



HARTFORD

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development plan. The anchor of this rapidly developing area is the 540,000-sq.-ft. **Connecticut Convention Center**, which offers a 140,000-sq.-ft. main exhibit hall, a 40,000-sq.-ft. ballroom, 19 meeting rooms and many high-tech features such as Webcasting and cyber-cafes. Attached to the Center is the AAA Four Diamond, 409-room **Marriott Hartford Downtown**, which offers an additional 13,500 sq. ft. of meeting space. Also nearby are the 393-room **Hilton Hartford**, 350-room **Ramada Plaza** and 215-room **Holiday Inn**.

Hartford's entertainment resources are diverse enough to please most any meeting attendee. Connecticut Whale and UCONN athletics events are complemented by major cultural attractions such as the Mark Twain House & Museum, Harriet Beecher Stowe Center and The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. Groups can explore the West End, one of Hartford's most architecturally significant neighborhoods, and Elizabeth Park, home to

the oldest municipally operated rose garden in the nation. Front Street is an up-and-coming area featuring the recently opened 800-seat **Spotlight Theater**, which will offer special-event rooms and a 75-seat restaurant. This fall, **Capital Grille**, a new upscale steakhouse, is expected to open on Front Street, along with the 600-seat **Infinity Music Hall and Bistro**. **Ted's Montana Grill** will also be opening in the first quarter of 2014.

The 47-acre urban revitalization project known as **Adriaen's Landing** is evidence that Hartford is a city steeped in both history and the future. Named for Dutch mariner **Adriaen Block**, who in 1614 became the first European explorer in the Connecticut River valley region, the project is the cornerstone of a five-year, multifaceted state and city economic



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Sioux Falls, SD-based **XRX, Inc.** publishes *Knitter's Magazine* and books on knitting and crocheting. The company also stages **STITCHES Events**, including **STITCHES East**, which will take place Nov. 7-10 at the Connecticut Convention Center. **XRX** has partnered with the Center for five years for **STITCHES East**, a consumer show that is expected to draw about 6,000 attendees this year.

Partnering With the Connecticut Convention Center

We were in Baltimore [for STITCHES East] for a while, and when we went looking for a new venue, the Connecticut Convention Center acted like they wanted our business and continue to act like a good partner with us. I like the big ballroom [40,000 sq. ft.] at the top level, and the Center has a lot of breakout rooms [14], which is necessary since we have so many educational sessions. And it's connected to the Hartford Marriott Downtown, so it's a really nice intimate experience; when we go there we will take over the entire convention center and hotel. We have a very good relationship with the Marriott, and we tend to partner with convention centers that have either a Renaissance or a Marriott next to them.

Advantages of Hartford

Hartford is extremely accessible, almost smack-dab between Boston and New York. They're a friendly little city. The Chamber of Commerce lets the city know we're coming, and some of the restaurants will offer a discount to people wearing a STITCHES badge. They also have a wonderful bus that tours the city as well as hydrogen-powered [zero emission] busses.

CVB Marketing Assistance

The Hartford CVB has been wonderful to work with. A couple years ago they had our Knitter's Magazine editor in to teach one of the morning shows how to knit, and so they help us promote. They're very much a partner in letting people know we're here and getting the word out. Their social media crew is very adept.