Tying the Shared Community Value into Membership

- If your Destination Organization does not already have an advocacy plan, create one. If you have one review it and adjust it to include the lexicon. (Destination Madison, VisitPITTSBURGH- examples of Destination Organizations/ CVBS with an advocacy plan).
- Constantly remind yourself and all within the organization that the community is your customer and treat it as such.
- You should also have an advocacy committee. If you have someone on your team who is charged with interfacing with the community, its stakeholders and elected officials this person may take the lead on all things advocacy. Membership or Partnership departments are constantly interfacing with the community and creating strong relationships with community leaders, for this reason it is important that membership and partnership departments within the Destination Organization be involved by being a part of the advocacy committee and play a role in advocacy initiatives.
- An advocacy plan should be reviewed annually and updated based on what is currently occurring within your community.
- Invite the community to Destination Organization events and activities, ensure that they are aware of campaigns and activities and most importantly how it impacts and benefits the community. (VisitPITTSBURGH’s Pull Up a Chair Campaign)
- It is important to speak the language of the elected officials and community stakeholders when ever you are presented with an opportunity to present and or connect with them. Use the lexicon so you are speaking their language.
- A true measure of how your relationship with the community and how the community understands your organization and its purpose is if your organization is called upon to participate when events and activities are taking place are you invited to the table and asked to contribute. Examples: when a proposal is created for major corporations to come to your city. Hosting major events examples: political conventions and or major summits.
- I have personally experienced destination organizations create relationships and ensure that the community stakeholders and elected officials understand their purpos. In some instances, after establishing this relationship, the local elected officials have further invested in the Destination organization by investing with funding on an annual basis.
- Give back to the community by participating and showing up at community events.
- Create an opportunity for the Destination Organization to volunteer within the community and constantly connect with community.