



## **TAMPA BAY & COMPANY UNVEILS GUEST SERVICES TRAINING PROGRAM**

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**TAMPA, FL** – As the Tampa Bay area gears up to host one of the most significant events in its history, Tampa Bay & Company is preparing frontline tourism personnel for the more than 50,000 visitors that will arrive for the Republican National Convention (RNC).

Tampa Bay & Company conducted a nationwide search for the best guest services training program available, and nationally-recognized speaker and author Ruby Newell-Legner shined above the rest. Newell-Legner will work to implement a local training program, which will roll out in the coming weeks in preparation of the 2012 RNC.

The training program is an effort to enhance visitors' experiences through outreach, education and working with industry personnel who have the most frequent and personal contact with the tens of millions of visitors to Tampa Bay each year. The program will focus on both enhancing the visitor experience, as well as training frontline personnel about what the destination has to offer.

“If we can work to create a memorable and unique visitor experience, then that leads to creating a positive image and brand for the destination,” said President/CEO of Tampa Bay & Company Kelly Miller. “And if we can create a positive image and brand for the destination, then that leads to increased economic impact for Tampa Bay.”

In partnership with the Hillsborough County Public Transportation Commission, the guest services training program will kick-off by working with drivers of vehicles for-hire, including taxicabs, limousines and vans.

Although the program is kicking off in preparation for the RNC, throughout the next year many other frontline tourism personnel will complete the guest services training program.

“This is an important step for our destination and making sure that guests to Tampa Bay have the best experience possible,” Miller added. “Cab drivers and other transportation professionals will often times have the first interaction with these visitors, and you only have one chance to make a good first impression.”

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Newell-Legner has worked with some of the most respected organizations around the globe. Her clients include the only 7-Star hotel in the world, amusement parks and leisure facilities of all kinds. Additionally, she has worked with 23 professional sports teams in more than 60 venues, including staff training for Super Bowl XLI, the 2008 U.S. Open and the 2010 Winter Olympics. Her most recent work with the Tampa Bay Lightning has enhanced significantly the guest experience at the Tampa Bay Times Forum.

For a video message from President/CEO of Tampa Bay & Company Kelly Miller about the guest services training program, go to [YouTube.com/VisitTampaBay](https://www.youtube.com/VisitTampaBay).

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Tampa Bay & Company is an independent, non-profit membership organization created to attract and serve visitors to Tampa Bay in an effort to create "Economic Development Through Tourism." Tampa Bay & Company is funded, in part, by the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners/Tourist Development Council.

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