

ICSC GOVERNMENT RELATIONS CHAIR SPOTLIGHT



Tracy Bratton

Tracy Bratton serves as the Texas Government Relations Chair. He has been a member of ICSC since 2013.

How did you get involved with ICSC's government relations?

My first activity with ICSC was actually our Texas Day at the Capitol in 2013. At the time, I had just joined ICSC and knew no one—and even less about the issues! ICSC did a great job of preparing all the volunteers for our day at the Capitol. I went to the event honestly anxious—not knowing anyone, the issues or even how to find the room where we were meeting! However, I left the Capitol that afternoon feeling enthused, more knowledgeable than when I arrived and with new contacts.

In 2014, our Government Relations Chair for Texas lived in San Antonio. Since I was one of the ICSC members living in Austin and had attended the previous Capitol Day, ICSC asked if I could meet with a couple of legislators about some property tax issues. Totally unaware of what I was getting myself into, I read up on the material, attended meetings about property tax issues and met with the legislators. The next year, I was asked to co-chair government relations for Texas. The rest, as they say, is history! I became co-chair for Texas in 2015 and later I was asked to be chair for the Southern U.S. After 2020 and the restructuring of ICSC into Marketplaces, I have continued in a Government Relations role for the Red River Marketplace and Texas.

Which ICSC meeting is your favorite to attend?

My favorite ICSC event to attend is easily the Federal Fly-In. Just like my first State Capitol Day, I was nervous at my first Federal Fly-In. Once again, ICSC did an incredible job preparing all the volunteers on the issues and I was amazed at how easy it is to converse with congressional staff—as well as Representatives and Senators—about policy matters.

Like a Labrador, I am highly motivated by food and drink. ICSC treats all the volunteers in D.C. amazingly well—you will leave more knowledgeable than when you arrived, with new contacts (and friends!) and likely in need of a trip to the gym.

What is your favorite hidden gem in Texas?

I have lists of bars, restaurants and speakeasies across the country. Since I call Austin home, my Austin list is quite extensive. One of the most unique dining experiences in Austin is Apartment 115 (do the sampler menu with the wine paring). For a one-of-a-kind drinking experience, check out Eden Cocktail Room (make a reservation—and yes, you are going the correct way if you are wandering down a dark alley past dumpsters...look for the purple door). If you visit Eden, there are five speakeasies within a block—but if you cannot find them on your own, you'll have to invite me to help track them down.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US AT
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