support this wonderful charity. You can donate right now on this link: <https://bit.ly/4eGdxGW>

Special thanks to our wonderful event sponsors Destination Reps, The Abbey Resort & Avani Spa, Palmer House A Hilton Hotel, One Tail at a Time, Meliá Hotels International and Go Team Events and to our annual strategic sponsors United Airlines, MK Event Photo, Elevoque, Cvent and Copa Airlines!



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# Unlocking the Power of Destination Reps for Your Next Incentive Program

When planning a successful program, choosing the right destination is just the beginning – and often the most crucial decision. For incentive planners, delivering a unique and unforgettable experience requires more than booking a venue – it's about crafting an experience that inspires, motivates, and delights for participants.

## What is Destination Reps?

Destination Reps is a group of 50+ Midwest-based convention bureau sales reps across North America that serve as experts and liaisons to the destinations each represents. They provide planners with a fast and personal way to reach their destinations' venues and vendors help to make your program more successful.

## How Can Destination Reps Benefit Incentive Meeting Planners?

Members of Destinations Reps can be invaluable partners when planning incentive programs. From sourcing to expert advice, members have deep knowledge that will help to make your program more successful.

1. **Insider Knowledge of Local Venues & Experiences:** they are well-versed in the best venues, accommodations, and off-the-beaten-path experiences in their region. Whether you're looking for a luxurious resort, a boutique hotel, or an unconventional space to host a memorable gathering, they will offer personalized recommendations based on your group's needs, ensuring your event venue fits your goals.
2. **Streamlined Planning Process and Cost Savings:** Planning an incentive program can be complex and sometimes pricey, but they simplify the process by connecting you to trusted local vendors in their extensive network to save time and effort at the best rates. They can also help coordinate site visits and provide information about seasons and booking patterns. Some convention bureaus even offer incentives to bring your program!
3. **Ensuring Local Authenticity and Uniqueness:** Incentive programs are about rewarding top performers and offering them something unique and memorable. Members can tell you how to incorporate local culture, experiences, and flavors into your event, ensuring your incentive participants feel truly immersed in the destination.

To leverage local expertise, streamline your planning process, and gain access to insider opportunities to make your event stand out contact [destinationreps.org](https://destinationreps.org) today.



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# Banff & Lake Louise: A Place Where Meetings Come Alive

## AN UPLIFTING LOCATION FOR YOUR NEXT GATHERING

While its natural spaces are some of the most beautiful in the world, Banff and Lake Louise also extends a warm welcome indoors. Covering the full range from luxury accommodations such as The Fairmont Banff Springs, The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise and Rimrock Resort Hotel, to rustic cabins such as Buffalo Mountain Lodge, and everything in-between including the renowned Banff Centre, groups from 10 to over 1,000 will find a perfect option in the majestic Canadian Rockies.

As Canada's #1 incentive location, Banff & Lake Louise are the perfect location to reward, rejuvenate and incentive your top performers.

Review of Groups Brochure and contact with us to learn more on meeting in the iconic Canadian Rockies!



To learn more about hosting your next event in Banff & Lake Louise, please reach out to Kyla Knudson at [kknudson@banfflakelouise.com](mailto:kknudson@banfflakelouise.com)



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# YOUNG LEADERS ARE MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

SITE Chicago's Young Leaders Committee (YLC) had a successful Q4 that both fostered new connections and looked toward building a bigger community in the year ahead!

This year, the YLC made it a priority to create space for new incentive professionals to learn and grow together, both professionally and personally. Since January, the committee itself has doubled in size, and Young Leaders events are seeing their highest attendance levels yet!

Notably, on November 13, the YLC hosted a SITE Chicago Young Leaders Cooking Class at Bettie's Chicago, a 1950s-style event space and recreational cooking and baking school in the River North neighborhood. Nearly 30 young leaders participated in the event, where they made homemade Italian gnocchi with vodka sauce, learned valuable lessons about teamwork and collaboration, and snapped some photos in Bettie's retro-themed photo booth.



## WHAT'S NEXT IN 2025 FOR YOUNG LEADERS

SITE Chicago's Young Leaders Committee has also been hard at work planning for 2025.

Here's what to look forward to from the YLC early next year:

- Young Leaders Happy Hour PRE - SITE Chicago's Annual General Meeting on January 28
- A return to Feed My Starving Children in Schaumburg on February 11 for an evening of teambuilding and giving back
- SITE Chicago's Young Leaders Co Workday is back again, returning to Convene in early April. Check out our '2024 Co Workday' featured article in Meetings Today!

Stay tuned for more from SITE Chicago's Young Leaders Committee next year!



Kelly Fuller, CMP, CIS, CITP  
Co-VP Young Leaders



Brittany Cerrillos  
Co-VP Young Leaders

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# Looking Ahead: SITE Chicago Annual General Meeting 2025



## SAVE THE DATE

Jan 28, 2025  
4:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Waldorf Astoria Chicago  
11 E Walton St, Chicago

Registration coming soon... Save the date for this important evening of connection, education and chapter updates!

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# Looking Ahead: Shamrock Social in Grand Rapids, Michigan

**2ND ANNUAL SITE CHICAGO  
SHAMROCK SOCIAL**

DRINKS  
RAFFLES  
MUSIC

MARCH  
**12**  
AT 5 PM

AMAZING RAFFLES & DOOR PRIZES

groups360 Peter Island Hard Rock 10 site Chicago  
prestige global meeting source

NEW HOLLAND BREWING - 417 Bridge St NW - Grand Rapids

## SAVE THE DATE

Registration coming soon... Save the date for this important evening of connection, education and chapter updates!

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# Don't forget to Renew

There has never been a better or more exciting time than to be a member of SITE Chicago, proudly serving Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

At SITE, we don't distinguish between buyers and suppliers; instead, we unite as incentive travel professionals, working together as equal partners to create and deliver extraordinary travel experiences.

SITE Chicago is committed to nurturing young talent as well since our inception over 10 years ago. SITE Chicago has been instrumental in leading the way in so many areas especially our education and events!!!!

We look forward to working and networking alongside you again in 2025!!!!

## MEMBERSHIP IN SITE CHICAGO HAS ITS BENEFITS

As part of your membership, be sure to take advantage of these benefits:

- [The Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) where, as a member, you have exclusive, complimentary access to hours and hours of on-demand educational content
- The new Communities micro-site where we'll be adding more communities in 2025 to our [Sustainability committee](#), already up and running
- The re-designed [CIS certification](#) on-line and hybrid formats, all with substantial member discounts
- [Research and White Papers](#) – the 3 part inSITEs series and the annual [Incentive Travel Index \(ITI\)](#)
- The enhanced and improved Member Directory, connecting you with our almost 3000 global community of incentive travel professionals

Best of all, being in SITE hard wires you into a vibrant culture that's committed to building & bridging cultures. See you in 2025!

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