

Smart Meetings Announces Monterey Bay's Own, Janine Chicourrat and Tammy Blount, as Winners of 2018 Smart Women in Meetings Awards



Monterey, CA – March 22, 2018 – Smart Meetings, published by Northstar Media – the leading media company and most trusted resource for meeting professionals – announced their 2018 Smart Women in Meetings Awards Winners. The prestigious awards platform honors talented, dedicated women who are making an impact on the meetings industry, elevating and inspiring female meeting ambassadors worldwide. Designed to honor and celebrate all women in the meetings industry, The Smart Women in Meetings Awards recognizes the industry's top female meeting professionals in five prestigious categories including Industry Leaders, Innovators, Entrepreneurs, Doers, and Rising Stars.

Amongst the one-hundred women recognized for this award are Monterey's own, Janine Chicourrat and Tammy Blount. Both of these women are powerful and inspiring trailblazers in the meetings and hospitality industry, paving the way for female leaders across the globe.

Janine Chicourrat's career has encompassed successful tenures at some of California's most renowned hospitality companies, including Pebble Beach Resorts and the Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant Group. She now brings nearly 20+ years of operations and management leadership to her position as general manager of the Portola Hotel & Spa, where she spearheaded their U.S. Green Building Council LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification and was awarded the Monterey County Hospitality Association's 2015 Hospitality Professional of the year.

"I am humbled and proud to be presented with such a prestigious award. I would not be where I am today in this industry if it weren't for the incredible employees at our hotel," said Chicourrat. "We have been under construction for the past nine years, including a major remodel of the Monterey Conference Center next door. Through all the construction, our employees never complained. Staff truly stepped up, and I am so appreciative of every one of them."

Tammy Blount is a tourism professional with a career of nearly 30 years, starting in the hotel industry in her home city of Vancouver, Canada to her current role as the President and CEO of the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau in California.

Tammy's career has included participation in a variety of state, regional and national tourism initiatives leading to her current place as Chair of Destinations International, the international trade association for destination marketing organizations. Tammy is only the fifth woman to Chair this association in more than 100 years. She serves on Visit California's CEO Destinations Council, Marketing Committee and International Committee. Tammy was recognized as 2015 CEO of the Year, one of the 25 Most Influential People in the Meetings Industry, twice as one of the top 25 Most Influential Women in the industry, Leadership Supplier of the Year in the Meetings Industry, and was awarded this year's CSUMB Community Leader of the Year.

"I am so honored and humbled to be recognized alongside many great women in our industry," said Blount. "What we do is important – we build communities, create lifelong memories of significant experiences, fuel economies and are the conduit for global safe passage and peaceful coexistence. I am blessed with a team who work with me every day to lead by example, and to live with courage and a sense of adventure."

Smart Women in Meetings Awards winners is featured in the March 2018 edition of *Smart Meetings* print and digital magazines.

About Portola Hotel & Spa

The AAA Four Diamond, Portola Hotel & Spa in Monterey, CA was one of the first U.S. Green Building Council LEED® Certified hotel on California's Central Coast. The full-service hotel offers guests a rich, historical ambiance, with residential style and a dedicated staff to ensure an unparalleled guest experience. The Portola Hotel features 379 well-appointed guest rooms, ranging from 400 to 1,000 square feet. Portola boasts an expert event planning staff and over 60,000 square feet of meeting space with the adjacent Monterey Conference Center. Home to the Monterey Peninsula's original craft brewery, Peter B's Brewpub, The Club Room and Monterey's newest dining hot spot, Jacks Monterey. The Portola boasts an award-winning 6,000-square-foot day spa. Spa on the Plaza offers beautifully appointed treatment rooms and an extensive spa menu of signature treatments. Overnight guests also have access to the hotel's spa and fitness facilities, complete with steam room, sauna, outdoor pool and Jacuzzi.



For more information, please visit <https://www.portolahotel.com/>

About the Monterey County Convention & Visitor Bureau

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501c6 organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was more than \$2.8 billion in 2016, representing a 3.6 percent increase from 2015. Visitors also generated \$115 million in local tax receipts, a 5.8 percent increase and supported more than 25,000 jobs.

For more information, please visit <https://www.seemonterey.com/>



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