



*For More Information, Contact:*

Adena Harper, Search Committee Chair  
Cartersville-Bartow County Tourism Council  
adenaharper@att.net  
770.877.9796  
August 23, 2022

## **Cartersville-Bartow County Tourism Council Names Steven Schumacher as Sole Finalist for Executive Director Position**



*Steven Schumacher*

The board of directors of the Cartersville-Bartow County Tourism Council has named Steven Schumacher, an experienced destination marketing professional, as the finalist for the organization's executive director position. The announcement was made this week by Adena Harper, chair of the council's search committee and Karl Lutjens, chair of the board.

Schumacher will be replacing the organization's long-time leader, Ellen Archer, who is retiring in September.

"The board is excited to have Steven join the council's team of professionals," according to Harper. "I believe he brings with him the experience and knowledge to move the promotion of tourism to a new level in Bartow County. Tourism is back across the country and Steven is going to play a key role in keeping our community 'top of mind' for groups and families."

Schumacher currently serves as senior sales manager for Atlanta Marriott Perimeter Center in Dunwoody, Georgia. From 2016 through 2021, he held the director of sales position with Discover Dunwoody, the destination marketing organization for the city. Also, Schumacher was interim executive director of the organization from March 2020 until August 2021.

"I am extremely excited about the opportunity to become a part of this team," said Schumacher. "The foundation that has been established over the years by Ellen Archer is strong and I look forward to building upon those relationships with the venue partners and community. Cartersville and Bartow County are recognized throughout the southeast for its tourism destinations whether it be natural beauty, five-star accommodations, or sports complexes."

Schumacher is married to MaryKate, a Senior Business Analyst for Whereoware, and they have two children. Quinn is four and Rowan is one.

“The search committee identified several key traits and experiences we were looking for in a new leader,” according to Lutjens. “We set our sights on someone who was innovative and had experience as a trailblazer in the tourism industry. Steven has experience in the field as well as the business acumen and communications skills that will make a difference. I think he is a great fit for the position.”

Schumacher attended Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut where he studied Tourism and Hospitality. He is an active member of Meeting Professionals International – Georgia Chapter (MPI) and currently serves on the executive board as vice president of education. He has received several recognitions from MPI, including the chapter’s Phoenix Awards for “Rising Star of the Year” and “Committee of the Year – Networking Events”. Schumacher is also on the “Supplier Council” for the Georgia Society of Association Executives and has been active in the Georgia Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus.

The executive search process was broken into three phases. The first stage centered on determining the skill sets and focus points for the position. Business representatives, government leaders and other stakeholders were interviewed in order to build an updated position description and a candidate profile for the search committee. The second phase was the casting of the net for candidates and specifically identifying professionals who fit the criteria established. The final segment was to interview candidates best suited for the role and complete a vetting process.

Schumacher will be voted upon by the council after a required 14-day waiting period as specified in Georgia law for public agencies. His first day in the position is scheduled for September 12.

In addition to Harper and Lutjens, other search committee members included David Friederich, Barnsley Resort; Jennifer Wiggins Matthews, community leader; Tom Shinall, Savoy Automobile Museum; and Tommy Strickland, Raintree Properties.

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The Chason Group, an executive search firm specializing in chambers of commerce, economic development entities, destination marketing organizations, foundations, and other nonprofits, assisted the Cartersville-Bartow County Tourism Council with the process.