



Bio – Lena Ross, COO, America 4 You

With a Master’s degree in Sustainable Destination Management from George Washington University (2010), I have dedicated my career to enhancing tourism practices that honor both cultural heritage and environmental sustainability. My thesis focused on developing promotional strategies for Wind River, Wyoming, showcasing the region's unique offerings and creating a plan for increased domestic and international visitation while staying true to rural feeling of the area.

As the current Chairperson of the International Inbound Travel Association (IITA) and a past president of Grand Circle, I play a pivotal role in advocating for sustainable tourism practices and is a leader within the Inbound Travel Community.

I have collaborated with the North Dakota Native Tourism Association (NDNTA) to help design and implement innovative Tribal tourism products across three Tribes, ensuring that these initiatives are both culturally respectful and economically beneficial and bookable on the consumer level for both domestic and international visitors. I am currently working with AIANTA (American Indian and Native Tourism Association) to continue to work with small Native businesses to make them bookable tourism products.

With a diverse background that includes internships at both the San Diego Convention and Visitor Bureaus and the Anaheim Convention and Visitors Bureau, a start to my tourism career as a Sales Manager at the Handlery Hotel in San Diego, and my current position as Chief Operating Officer of America 4 You (and past Director of Product Development), I possess a comprehensive understanding of the industry. I am also a sought-after guest

speaker, sharing insights on topics ranging from international collaboration to sustainable travel strategies, helping to shape a more responsible future for tourism.

My role within America 4 You, also allows me to seek out smaller tourism products in rural or third tier destinations and help find ways to put them “on the map” for an international audience, by using my knowledge of the USA and itinerary planning skills to create itineraries that are both interesting to the destination itself and showcase their lesser known products while still being marketable to an overseas audience. We are working hard to alleviate some of the stress put on the major tourist attractions such as National Parks and large cities by still featuring them, but adding more time in lesser known areas that will eventually become highlights themselves on an international scale.