

# BETWEEN EVENTS

## MESSAGE FROM GREG

After a busy summer, the staff of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center is prepared for our prime meetings and tradeshow season in October and November. Between now and the end of the year, we expect to see nearly a quarter-million attendees walk through our doors. Ensuring that our customers receive the outstanding service they expect remains our top priority.

Inside this issue of Between Events, you will see that we've made excellent progress on our retrofit project, which will add 40,000 square feet in flexible meeting space to the Center, including two new glass-walled meeting rooms overlooking the Grand Lobby — exceptional space for executive meetings and presentations. You will also



read about another customer enhancement ready this fall: our new Web site, which combines dramatically improved navigation with 3-D renderings of each meeting room and exhibit space. If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to visit the new [dconvention.com](http://dconvention.com) and then connect with us through Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

We continue to work toward the development of a new 1,167-room headquarters hotel, which will be built next to the Convention Center. The Marriott-flagged hotel, which will be one of only three Marriott Marquis hotels in the country (the others are in New York and Atlanta), will be one of the largest hotels in the region and include amenities such as street-level retail, meeting and ballroom space and an under-

ground parking garage. Located within a block of City Center DC, a \$1 billion retail and entertainment project, the hotel will allow visitors to stay within a short walk to first-class shopping and dining. We will keep you abreast of a ground-breaking date.

Finally, we have spent the summer preparing for the Oct. 1 merger of the Washington Convention Center Authority, which owns and operates the Center, with the DC Sports and Entertainment Commission. The new Washington Convention and Sports Authority, which I will head as President and CEO, also owns Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium and Nationals Park, and is responsible for the non-military use of the DC Armory. We have a separate Sports and Entertainment Division dedicated to these additional venues, while our core Convention Center operations team remains unchanged, save for Deputy General Manager Samuel Thomas, who is now the Convention Center's Senior Vice President and General Manager.

The Washington Convention and Sports Authority will focus on creating greater economic and community benefits for the District of Columbia through a mix of hospitality, athletics, entertainment and cultural programming. Within this new structure, the Convention Center will continue to lead the way as one of the city's premier catalysts for economic activity, and our primary focus will remain on running a world-class convention and meetings facility. We have started exploring new opportunities for our customers that could result from the merger, and will keep you updated on our progress.

We owe our success as a service organization to each of you. Thank you for allowing us to serve you, your leadership, stakeholders, exhibitors and attendees.

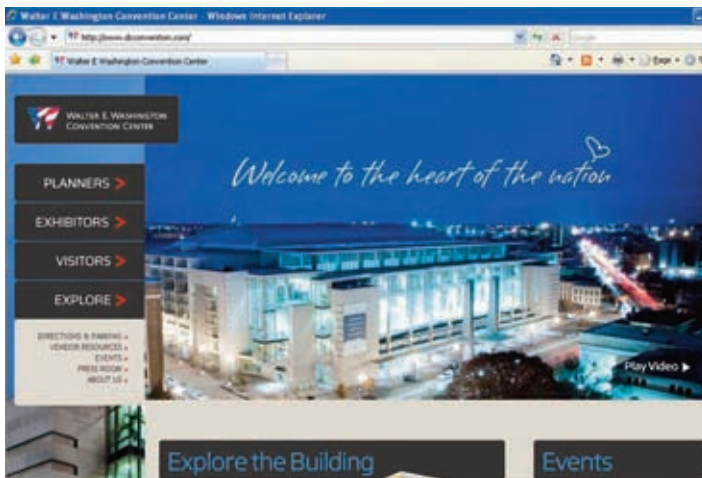
Greg O'Dell  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*



# BETWEENEVENTS

## eMAKEOVER

The Walter E. Washington Convention Center has a new look — online! The Center is pleased to announce the launch of its new and dramatically enhanced Web site that can be accessed at [www.dconvention.com](http://www.dconvention.com). The new site is easy to navigate and provides users with a unique virtual gateway to the Convention Center and highlights the Center's location in the heart of the city.



“We’re excited to launch our new site — an interactive look into the beauty, flexibility and functionality of the Center as a world-class events facility,” said Gregory A. O’Dell, President and CEO of the Washington Convention and Sports Authority. “This Web site was built with the needs of our customers, exhibitors and their attendees in mind. We think the site will create a new standard for online tools that convention centers can provide for their clients.”

Some of the main features of the new site include the following:

- Interactive floor plans with 3-D renderings of the exterior of the building, and 3-D diagrams of each meeting room, exhibit hall and ballroom

This Web site was built with the needs of our customers, exhibitors and their attendees in mind. We think the site will create a new standard for online tools that convention centers can provide for their clients.

- A custom designed, up-to-date events calendar and event planning guide for clients
- Promotional video featuring both the Center and the destination, as well as an image gallery
- Improved navigation: Web pages work in a unified and consistent way, making it easier for users to find what they are looking for within two clicks and know where they are within the Web site



- Improved look and feel: enhanced graphics and the new page layouts provide visitors with a superior user experience
- Translation into French and Spanish for international users, with the ability to add new languages in the future.

# BETWEENEVENTS

## OPEN FOR EVEN MORE BUSINESS — RETROFIT PROJECT

This summer, we hosted an information session about our retrofit project for customers. John Collins, Vice President, Facility Operations and Cathy Boles, Deputy Director, Development, advised and introduced the framework of this project and took questions from the participants who attended in person and through our webinar. Even in these economically



challenging times, we are expanding, since, unlike in other cities, there is a high demand for meeting and exhibit space. Doing it in the most economically efficient way, we are undergoing a retrofit to create an additional 40,000 square feet of flexible prime meeting space in several areas including the East and West Registration areas near the Grand Lobby and the upper levels overlooking 7th and 9th streets. Columbia | Forrester Joint Venture, a Certified Business Enterprise that includes Washington-based Columbia Enterprises and Forrester Construction Co. of Rockville, MD, has been awarded the \$14 million renovation project.

This retrofit project comprises new, custom-made carpeting, electrical and sound systems, and will feature installation of the state-of-the-art Skyfold Partition Wall system. Another important highlight of this retrofit is the relocation and conversion of staff offices into meeting space, as co-workers have had to shift offices while construction is underway in the East Mezzanine.

The combined design/build phase of the project will be performed in stages and during non-event hours to minimize impact on our operations and make it seem like business as usual.

In the end, our makeover will enhance our product offering, creating space that can be used for meetings, exhibits and banquets, just a few steps from the Grand Lobby. Construction is expected to be completed by February 2010.

## WELCOME MASTER CHEF CHIN

The Convention Center and Centerplate recently held a meet-n-greet and welcome reception for Master Chef Philippe Chin. City officials, industry leaders, WCSA and Centerplate/NBSE leadership, along with the Board of Directors, were in attendance.

Graduating in the top ten of his class at the elite L'École Hôtelière de Paris, Chef Chin is the youngest chef on record to be accepted and included in the prestigious *Maîtres Cuisiniers de France*, one of an exclusive class



# BETWEENEVENTS

of only 16 in the United States. Also a nominee of the James Beard Foundation's Best Chef in the Mid Atlantic Region, he brings over 30 years of fine dining experience to the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

Influenced by his Chinese roots and his childhood in Paris, Chin has held a number of highly regarded positions, serving as chef and owner of Chanterelles in Philadelphia and as executive chef at The Partridge Inn in Augusta, GA. "We're excited to have a master chef of such high caliber with credentials unseen in a convention center," stated our President and CEO, Greg O'Dell.

## SALES CORNER

Maybe you have heard it on the radio, participated in one of our monthly breakfasts or received it in the mailbox. No matter where or how the message is out — the Walter E. Washington Convention Center does small events in a big way. In the last issue of "Between Events" we informed you of our internal retrofit program and our all-inclusive Distinctive Meetings Package (DMP). We have started to see those two initiatives work for our clients. To ensure everyone can benefit, we have invested in a full-fledged marketing campaign, including radio spots, online advertising, print advertising

and direct mail. We want everyone to know that the Walter E. Washington Convention Center is here for your large or small event. To learn more or take part in one of our upcoming Open House Distinctive Meeting Breakfasts, contact us at 202.249.3311. You can stay also updated on the latest and greatest news at the Center on Facebook. [Log in](#) today to become our fan!



## ALERT TO DIVERT PROGRAM IMPROVES RECYCLING EFFORTS

We're setting an example on how to successfully implement a comprehensive recycling program on a large scale with our "Alert to Divert" initiative. In order to optimize waste separation, increase recycling rates, and save our clients money, we've teamed up with our housekeeping service partner, ARAMARK, to help clients focus on educational outreach prior to their event.

The Alert to Divert program has been in place for three months and several clients have already seen significant savings. Recycling hauls are free at the Center, but trash hauls are not. The "Know the Code" recycle compliance program uses a color-coded approach to separate at the source cardboard, mixed paper, glass, and aluminum and plastic from waste. These recycling stations can be found in all exhibitor halls and meeting rooms.



To ensure maximum recycling participation, our event managers introduce clients to "Know the Code" as a standard operating procedure.

The Convention Center has been at the forefront of implementing environmentally-friendly practices since its opening. The facility incorporates innovative energy practices throughout the building, from high efficiency lighting and sensor systems to its own stormwater management system. In addition to its extensive recycling program, green products are used by the Center's catering and housekeeping service partners; products and services are procured from local businesses to reduce delivery distances and emissions; and, because the facility is located downtown, mass transit, including the Metro and DC Circulator bus service, are easily accessible by visitors and staff alike. For more information, please visit [www.dcconvention.com](http://www.dcconvention.com).

# BETWEENEVENTS

## WINDOWS INTO DC

### First-of-its-Kind Exhibit Energizes Storefronts

On September 29, 2009 Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, Councilmember Jack Evans (Ward 2), Washington Convention Center Authority CEO and General Manager Gregory A. O'Dell and Executive Director of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Gloria Nauden celebrated the opening of a creative public art installation in the windows of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Fourteen local artists including



the New Community for Children created art works with the theme "Windows Into DC" for the first-of-its-kind exhibit that energizes select storefronts and windows at the Convention Center in downtown DC. The windows showcase creativity and beauty for visitors and residents strolling through the neighborhood.

"Windows Into DC at the Convention Center is a fun and creative answer to the question of how to add vibrancy to store windows," says Fenty. "In downtown DC, we are committed to bringing new visitors and improved economic revitalization. It's simple — people love to see art."

Sponsored by the Washington Convention Center Authority and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, "Windows Into DC" brings diverse artists, including a group of students from Shaw's New Community for Children, to paint windows and install artworks with creative expression for and about the city. Local DC and Shaw community artists



filled a dozen spaces around the outside of the Convention Center with scenes depicting their visions of DC.

"The Convention Center has a long history of supporting DC arts," says O'Dell. "Many visitors come inside to view our \$4 million permanent art collection, so it was a natural conclusion to bring the arts and its viewers to experience this innovative initiative."

The Convention Center is the first DC institution to fill its windows with a temporary art installation, and the exhibit planners hope others buildings and property owners will follow

---

### The Convention Center has a long history of supporting DC arts.

---

their lead. "Pop-up" galleries and temporary art spaces are already popular in London and New York City.

Convention Center visitors can pick up a walking tour guide for "Windows Into DC" at the information desk located in the Grand Lobby. The installation will be open through March 2010.