



HOUSTON FIRST PARTNERS WITH LEVY CONVENTION CENTERS AND STAGING SOLUTIONS TO ENHANCE CONVENTION CENTER EXPERIENCE

HOUSTON (October 9, 2017) – Houston First Corporation (HFC) announced it has entered into agreements with Levy Convention Centers as its hospitality partner and Staging Solutions to provide its premier multimedia expertise to the George R. Brown Convention Center (GRB), transforming the overall meeting and special event experience.

With its deep roots in convention centers, large-scale events, restaurants, and professional sports, Levy will be the food and beverage partner for Houston’s convention center district, bringing creativity and an elevated approach to hospitality. Levy will offer expanded culinary options, including pop-up dining locations throughout the facilities featuring afternoon treats, specialty cocktails, and other customized creations to delight guests throughout the day. Locally sourced ingredients and vibrant flavors will come together to create new signature items, while a local roaster will be tapped to create a signature coffee for the GRB. Levy will also partner with local farms, restaurants, and purveyors to deliver a unique ‘taste’ of Houston. The contract also expands to the Theater District, where Levy will incorporate mobile technology to offer expedited service during intermissions and new options for patrons planning their evening before the show.

“Houston First’s vision for the future of the George R. Brown Convention couldn’t be more exciting, and we’re proud to be a part of the convention experience in Houston and to help this incredible city look toward the future,” said Andy Lansing, President and CEO of Levy. “By marrying a culinary focus on local ingredients and flavors with industry-leading technology, we look forward to working to create an experience that is customized and meaningful for the broad range of guests we will serve.”

Staging Solutions, a Houston-based production and creative agency, will also bring their expertise to the GRB. Through creative strategy, media, and production services, Staging Solutions crafts experiences that bring value to brands and engage audiences. One of the first tasks for Staging Solutions will be to help the Houston Grand Opera transform an exhibit hall in the GRB into an intimate opera stage as the GRB becomes a temporary home for the opera after the Wortham sustained damage from Hurricane Harvey. In the Shakespearean spirit of “all the world’s a stage,” Staging Solutions is excited to partner with the Opera, and help them to provide excellent, uninterrupted service to their many patrons across the city. The GRB has become the temporary home for the opera after the Wortham Theater Center was closed for repairs because of extensive damages caused by flood waters from Hurricane Harvey. Staging Solutions is an industry leader and has created event experiences at the GRB for two decades for events like ABB’s Customer World and LNG’s World Gas Conference. Notable events and experiences in surrounding venues in their portfolio include the Virtual Reality Activation for Texas Medical Center and Super Bowl LI Gala: Luminaries of the Game.

“By redefining in-house audio-visual offerings, we will elevate the experience traditionally found within convention centers and facilities. Our expanded service wheelhouse allows us to drive projects from concept

to completion. We're excited to collaborate with Houston First to continue to grow the GRB as a unique destination for business and entertainment," said Bill Fitch, President and CEO, Staging Solutions.

"Meeting planners can look forward not only to the high quality of service they have come to expect from the GRB, but also to more innovative and groundbreaking experiences for their attendees" said Luther Villagomez, Chief Operating Officer Convention District, Houston First Corporation. "Both Levy and Staging Solutions will provide superior services that will continue to set the standard in our industry making the George R. Brown one of the top convention sites in the country."

Contracts for Levy Convention Centers went into effect October 1, and Staging Solutions will go into effect October 15.

ABOUT HOUSTON FIRST CORPORATION

Houston First operates the city's finest convention and arts facilities to position Houston as a world-class destination. In 2014, Houston First and the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau aligned operations to create a single voice representing the city under the brand Visit Houston. Houston First owns the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel, manages the George R. Brown Convention Center and 10 city-owned properties and is a driving force in developing the new Avenida Houston entertainment district. Learn more at HoustonFirst.com and VisitHouston.com.

ABOUT LEVY CONVENTION CENTERS

Levy Convention Centers is a team of culinary and hospitality specialists who deliver restaurant-quality food, beverage and hospitality to a number of venues across the country including the Austin Convention Center, Hawaii Convention Center, Georgia World Congress Center, The Greater Columbus Convention Center, and the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. Centered on a passion for food, Levy Convention Centers has been recognized by Food Service Director, International Association of Venue Managers, and the American Culinary Federation. For more, visit www.levyrestaurants.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

ABOUT STAGING SOLUTIONS

Staging Solutions crafts experiences that bring value to brands and engage audiences. Whether the experience is a live event, presentation, media content, or creative strategy, what we do creates connections between our clients and their audience. Since 1997, we have partnered with some of the world's most recognized and respected brands in venues of every description. While the world is our stage, Houston, Texas is our home.