

# Press Releases: State Department Announces 23rd Experience America Visit to Charleston, S.C.

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

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The U.S. Department of State and the Office of the Chief of Protocol are proud to announce the 23rd Experience America trip to Charleston, S.C. with members of the foreign Diplomatic Corps, October 14-16, 2018.

More than 30 foreign ambassadors – representing countries across four continents – will join Ambassador Sean P. Lawler, Chief of Protocol of the United States, to engage local business and community leaders and spotlight America's communities. Transforming from an economy driven by tourism and aerospace manufacturing, the Charleston region is diversifying into a number of new business sectors, accelerating international exports and launching new programs to integrate into a global marketplace. The culture, diversity and competitiveness of the region continues to draw international firms to the area, which has powered growth across automotive, IT, life science and aerospace industries.

While embracing classic Southern charm, diplomats will learn firsthand about Charleston's integration with the world – from the nearly \$70 billion worth of cargo transported each year through the Port of Charleston, to the engineering advances developed at Clemson University for countless international projects, to the advanced manufacturing at Boeing's signature production facility – as the region addresses critical challenges and opportunities.

Promoting economic development is a major priority of the visit. Experience America will build relationships between the visiting Ambassadors and Charleston, open doors for local organizations eager to develop global partnerships, and stimulate new investment and trade possibilities.

The following events are open to the press:

**Sunday, October 14, 6:15pm – Welcome Reception aboard the USS Yorktown –**  
Aboard one of the 24 Essex-class aircraft carriers built during World War II for the U.S. Navy, and a national historic landmark, the foreign ambassadors

will meet and interact with Charleston's top business and cultural leaders. The event will feature remarks by Charleston representatives and Ambassador Lawler.

**Monday, October 15, 9:00am – Regional Business Breakfast at Trident Technical College** – The Charleston region is a home, workplace and inspiration to 750,000 people who are globally connected through trade, technology and travel, and locally engaged to craft a legacy for the future. Diplomats will meet with local business leaders and hear from manufacturing, technology and logistics executives leading companies operating across the region. This panel discussion will be held at Trident Technical College, a 2-year, multi-campus community college that provides quality education and promotes economic development.

**Monday, October 15, 11:00am – Visit to Joint Base Charleston:** Ambassadors will receive a mission briefing and tour a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III assigned to the 437th Airlift Wing. They will also tour the Transport Isolation System, or TIS, an asset the Department of Defense can use to safely transport patients with highly contagious diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, and visit with explosive ordnance disposal Airmen assigned to the 628th Civil Engineer Squadron. The Charleston Region contains the largest military presence in South Carolina, with an annual economic impact of approximately \$10.8 billion that is supported by 68,529 jobs. JB Charleston is "The Launch Point for the Nation's Resolve" because it comprises the strategic mobility triad. Uniquely, JB Charleston has air, land and sealift capabilities to support the nation's warfighters. It is comprised of 23,000 acres and provides installation support to more than 60 mission partners representing all military services (Air Force, Navy, Army, and Marine Corps) as well as Federal Law Enforcement Training agencies. Overall, JB Charleston services a total population of 90,000 active duty, reserve, civilian, dependent and retiree members while maintaining and operating \$7.8 billion of physical infrastructure spanning three seaports, two civil-military international airfields, 22 miles of coastline and 38 miles of rail.

**Monday, October 15, 1:00pm – Tour of Clemson Turbine, Clemson University SCE&G Energy Innovation Center:** Diplomats will visit The Clemson University Restoration Institute (CURI) to tour a diverse range of projects focusing on restoration ecology, historic preservation, advanced material research, marine conservation and electric grid testing. The CURI provides researchers, scientists, students and faculty with opportunity to impact the growing tech economy while also appreciating the rich historical heritage in the surrounding area. It was established in 2004 as a means for driving economic growth, innovation and workforce development in South Carolina's Lowcountry.

**Monday, October 15, 5:30pm – Community Reception with Mayor John Tecklenburg, Business and Community Leaders** – During an evening reception in historic Charleston, elected officials and community leaders will meet with ambassadors to discuss how international trade and innovation are fueling growth in the regional economy. The event will feature remarks by Ambassador Lawler and Mayor Tecklenburg.

**Tuesday, October 16, 9:00am – Breakfast at the College of Charleston:** At this

event, the rich culture of Charleston will be explored through a variety of presentations focusing on food, social commentary and music. College of Charleston students, faculty and staff will connect with diplomats and forge new partnerships. President Steve Osborne, Addlestone Library's scholar-in-residence and local historian Harlan Greene and others will deliver remarks.

***Tuesday, October 16, 1:00pm – Tour of Boeing Charleston Delivery Center:***

Boeing will provide a tour and briefing to the visiting Ambassadors to showcase the latest in innovation and aerospace manufacturing. Diplomats will experience the world's only "freezer-to-flight" manufacturing facility where the most technologically advanced commercial airplane on the market is produced. The briefing will also discuss the importance of creating partnerships across the public and private sectors, as well investing in the community and nourishing a workforce pipeline through those partnerships.

The visit will also include closed-press activities, such as a tour of the Port of Charleston, an editorial tour of Garden and Gun Magazine, and cultural and historic tours of Charleston.

For more information and to RSVP for one or multiple events, please contact Tim Gowa at [GowaTM@state.gov](mailto:GowaTM@state.gov) by October 12 at 12:00pm.

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