

Excellence In Sales & Marketing Panelists

June 17, 2021

Theresa Toussaint, Sales Manager, Embassy Suites by Hilton Baton Rouge

Theresa Toussaint is a Sales Manager for Embassy Suites by Hilton Baton Rouge, which is managed by the largest hospitality management company in the nation, Aimbridge Hospitality and owned by Goldman Sachs, one of America's leading global investments firms. Theresa has been with Embassy Suites for over 4 years but has been in sales for more than 25 years.

Theresa covers two market segmentations, Associations and SMERFE (Social, Military, Educational, Religious, Fraternal, Ethnic). Theresa has consistently met or exceeded annual sales goals and this year, out of 838 hotels, Theresa was awarded Aimbridge Hospitality 2017 Group Sales Manager of the Year. Theresa nearly doubled her revenue goal and secured \$2.4 million in sales!

Theresa serves on the Board of Directors for the Baton Rouge Lodging Association and is dedicated to preservation, growth, and continued industry development. She also shares their vision to engage in and perpetuate giving back through various community service efforts. Although they are committed to assisting multiple organizations, this year their main goal is to contribute to Our Lady of the Lake Children's Hospital.

Outside of work, Theresa enjoys spending time with her husband Derrick, children, Charity, Faith, and Jordan, their grandchildren, family and friends. She loves traveling with her sisters Del and Carol, and her best friend Paula. Theresa's other passions include cooking, singing, and community service. She is also a licensed and ordained minister and serves in various capacities with her church, Oasis Christian Church, under the leadership of Bishop Charles E. Wallace.

Meredith Waguespack, Owner / CEO of Sweet Baton Rouge

Meredith Waguespack is the Owner, CEO of Sweet Baton Rouge, a local female-owned business that makes unique lifestyle t-shirts and goods that represent Louisiana.

Meredith has created a smart business concept that she manages to sustain and grow profitably while staying true to her goal to always be philanthropic.

She manages and oversees the day-to-day operations of Sweet Baton Rouge and its sister brands, Sweet Baton Rouge, Lagniappe Box, and co-owns a Local Pop Up.

The company is naturally interested in growing sales, but most importantly adding value to others and our community.

Among other donations, the company has raised and donated nearly \$82,000 for food banks as a part of the 2016 and 2017 flood relief efforts in Louisiana and Houston. In 2020, she started the Locals Supporting Locals campaign to assist local businesses during the pandemic by giving back 50% of the sales each month to a new recipient. Since May, Sweet Baton Rouge has donated nearly \$5,000 with a goal to hit \$10,000 by the end of the year.

To support local makers, she created a monthly subscription four years ago called Lagniappe Box packed with local products - from food to beauty products. The goal is to keep local dollars in Baton Rouge and surrounding parishes. Meredith is a mom of 3 who started her business selling t-shirts around the state out of her car! With a background in marketing, retail management, customer service, sales, and a love for all things Baton Rouge and Louisiana, she's proud to be celebrating 10 years of success!

From humble beginnings, Sweet Baton Rouge now has a robust online store and recently opened a flagship store in the Electric Depot in the heart of Mid-City Baton Rouge.

Rob Wise, Owner / CEO of ITinspired

Rob Wise is a self-proclaimed entrepreneur since his early days of washing cars, cutting grass, and recycling cans where he enjoyed doing hard work, leaving something better than he found it, and helping people. As an adult, he manages to find the same fulfillment in business by impacting and inspiring those around him at ITinspired where he is the CEO and co-owner.

Rob and his co-owners founded ITinspired to be the company that changes the perception of IT by shattering the stereotypes in the industry. In seven years, ITinspired has grown to a staff of twenty people and hit several milestones including ranking 2,584th on the Inc 5000 list in 2018 as one of the nation's fastest-growing companies, Inc.'s Best Places to Work in 2018 and 2019, back-to-back 2019 and 2020 Louisiana Growth Leader Awards, and LSU's Top 100 Tiger Led Businesses of 2019.

Rob serves on non-profit boards for the Junior League of Baton Rouge, Leadership Baton Rouge Alumni, Louisiana Resource Center for Educators, and the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge. He's been honored as a member of the LSU L-Club, Baton Rouge Business Report's 2018 Forty Under 40, 2017 Leadership Baton Rouge class, 2019 Leadership Louisiana class, and Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses graduate & alumni ambassador.

He enjoys working on his self-development and business leadership skills in LED CEO Roundtables, the American Academy of Entrepreneurs, and his live stream show with Dima Ghawi called "Chit Chat with Dima & Rob" every Wednesday night at 7 pm.

He is a graduate of LSU with a Bachelor's in ISDS and a former LSU Cheerleader and Mike the Tiger mascot where he met his wife Michelle, a former LSU Tiger Girl. Together they are happy parents of two beautiful children, Myra and William.