



>Showplace at High Point Market

# Job 1: Maintaining High Point Market's premier position

*Tom Conley is our market's point man in a globally competitive environment*

The High Point Market, the world's largest home furnishings industry trade show, is Tom Conley's focus. That means he has to keep an eye on situations anywhere on the planet, from Raleigh to Washington to China, that might affect the semi-annual event.

Conley is president and CEO of the High Point Market Authority (HPMA), which organizes the High Point Market. The next market is April 22-26. It is expected to draw, as usual, more than 70,000 people to High Point, where they sell and buy furniture and accessories displayed in more than 10 million square feet

of showrooms.

"We are a global brand," says Conley. "That is something that is achieved gradually over the years, and you can blow it quickly if you don't do a good job."

Conley, who came to HPMA in 2011, also serves on GMA's board of directors. He points out that some factors affecting the High Point Market – such as the N.C. General Assembly's passage of HB2 last year, which led to a number of buyers canceling plans to attend the April 2016 show – are beyond his organization's control. "That hurt us dramatically," he says.

Politics aside, that leaves



Tom Conley, president & CEO of the High Point Market Authority.

plenty for Conley and his team to grapple with. Some, such as working closely with the Piedmont Triad hospitality industry to ensure that market guests have plenty of hotel choices and a pleasant experience, are well known.

Others, such as developing contingency plans in response to Ebola outbreaks earlier this decade, are not.

"The Ebola scare was something that we had to

watch," Conley says. "We had some people from those African countries here."

HPMA worked with High Point Regional Hospital to screen visitors from the stricken countries, taking temperatures and checking for other symptoms.

No visitors were symptomatic, Conley says, "but it was a little bit of a scary time for us. The medical people in this town did a fantastic job."

The development of a furniture market in Las Vegas, which began more than 10 years ago, initially threatened High Point's dominance among furniture trade shows.

The rivalry now has settled down, Conley says, in part because the new owners of the Las Vegas Market control about 65 percent of High Point's showroom real estate.

"They have positioned Las Vegas as a regional show in the home furnishings industry," Conley says. Competition with High Point for attendance continues, but to a lesser degree. The Las Vegas market also pressures other furniture, accessories, and gift shows in Dallas, Los Angeles, and Atlanta.

"I think we've called a truce in the trade show wars," Conley says.

More troubling these days is the frequency of shows competing for attendance. Buyers for furniture retailers potentially could go to a

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People from around the globe flock to High Point for the market.

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*Trends is a publication of the Guilford Merchants Association.*



### Talking football

Brian Formica, sports anchor for WXII (right) listens as Archie Manning talks about football and his football family at the GMA's 111th Annual Dinner on February 23. More photos, page 5.



## GMA Board of Directors / 2017



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Check the website often to make sure you're always up to date with GMA.



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The Guilford Merchants Association is a nonprofit organization founded in 1906. The Association is a business membership organization focused on supporting member companies with educational programming, lead generation activities, marketing opportunities, and overall enrichment while serving as a catalyst for community growth and prosperity.



### Welcoming new members

Businesses that join GMA are encouraged to send employees to an orientation session to learn about the organization's services and free member benefits. They also get to meet GMA leadership and staff. Pictured at the February orientation are (from left to right), Mark Prince, GMA president & CEO; Jan Badger, Fifth Letter; Amber Owens, Tarheel Basement Systems; Randy Stenson, Merrill Lynch; Jackie Hoffman, Tarheel Basement Systems; Susan Parker, N.C. Zoo Society; Max Sheikh, 1st Aide Restoration; Jessica Byrd, The Resource; KJ Morgan, Grandover Resort; Kenny Roberts, Fresh.Local.Good food group; Kelly Tilyard, Heat Transfer & Sales; Doug Watkins, 1st Aide Restoration; Angela Shoffner, SEO Rocket; Christina York, Grandover Resort; Melinda Thomas, Print Plus, Inc.; Des Laffan, Carolina Custom Signs & Graphics; Shirley Day, Let's Get Moving Services; Tom Martin, Service Telephone & Equipment; Avil Scurlock, Radisson High Point; Elliott Strunk, Fifth Letter; Peggy Blackwell, Heat Transfer & Sales; Kei Kato, Fifth Letter.

### Blaire McLanahan chairs young professionals group

Blair McLanahan, GMA's group for young professionals, recently selected officers and committee chairs.

Chair: Blaire McLanahan, Law Offices of Cheryl David.

Vice-Chair: Jose Sandoval, American National Bank.

Meet-Up Co-Chairs: JC Arroyo, Robinson Construction, & Nikki Taylor, Cowtown Branding.

Social Activity Chair: Josh Jackson, Leeper Kean & Rumley

Lunch & Learn Chair: Da-

vis Arend, WXLV

Outreach Chair: Patricia Scherger, Fairfield Inn & Suites

Other committee members are Gillian Dobbins, Embassy Suites Hotel; Hayley Curry, WXLV.





Greg Jones, YMCA of Greensboro president & CEO, at the Bryan Family Y pool.

## There's something for everyone at the YMCA of Greensboro

If the YMCA of Greensboro were a club, it would be Guilford County's largest and least exclusive. Everybody is welcome at the Y, a GMA member since 1995.

Membership currently stands at about 40,000, says Greg Jones, president and CEO of the YMCA of Greensboro since 2004. "We recently had a little uptick," he says.

"The beauty of the Y is that we serve people from all backgrounds," Jones says. "The challenge of the Y is the same thing."

Meeting the challenge means that the Y must offer facilities where people in good health can work out and maintain personal fitness. That's one of the Y's traditional roles.

Yet the Y also strives to serve individuals who are concerned about preventing illnesses, such as diabetes, and others who are cancer survivors.

Meeting the challenge means offering programs for people with autism and multiple sclerosis.

It means providing a variety of summer camp opportunities, including special programs for the children of veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome.

"Our camps are booming," Jones says. "We run some really cool special camps."

The Y's largest facilities are the Bryan Family YMCA and Hayes-Taylor Memorial YMCA. But it also operates a number of other facilities, from Stoney Creek to Jamestown, from Camp Weaver east of I-85 & 40 to the Spears Family YMCA in northwest Greensboro.

The Y also operates the Eden Family YMCA, the Reidsville Community YMCA, and the Western Rockingham YMCA in Mayodan.

New reciprocity agreements mean that membership in the local Y will grant access to out-of-town YMCAs when members travel.

The YMCA board of directors, which includes GMA Chair Rhonda Joyce, strongly believes that everyone should have access to Y programs, regardless of financial status.

The Y raises \$700,000 annually to provide financial assistance to economically disadvantaged persons, Jones says. This allows many to take advantage of after-school care programs or attend summer camp. Fees are adjusted on a sliding scale based on ability to pay.

The Y's financial assistance programs have touched more than 3,000 families, he says.

"We want to be affordable to all who want to participate," Jones says.

**LOYAL  
MEMBER**



- Name:** Josh Jackson
- Age:** 33
- Hometown:** Bradenton, Florida
- Residence:** Greensboro
- Education:** High Point University, B.A.  
UNCG, M.A., Accounting
- Business:** Leeper, Kean & Rumley, LLP
- Position:** Supervisor
- Duties:** I plan, manage, and prepare various levels of audit and accounting jobs. I also do tax prep. I enjoy taking smaller businesses and making their numbers correct. What I really enjoy is the relationships, the personal aspect of things.
- On GMA:** I've gotten to know the majority of the people there, and they really seem to enjoy what they do. When you do things that give back to the community, fun stuff, it makes things a little easier. The other things they do really well are the training sessions; they're top-notch.
- The Risers program gives the young professionals our own little niche. I'm the social chair. The networking is there, for sure. Risers gives young professionals, with the experience levels that we have, a smoother alleyway, so the networking is at multiple levels.
- Goals:** Helping grow the firm, and helping grow with the firm, individually. And having fun while doing all those things.
- Personal:** I like to go hunting, fishing, and watch a lot of football. Go Tampa Bay Buccaneers! My wife, Sondra, and I have been married for four years.



Josh Jackson, a supervisor at the accounting firm of Leeper, Kean & Rumley, LLP, is social chairman for RISERS, GMA's group for young professionals.



## Helping at GMA events keeps staffing recruiter in touch

**P**auline Indalecio's position as a recruiter for Manpower, a staffing company, regularly sends her from her Burlington office to destinations throughout the Piedmont Triad.

She attends job fairs, community events, meetings of civic groups, and other functions. She's searching for people with all sorts of talents and skills.

"My goal is to put people to work," she says.

She's an outgoing person who meets and interacts with new people easily. That's one reason she enjoys being a GMA volunteer.

She's most often a "flasher," the person who wears a necklace of flashing LEDs at networking events. The flasher facilitates the sticker game, passing out the colorful stickers that attendees match up with others as an ice-breaker and conversation starter.

GMA networking events, such as After Work Networks and Noontime Networks,

### VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

"are happy environments," Indalecio says. "It seems like everyone I meet wants to talk, and I'm a very good listener."

Indalecio says networking is crucial in her work as a recruiter for Manpower. "Everyone knows somebody who is seeking employment or looking for a career change," she says. "I want to be a resource."

When Indalecio meets with client companies, she often invites people to attend a GMA networking event with her. The energy and atmosphere set GMA events apart from other networking meetings, she says. It has to be experienced.

"I believe it is better to come out and see what GMA does," she says, "instead of me trying to tell them about it."

*Pauline Indalecio*  
Manpower  
*pauline.indalecio@manpower.com*  
336-639-9401



Pauline Indalecio recruits talent for Manpower.

## Guilford County Hotel Association depends on GMA for management expertise

**M**ike Reynolds, like most executives in the hospitality industry, doesn't have a lot of spare time.

Reynolds, general manager at Courtyard Greensboro also is president of the Guilford County Hotel Association (GCHA).

"This business is very demanding," he says. "It's a 24/7 operation."

That's why Reynolds and the approximately 70 member properties in the GCHA depend on GMA to provide logistical, financial, and management services for the hospitality organization.

GMA has served GCHA in this manner since the association was founded in 1995.

Michelle Bolick serves as GCHA executive director, and Holly Smart is assistant director.

In addition to maintaining the GCHA website and publishing its newsletter, GMA organizes the association's regular events, such as monthly luncheons, and stages its special events, such as the annual Fastest Bedmaking Contest for housekeepers.

Were it not for the services provided by GMA, Reynolds says, "we wouldn't have an association. You have to have someone behind the scenes that organizes our events and our luncheons and keeps track of our finances.

"They've been great," he says.

GCHA is "a business to business networking association," says Reynolds, who has been with Courtyard Greensboro for "going on 20 years."

Bolick says that GCHA and GMA "have a nice synergy. Both groups are interested in hospitality and welcoming visitors to our community."

The association enables the county's hotels to work on common issues and cooperate to serve



Mike Reynolds, general manager of Courtyard Greensboro, is president of the Guilford County Hotel Association.

Guilford County's substantial tourism industry.

Guilford consistently ranks third in the state in tourism expenditures. In 2015, the most recent year for which figures are available, tourism

**'We have to operate as a community to compete with other communities.'**

**– Mike Reynolds**

in Guilford generated nearly \$1.3 billion, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

GCHA provides a vehicle for the hospitality industry to work cooperatively with the Greensboro Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, the

High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the High Point Market Authority. "We have to operate as a community to compete with other communities," Reynolds says.

GCHA also provides a vehicle for the hospitality industry to take part in community service, such as work crews for Habitat for Humanity construction projects.

GMA organizes GCHA's annual blanket and linen drive, assembling gently used linens for Greensboro Urban Ministry, The Barnabas Network, the Salvation Army, and 16 Cents Ministry. GMA also stages Bowling for Beds, an association fund-raiser for The Barnabas Network, which collects and distributes furniture to persons in need.



# 111TH GMA ANNUAL DINNER



Archie Manning; Cathey Prince; Brian Formica, WXII; Mark Prince, GMA & FirstPoint.



Leah Askew, LifeSpan; Athan Lindsey and Phelps Sprinkle, Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro; Kate Sprinkle.



Peggy Pickeral, Kristen Rives, Rick Joyce, Mary Dunning, and Jose Sandoval, all with the American National Bank party.



Richele Wilkins and Monica Lee, Caring Hands Home Health.



John Kean, Elizabeth Bowman, Sondra and Josh Jackson, all with the Leeper Kean & Rumley party.



Victor Jones, Royal Limousine; Sherry Stevenson; Steve Swetoha, Greensboro Swarm.



Courtney Dabney, Children's Home Society; Maria Gonzalez, The Clubs of Greensboro; Bill Lodzinski, Fairway Outdoor.



Kelly Gaines and Kim Strable, Greensboro Sports Commission.



Tammy Gamble, Touch Point Staffing; Tracy Dolan; Kathy Entwistle, FirstPoint; Gene Dolan, Culinary Visions; Lisa Wooten, LDW Endeavor.



Rob Whitestone, Cottman Transmission; Stuart and Jan McDiarmid, Cruise Planners.



# Do you recognize these five ways to chase away customers?

BY ALAN ABRAMS

**N**o business intention-ally pushes customers away. No one goes to work with the goal of having fewer clients at the end of the day. But it happens.

Yet it doesn't have to happen. In many cases, customer loss can be prevented by staying sharp and recognizing the conditions that can lead to customer dissatisfaction and their ultimate disappearance.

Situations that can lead to customer loss include:

**Being clueless.** Have you offered a customer something they just bought from you? Each week I get an offer from a company trying to sell me something that

I already buy from them. What does that say about my value to them?

**Being inconsistent.** Do you have a favorite fast-food stop? Is it because of the high quality? The ambiance? Or is it because you know what you'll get every time? If you can't be consistent, your customers don't know what to expect, and they'll find someone else to fill your slot.

**Being poorly priced.** Notice I didn't say "too highly priced." Price and value should be consistent, but they are not the same thing. If your price is too far off the value you provide – in either direction – you're hurting your business.

## BUSINESS SUCCESS

**Being slow.** The immediacy of the Internet has conditioned us to expect instant gratification. If it takes you more than a day to respond to a customer, you're setting the table for someone else.

**Being indifferent.** You have invested good money to acquire a customer. If you don't find ways to let your best clients know they're your best clients, they will slip away. The key to keeping clients is making them feel special.

Why does this matter? Losing customers is actually

a really bad thing. It costs much more to replace a customer than to retain one.

Furthermore, irate ex-customers are much more likely to talk about your business than are happy current customers.

If you don't know how many customers you're losing or, more importantly, why, then you need to start capturing this data immediately.

What are the best ways to track customer data?

Know your customers. If you don't have this data to begin with, you can't identify where you need to improve.

Monitor your sales cycle. How often do people buy

from you? If that begins to lengthen you've got a retention problem on the horizon.

Do exit interviews. Customers leave; it's just a fact. But the more you know about why, the more focused and effective your retention strategies can be. Exit interviews also offer a potential reward: The act of reaching out and engaging an inactive customer may even bring them back.

For more information on implementing effective customer retention strategies, contact ActionCOACH Alan Abrams, AlanAbrams@ActionCOACH.com or 336-288-8858.



Spare Time,  
Greensboro

January 17, 2017



Tammy Marshall, Onin Staffing; Nanyamka Farrelly, John Maxwell Certified Trainer, Coach & Speaker.



Christopher Garrison, Andre Conway, and Don Paulson, all with Alarm Service Co. of America.



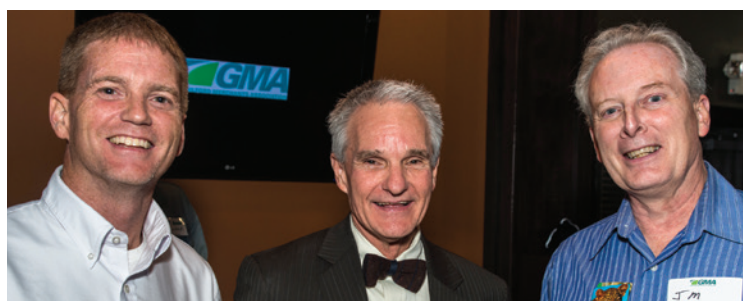
Melanie Troutman, Hamilton Group Funding; Kristi Johnsen, LBA Haynes Strand.



Maureen Peterson, Berkshire Hathaway Home-Services; Zoe Pye, The Carillon.



Elliot Strunk, Fifth Letter; Christie Soper, Suncierge; Keith Warfel, Versa Technologies.



David Brown, Detail Experts of Greensboro; Chuck Windham, Corporate Cleaning Group; J.M. Spoon, Terminix Commercial.



Pamaila Burgess, Raymond James; Mel Schlesinger, Virtual MD 24/7; Judy Brumley, PIP Printing.



After Work Network events are a free member benefit, open to all employees of member companies. The next After Work Network is May 9; check mygma.org for the location.



## April 20 Workplace Workshop



**Laurie Guest**  
on  
Customer Service



### 'A Show Business Guide to Red Carpet Customer Service'

with  
**Laurie Guest**

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Carol Wooten of Manpower (center), won the \$50 door prize.



Speaker Kristen Brown.



Scenes from February's  
Workplace Workshop



Bruce Stewart and Steve Thomas, Wood Forest National Bank.



Mark Jeacoma and Jason Grayer, Verizon; Ken Kinka, Starmount Forest Country Club.



**Courtyard Greensboro**  
February 3, 2016



Avil Scurlock, Radisson Hotel High Point; Nicole Scullion, U.S. Health Advisors.

## High Point Market Continued from page 1

show every month, he says.

“We fight all the time in terms of getting buyers of critical mass to come to this market,” Conley says. “Those challenges, by the way, are global.”

China has “a huge market” in Shanghai in September, housed in “a brand new facility that’s absolutely gorgeous,” he says.

Conley has visited that facility, which will become more important as China’s growing middle class ex-

ercises its buying power.

By 2020, he says, China’s middle class will exceed the population of the United States.

“Marketers and buyers have to consider that,” he says “It’s a global marketplace, and there’s a ton of shows out there. At some point, something’s got to give.”

Conley aims to ensure that High Point retains its premiere position by “delivering the best experience for the buyer that we possibly can.”



Erica Parker, PNC Bank; Barbara Smith, Wingate by Wyndham; Alison Huber, Sprint.



Jackie Wills and Jody Clayton, Heritage Greens.

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“ As we celebrate our 70th anniversary in 2017, we want to thank our valued clients and others in the Guilford area for helping make that possible through the years. We look forward to continuing to provide our clients with services of the utmost quality, as well as continuing to serve in our Guilford community. ”

– Wade Pack, Managing Partner

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