



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

**VBC**  
VON BRAUN  
CENTER

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is that time of year where we reflect on the past year and look forward to the opportunities ahead of us. Last year we hosted right at 500 events with an estimated 800,000 attendees and generated approximately \$72M dollars in economic impact for the community. That's huge, and why do I say that? The VBC just ended the best financial year in our history and the good news is that we see and project continued growth.

As I think of this past year's events, **AUSA Global Force Symposium** is the first to come to my mind. It returned to Huntsville for its 3rd consecutive year. The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) supports all aspects of national security while advancing the interests of America's Army and the men and women who serve. We value the relationship we have with the local AUSA Redstone-Huntsville chapter. They have been doing business with us for over 15 years and we are proud to be a part of such a great organization.

We also welcomed back the **Space & Missile Defense (SMD) Symposium** in August 2016 for the 16th consecutive year. The Space & Missile Defense Symposium is the leading educational, professional development and networking event in the space and missile defense industry.

Another great event to mention from this past year is the **FLW Forest Wood Cup** bass fishing competition. That was an exciting experience, especially if you are a fisherman. We had hundreds of exhibits fill the Von Braun Center South Hall with anything and everything you needed for fishing. Then, of course, the weigh-in was held inside the Propst Arena where Dustin Lynch also performed for the attendees. That was impressive, and if you missed it then you really missed something thrilling. I sure hope we have the opportunity to host FLW again in the near future.

The **Family Fun Festival & Expo** continued to grow and exceed our expectations. We had over 9,900 attendees come out and support this 3rd annual event. The Family Fun Festival & Expo is truly a fun event filled with activities for children and adults. Some of the most memorable activities include the electric passenger train, the rock climbing wall, and face painting. We are planning for an even bigger event in 2017 and certainly hope to see you there making some great memories.

The 6th annual **Heads-n-Tails Crawfish Boil** was a big success this past year. Each and every year we have more and more people attend the event for the very first time. It's a wonderful time to relax and enjoy some zydeco music, great food and put on those dancing shoes. Let's throw this party again!!

This year we were part of the **first night time Christmas Parade** with Mix 96.9. The weather was perfect, just cold enough to feel like Christmas. Hundreds, if not thousands, of little kids brought their mom, dad and even grandparents out to see the magic of the parade. We certainly want to thank all of our sponsors and our media partner WRSA Radio for making this event such a success. I love it and it is such a blessing to see all the little kids smile while watching for Santa as beautiful floats and displays travel the streets of downtown Huntsville.

**What else does the future hold for the VBC?** We do our best to plan for the future and to think outside the box. It's still our top priority to solicit a convention – quality hotel connected to the Von Braun Center allowing us to bid on larger events. In addition to the hotel we need a larger ballroom and additional meeting rooms. We continue to work with city leaders to plan what the VBC may look like several years down the road.

**It's a great time to be part of Huntsville** and the VBC is proud of the part it plays in providing an outstanding quality of life to members of the community and throughout the Tennessee Valley. *We have a great relationship with our city leaders who do such a good job. We could not do what we do without their support.*

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to say **Thank You** to all of our clients, partners and staff for making all the events at the VBC a success. ***We hope to see you at the VBC in 2017!!***

Sincerely,



Steven G. Maples, CFE,  
Executive Director



## MANAGEMENT TEAM

*The VBC Management Team is committed to facilitating and promoting the vision of Huntsville.*

**Steve Maples, CFE**, has served as the Von Braun Center's Executive Director for the past ten years. As Executive Director, Maples oversees the entire operation of the Von Braun Center.

**Michael Vojticek, CPA**, has been a member of the senior management team of the Von Braun Center for 26 years.

*Left to right: STEVE MAPLES, CFE, Executive Director;  
MICHAEL VOJTICEK, CPA, Assistant Director*



## BOARD OF CONTROL



Wayne Bonner,  
Chairman



Betty Schonrock,  
Vice Chairman



Evans Quinlivan,  
Secretary



Linda Maynor



Randy Schrimsher



Dr. Bill Sullins



Eddie Turner

## THE ORGANIZATION

The Von Braun Center is governed by a seven-member Board of Control appointed by the Mayor of Huntsville and the City Council.

The Von Braun Center is an anchor within its community. Located in downtown Huntsville, the VBC offers a beautiful facility for local, regional, and national events. The VBC provides multiple venues for the presentation of cultural, educational, entertainment, sporting and social events. The VBC has a staff of proven professionals ready to contribute to the success of your event.

## THE HISTORY

The Von Braun Center was built thanks to the foresight of local leaders and a very real civic demand. The facility built in 1975 was welcomed by the community and the demand for use continued, leading to three additions within a ten year period driven largely by local and civic demand.

## THE MISSION STATEMENT

The Von Braun Center is a multipurpose facility with the primary objective of facilitating and promoting events and activities in addition to generating economic benefit and improving the quality of life for the Huntsville community and surrounding areas.

# THE WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT

## A Concert Line-up to Rival Any...

Alice Cooper  
Alton Brown  
Black Jacket Symphony - Journey's Escape  
Black Jacket Symphony -  
Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon  
Black Jacket Symphony -  
The Eagles "Hotel California"  
Brian Regan  
Corey Smith  
Delbert McClinton  
Don Williams  
Dopapod with the Nth Power  
Earth, Wind & Fire  
Elvis Tribute Artist Christmas Concert  
Fantasia  
Firefighters Association present The Spinners  
Firefighters Association presents Lonestar  
Get the Led Out - The American Led Zeppelin  
Godsmack & Sevendust  
Halestorm  
Harry Connick, Jr.  
Heads-n-Tails Crawfish Festival  
Home Free  
I Love the 90s  
In the Mood - A 1940's Musical Revue  
India Drama  
Jeanne Robertson  
Jim Brickman  
Jim Parker's Songwriters Series  
John Prine and Jason Isbell  
Katie Sankey  
Keith Sweat  
Kidz Bop  
Lil Boosie  
Listen Local  
Mannheim Steamroller  
Men of God Concert  
MercyMe  
Mickey Gilley  
Miranda Lambert  
Old Crow Medicine Show  
Paula Poundstone  
Rance Allen Group  
Rock and Worship Road Show  
Rodney Carrington & Colt Ford  
Ronnie Milsap  
Shinedown & Breaking Benjamin  
St. Paul and the Broken Bones  
Stephen Fite Children's Concert  
Tedeschi Trucks Band  
The Comedy Get Down  
The Oak Ridge Boys  
The Sweplings

Thompson Square  
Travis Tritt  
UAH Music Department  
Vince Gill/Lyle Lovett  
Weird Al Yankovic  
Widespread Panic

## The Symphony...

Huntsville Symphony Orchestra presents  
*EASTERN EUROPE: Enescu, Vajda & Dvorak*  
*GERMANY: Brahms Festival*  
*LAS VEGAS: Halloween Magic*  
*LONDON: Diamonds are Forever*  
*NEW ORLEANS: Tribute to Louis Armstrong*  
*THE AMERICAS: Canadian Brass*

## A Variety of Family Shows...

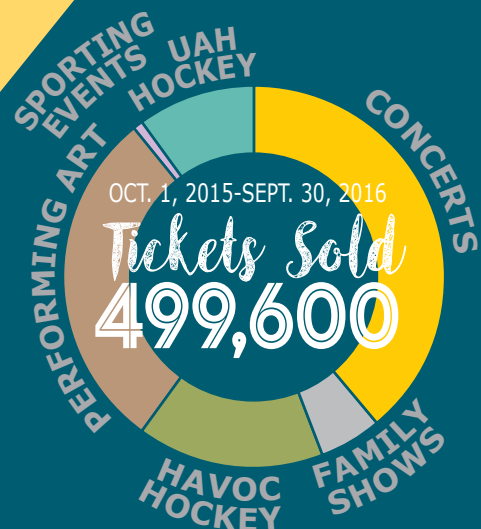
Cirque du Soleil - OVO  
Disney on Ice  
Harlem Globetrotters  
Marvel Universe Live!  
Monster Jam  
North Alabama Black Rodeo  
Peppa Pig  
Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus  
Sheriff's Lonestar National Finals Rodeo  
WWE Live!

## Theatrical Shows Galore...

Broadway Theatre League presents  
*The Producers*  
*Blue Man Group*  
*Mama Mia*  
*Beauty and the Beast*  
*The Illusionists*  
*Hot Peas and Butter*  
*Clifford the Big Red Dog*  
*Bullets Over Broadway*



Fantasia





WWE



Alice Cooper



Summer Rev



Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus



Black Jacket Symphony

# CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES, TRADESHOWS & SPORTS

## Conventions & Conferences

31st Aircraft Survivability Professional Forum  
 32nd International Symposium on Child Abuse  
 AKA Membership Works  
 Alabama Association of Realtors  
 Alabama League of Municipalities  
 Alabama National Guard Yellow Ribbon Program  
 AUSA Global Force Symposium  
 AUSA Missile Symposium  
 AUSA ROTC Luncheon -  
     Redstone-Huntsville Chapter  
 AUVSI  
 Aviation Life Support Equipment Conference  
 Best Buy Stores, L.P  
 Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses  
 Devspace  
 Exposure Youth Camp  
 FACE TIM  
 FIRST Robotics Regional Competition  
 Government Services Administration Training  
 HAMA - MiniCon  
 HAMACON  
 Hand Arendall Conference  
 Joseph P. Cribbins Aviation Product Symposium  
 MDA Small Conference  
 National Cyber Summit  
 National Tourism Summit  
 NCMS  
 Non Profit University  
 North Alabama Conference of the UMC  
 North American Women's Conference 2016  
 Nuclear & Emerging Technologies in Space  
 Saved in the City  
 SerPIE One Health Conference  
 SMD Symposium  
 Southern Automotive Workforce  
     Solutions Summit  
 Southside Church of Christ  
 UAH Systems Engineering Conference

## Consumer/Trade Shows

28th Annual Building Home &  
     Remodeling Show  
 Alabama RV Supershow  
 All Star Pool and Spa  
 Babypalooza Baby & Maternity Expo  
 Car Audio Championship  
 Celebrations Bridal Fair  
 Collector & Shooters Club  
 Discover the Dinosaurs  
 Fall Home and Garden Show  
 Family Fun Festival & Expo  
 Fanfare Quilt Show  
 Greater Alabama Survival Expo  
 Halsey Food Show  
 Huntsville Hamfest  
 Naturals in the City  
 NEACA Craft Show  
 Randolph Under The Christmas Tree  
 Rocket City Broadcasting Bridal Fair  
 Rocket City Lit Fest  
 Senior Center Expo  
 Southern Bazaar Market  
 Tennessee Valley Hunting & Fishing Expo  
 The Boat Show  
 Warriors to the Workforce

## Sports

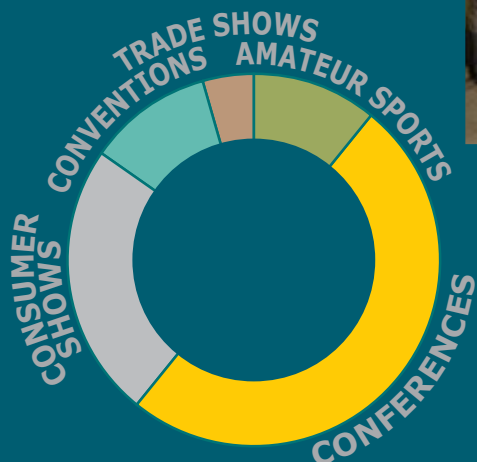
Alabama State High School  
     Wrestling Championship  
 Big Spring Volleyball Bash  
 Cotton Row Run & Expo  
 EA Sports Madden 17 Release  
 Fishing League Worldwide -  
     Forrest Wood Cup  
 Huntsville Gymnastic Center  
 Jamfest Cheer & Dance Competition  
 Lee vs Johnson High School Basketball  
     "Downtown Dunk"  
 Regional High School Volleyball Tournament  
 Rocket City Classic  
 Rocket City Marathon and the  
     Health & Fitness Expo



AUSA



University of Alabama Basketball



Exposure Youth Camp

# BANQUETS, MEETINGS & SOCIAL EVENTS

## Banquets

Alabama A&M University Black Tie Gala  
 Alabama A&M Athletic Banquet  
 Alpha Kappa Alpha Debutante Ball  
 American Cancer Society Summer Lights Gala  
 Asha Kiran  
 Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet  
 AUSA DA Civilian of the Year Awards Banquet  
 AUSA Veteran's Day Breakfast & Dinner  
 Black Tie Charity Ball  
 Boys & Girls Club Leaders and Legends Dinner  
 Chamber of Commerce Washington Update  
 with Congressman Mo Brooks  
 Chamber of Commerce Alabama Update  
 Luncheon with Governor Robert Bentley  
 Chamber of Commerce Armed Forces Dinner  
 Chamber of Commerce Armed Forces Luncheon  
 Chamber of Commerce County Update with  
 Commissioner Dale Strong  
 Chamber of Commerce Redstone Update  
 Chamber of Commerce State of the City  
 Luncheon with Mayor Tommy Battle  
 Chamber of Commerce Washington Update  
 Breakfast with Senator Richard Shelby  
 Christian Women's Job Corp Circles Luncheon  
 Dependable Hands Extravaganza Dinner  
 Dinner with Gene Stallings  
 Ducks Unlimited Banquet  
 Funset Social and Charity Club Beautillion Ball  
 Holy Spirit Regional School Bash  
 HudsonAlpha Tie the Ribbons  
 Huntsville Bible College "Vision" Banquet  
 Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Guild  
 Debutante Ball  
 Martin Luther King Unity Breakfast  
 Medical Gala  
 Morning Star Lodge #50  
 Oakwood UNCF Gala  
 Societies of 1895 & 2012/  
 Huntsville Hospital Foundation  
 Sparkman JROTC Military Ball  
 St. John's Benefit Gala  
 Summer Lights Gala  
 Victorian Cotillion Ball  
 WEDC Foundation Women Honoring Women

## Social Functions

100 Black Men of Greater Huntsville  
 Holiday Gala  
 Alabama Republican Party  
 Associated Builders & Contractors Excellence  
 in Contractors Banquet  
 Auburn University  
 AUSA Holiday Celebration  
 AVION Holiday Party  
 Bill Penney Toyota Holiday Party  
 Boeing Holiday Party  
 Colsa Corp Holiday Party  
 Deltha Critique Holiday Party  
 Direct TV Holiday Party  
 Dog Ball  
 Dynetics  
 ERC Holiday Party  
 Gleason Research Holiday Party  
 Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Guild  
 Crescen-Dough Auction  
 Intergraph Holiday Party  
 Intergraph SG&I Holiday Party  
 Jerry Damson Auto Group  
 Junior League American Girl  
 Lockheed Martin  
 Margarita Ball  
 Omega Psi Phi  
 Raytheon  
 Sanmina-SCI Holiday Party  
 Sparkman HS Prom  
 Taste of Huntsville  
 TOC Holiday Party

## Meetings

AKA Technology Summit  
 Alabama A&M Confucius Institute Celebration  
 All Nations Christian Center  
 Barbizon Modeling Search  
 BNI Meeting  
 Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting  
 Cove United Methodist Christmas Eve Meeting  
 CTS Driving Training  
 Culture & Leisure Day - Masters Leadership  
 Distinguished Young Women Scholarship  
 Program  
 Downtown Huntsville, Inc. Annual Meeting  
 Executive Women International Annual Meeting  
 Fortune Builders  
 Huntsville City Schools "I Register Fair"  
 Huntsville Rotary Luncheon  
 Huntsville Sports Commission Meeting  
 Huntsville/Madison County Hospitality  
 Association  
 Madison County Schools  
 Oakwood Alumni Association  
 Oxidation, Corrosion & Diffusion for  
 eMMRTG  
 People to People Information Meeting  
 Redstone Federal Credit Union Annual Meeting  
 Rocket City Alabama Chapter of SGMP  
 Annual Awards  
 Tempursealy Meeting  
 TVA Business Planning Meeting  
 Verizon Wireless Corporate Meeting  
 WHNT Manager Meeting



Vojticek-Harrison Wedding Reception

Arighi-Boyd Wedding Reception

## SPORTS



The 2016-17 season of the **Huntsville Havoc** looks to continue the tradition of the fast-paced, hard-hitting, family entertainment. The 13th season will not disappoint as head coach Glenn Detulleo and the team take on SPHL rivals Columbus Cottonmouths, Fayetteville FireAntz, Knoxville Ice Bears, Evansville Thunderbolts, Mississippi RiverKings, Pensacola Ice Flyers, Peoria Rivermen, Macon Mayhem and Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs.



The **University of Alabama in Huntsville hockey team** is looking forward to the fourth season in the prestigious Western Collegiate Hockey Association. The Chargers will welcome seven schools to the Von Braun Center for the upcoming season with featured promotions and giveaways at each home game.

## #VBCChsv

The Von Braun Center has started a campaign with the hashtag **#VBCChsv**. It allows people to tag the Von Braun Center on multiple platforms and uses less characters!



Facebook, Twitter and Instagram...

*oh my!*

The VBC continues to gain followers! Interaction is at an all-time high! People love seeing and knowing what's happening at the facility!

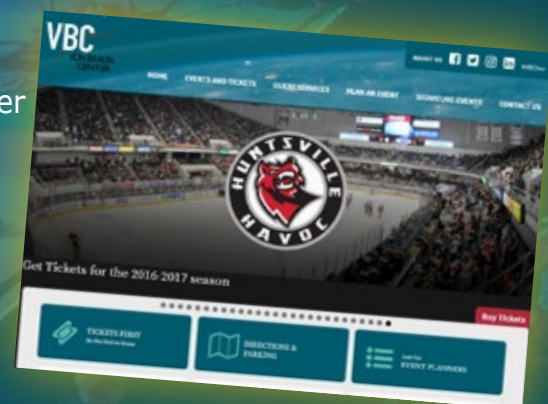
## Connect With Us Linked in

The Von Braun Center launched a company page on LinkedIn and utilizes it to share articles relative to the venue and it's events as well as high light employees and their achievements.

The Von Braun Center website got a fresh new look! With vibrant new colors and images the site is exciting and easy to maneuver!

Make sure to check it out at

[www.vonbrauncenter.com](http://www.vonbrauncenter.com)





## FOOD & FUN



This year we held the **6th annual Heads-n-Tails Crawfish Boil**. More than 5,600 people attended the event to indulge in some tasty crawfish and enjoy some good zydeco music. There were activities for kids and adults! The kids were able to have their face painted, jump on inflatables and receive balloon animals while the adults were dancing and enjoying craft beer tastings. The heads-n-tails crawfish boil continues to grow each year and we can't wait to see who all comes next year!



This year marked the **3rd annual Family Fun Festival and Expo**. With an impressive 9,900 people in attendance this event definitely exceeded expectations. Family Fun Fest is an exciting and fun event that is offered to the community at no cost. There are lots of activities, vendors and the largest FunNel Cake in Alabama. It encourages families to come out and just have some good ole fashion FUN! With the growth of Family Fun Fest in the past couple of years the stars are the limit!! Just wait until next year!

## Christmas Parade

Back by popular demand Mix 96.9 and the Von Braun Center partnered to sponsor the Downtown Huntsville Christmas Parade on December 17. It was **Huntsville's first nighttime parade** and had the fitting theme "Festival of Lights". People of Huntsville lined the streets for the 6pm parade and watched illuminated floats fill the streets along with other organizations and bands that made it one of the most memorable parades in Huntsville.



## IN THE WORDS OF OUR CLIENTS...

*As you know, the Association of the United States Army held their annual Global Force Symposium & Exposition in Huntsville March 15-17. We had the opportunity and pleasure of making the Von Braun Center our home for the past few years.*

*It was great working with you and I appreciate your customer service and your ability to make AUSA feel extremely valued and welcomed. Your attention to detail and responsiveness makes planning the Global Force Symposium with you extremely pleasant. Additionally, I would like to thank you for going above and beyond the call of duty before, during and after our event.*

Melissa Wenczkowski, CMP  
Association of the United States Army

*Thank you so much for helping us plan, prepare and hold the Annual Conference 2016. We are receiving rave reviews for both our gathering and for your facility, and I so appreciate the grace and hospitality you shared with me, my staff and our members.*

Linda Holland  
North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church

*It is so nice to be able to depend on folks and know they have your back at all times – HOOAH! Yes this was a big event for all of us but efforts like yours made it a really successful event. I hope we get to work together in 2017 as a team because it will only be bigger and better with you.*

Thanks, Dave Seay  
Alabama State President - AUSA

*Mo and I appreciate everything you did for our reception. It turned out absolutely beautiful and phenomenal! We loved every moment of it and couldn't be thankful to have a great team to work with throughout this process.*

Mo & Jareen Alam

*Thanks to you and your VBC crew for making our dinner a GREAT event!! Appreciate all you do going "above and beyond" to make it easy for us!!*

Beth Moring  
Boys & Girls Club of North Alabama

*All of the staff was very helpful. They responded very professionally to all my requests.*

John Burantt  
UAH Capital Management Group Luncheon

*Thank you so much for all of the work you did to make our wedding beautiful. We really appreciate it and will have wonderful memories for years to come.*

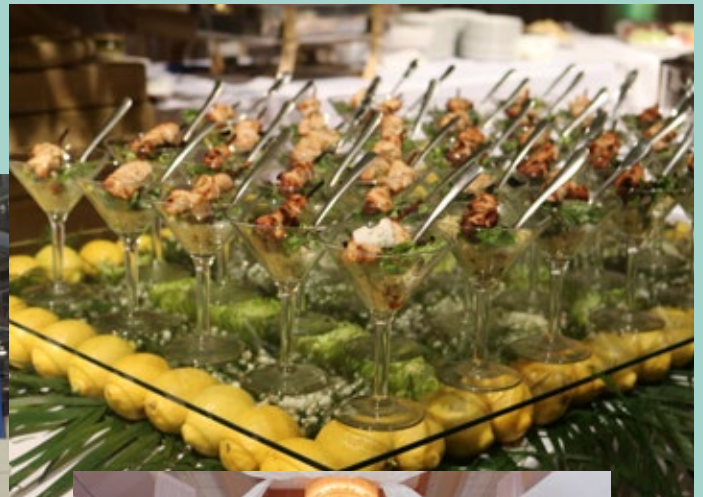
Steven and Jessica Boyd

*Many thanks to each of you for pulling off another successful State of the City event! You make everything seem so easy – and I know it is not. The entire process ran smoothly and professionally, and that would never have happened without your support and helpful spirit. On behalf of Mayor Battle and the City's administrative team, we appreciate you!!*

Kelly Schrimsher  
City of Huntsville

*The VBC staff was courteous, professional and attentive. I look forward to our next Annual Meeting at the Von Braun Center.*

Annalise Harwood  
Redstone Federal Credit Union





## DOING OUR PART...

The Von Braun Center kicked-off its **Recycling and Conservation Initiative Program** in October 2008 and it has been going strong ever since.

In the 2016 fiscal year the Von Braun Center recycled:

- Paper, plastic, aluminum cans, cardboard – 74,340 lbs. or 37.17 tons
- Electronic waste – 1,178 lbs.
- Spent Fluorescent Lamps – 756

The Von Braun Center diverted **189.48 tons or 378,960 lbs. of trash** from the local landfill by transporting our trash to the Waste to Energy Facility via our waste service provider Republic Services. By sending our trash to the Waste to Energy Facility we were able to achieve an average diversion rate of 70.48% for the year.

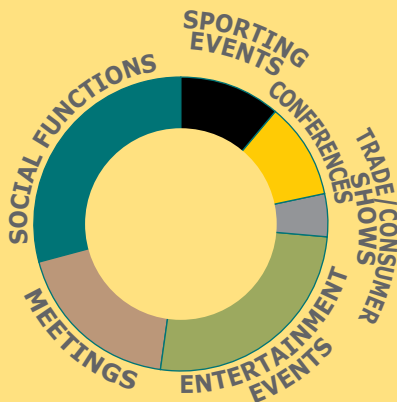
## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The VBC generated an estimated \$72 million in economic impact in fiscal year 2015-2016. Over 775,000 people attended a variety of events held at the center throughout the year. This reflects an 8.6% increase over the previous fiscal year. The VBC generates its economic impact numbers based on events, attendees and the number of hotel rooms those attendees occupy.

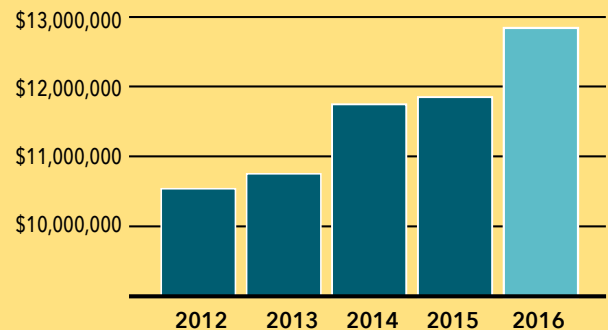
Attracting larger conventions with more attendees increases spending which overflows into all sectors of the local economy by bringing new tax dollars and supporting many jobs throughout the community.

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

### VBC Event Composition



### VBC Gross Revenue





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[www.vonbrauncenter.com](http://www.vonbrauncenter.com)