

Short Bio: Michael T. Owens

Michael began his lifelong career in the hospitality industry while growing up in Atlanta and he made his home in Savannah over 15 years ago. For a decade, Michael worked for HLC Hotels, a local Savannah Hospitality company. At HLC, Michael was charged with overseeing the operations of multiple luxury hotels while also managing acquisitions and take-overs for the company's expanding portfolio. In 2012 he was hired as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Tourism Leadership Council. He and his distinguished board of directors lead the largest trade organization representing the tourism community in the Coastal Empire through advocacy and government affairs. In 2013, he founded the Savannah Food & Wine Festival and he serves as the festival's CEO. The festival is now one of the largest in the region and has raised more than \$300,000 for local non-profits and charities.

Michael was appointed by Mayor and Council to serve on the Tourism Advisory Committee. He serves on the executive committee of The Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce, Savannah-Chatham CrimeStoppers, and is Vice-Chairman of EmployAbility. He is chairman of the Savannah Technical College Programs Advisory Committee. He is Chairman of the Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Foundation and serves as the State Chairman of the Georgia Travel Association.

He is an active supporter and volunteer for, The 200 Club of the Coastal Empire, The Savannah Harbor Foundation and the Coastal Hospitality Education Foundation.

He married well above his station and has two young children: Jackson who is three and Adeline who is two. And while his personal Scotch collection is impressive, he does not believe he has enough to support having third child.