

## Noteworthy Northeast

By Kate Parham

The region may be the oldest in the country, but pride in its deep-seated roots doesn't stop the Northeast from evolving. Whether it's a bustling metropolis like Manhattan or a charming New England town like Providence, each city possesses its own distinct energy and personality, complete with luxury hotels and innovative restaurants. Producing roughly a quarter of the country's gross domestic product, cities in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York and Rhode Island are affordable, exciting and easy to reach.

## Hartford, Connecticut



Hartford may be the Insurance Capital of the World, but there's so much more to the historic town. Its proximity to Springfield makes the Hartford-Springfield Metropolitan Area the second most populous region in New England and is revered by locals for its dining scene. With more than 40 independent three- and four-star restaurants within walking distance of downtown, there's something for every palate.

A sophisticated city with a small-town feel, Hartford only accommodates one large group at a time. "Everyone knows when the group is in town and they get lots of recognition in the restaurants and shops," says Michael Van Parys, president of the Greater Hartford CVB. "When a [group] has a meeting or convention here, they are always blown away by the uptick in attendance," says Van Parys.

Pam Cerrone, manager of community relations at Price Chopper Supermarkets, loves meeting in Hartford. "The Connecticut Convention Center is one of a handful of locations that can accommodate the large group of teammates [1,500] and trade partners [750+] that we bring," says Cerrone, who opts for the four-star Hartford Marriott Downtown for accommodations. "It's also close to a number of our stores, and the city is clean and easily accessible."

Hartford is an obvious choice for Colleen Boles, manager of corporate meetings and protocol at



United Technologies, as the company is headquartered here. “With the never-ending demands to increase efficiency and streamline costs, Hartford has become a primary location for us to host meetings and events,” says Boles, who has several favorite meeting venues in the city, including The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, The Wadsworth Atheneum and the Connecticut Center for Science and Exploration.

“We look to partner with vendors and venues that share [our] same commitment to excellence,” she says.

“They are fully aligned on issues

important to us, and are instrumental in our quest to deliver successful, world class events.” Boles has also developed strong relationships with several local businesses such as the Connecticut Convention Center, the Marriott Hartford Downtown, Morton’s The Steakhouse and The Society Room of Hartford, to name a few.