

Chacara Harvin, CMP, TMP, Travel Trade Marketing Manager, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

We could have been lawyers. We could have been dentists. We could have been accountants. But no, we decided to pursue careers in tourism. In our Dream Jobs series, we interview some of the best and brightest within the tourism industry about how they broke in and get their advice to the next generation of tourism leaders.

Today, we feature Chacara Harvin, CMP, TMP, the Travel Trade Marketing Manager at Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority.

How long have you been at your job?

I've been in my new role with Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority for one year. My hospitality experience spans over 14 years including casino/restaurants, hotels, catering, and most recently in the DMO/CVB industry for five years.

What's your favorite thing about your job?

Growing up in a military family, I had the opportunity to see the world and quickly developed a deep appreciation for traveling and learning about various international cultures. I decided that if I was going to truly love what I do every single day (for work), I would have to combine the two in some way. In this position, I have the privilege to work with tour operators from all over the world by helping them plan the perfect itinerary that includes Charlotte and surrounding areas. In turn, Charlotte, NC becomes a part of vacation packages that are sold to their clients.

First job?

Let me preface this by saying, while in high school I was torn between becoming a traveling dentist and owning a travel agency. With that said, I took both travel and tourism courses along with Allied Health. My first job (16 years old) was at a plastic surgery office where I learned to take before and after pictures (mostly breast augmentations) and filed paperwork. My parents and I laugh about it to this day, because my schedule was Monday-Thursday 3:30-5:00 pm at \$5.15 per hour. The best part was, this was before I had a driver's license, so in my parent's opinion I was wasting time and gas.

Worst job?

I've been pretty fortunate in my work history, but if I had to think of a challenging time, it would be when I worked for an organic grocery store in Miami where I would encounter disgruntled customers on a daily basis. However, I worked for the same company in Charleston and had a completely different experience. I've honestly never had a job I did not like. I've learned something valuable from every job and met some interesting personalities along the way. Each and every experience has taught me valuable lessons and for that I am forever grateful.

What's your advice to young people looking to break into tourism?

Network at industry events and also use LinkedIn to make meaningful connections so you too can help others by making genuine introductions. When I receive random requests via LinkedIn, I typically send a message asking how we can be a resource for each other. If someone is seriously looking to connect, they will respond.

Want a career in tourism? Check out the Southeast Tourism Society jobs board filled with great opportunities located all over the Southeast: [View Travel and Tourism Job Opportunities Here](#)