

## NCTIA President is Head of the Class

NCTIA President Jessica Roberts was a guest lecturer last week in an Appalachian State University classroom. The class was Destination Management, which is in the Hospitality Management Department at the school.

The class is usually taught by adjunct professor Wright Tilley, who serve as the Executive Director at the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority. Roberts is the Executive Director of the Mount Airy Tourism Development Authority.

"I believe that learning from current tourism industry leaders is an important aspect of this class," said Tilley, who has taught in the department since 2010. "Jessica did a great job with her presentation. Several members of the class were not familiar with Mt. Airy and were very impressed with the marketing, planning and new initiatives that Jessica shared with the class."

Tilley says the class will have eight speakers from various tourism entities across the state, including Wit Tuttle from Visit NC, Chris Cavanaugh, Stephanie Pace Brown from Visit Winston Salem, Donna Carpenter from Cabarrus CVB, and Claire Wood from NCTIA/The Management Office. (See photos on right.)

## No Bets on Casinos in Short Session

*The following article was published by WRAL on February 14. It was written by WRAL Capital Chief Laura Leslie. [Click to read the entire article.](#)*

When North Carolina lawmakers return for their short session in late April, gambling expansion could once again be on their agenda.

State House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate leader Phil Berger told reporters Wednesday there's interest within their respective GOP caucuses in legalizing video slot-machine gambling under the state lottery.

However, Berger cautioned, (VLT) legalization might not happen during this year's short session.

Berger also said he will not champion casino expansion this year, and said he hasn't talked to anyone else who intends to, either.

Berger last year led an effort to approve four rural tourism districts in economically distressed parts of the state. Each district, including one in Berger's district, would have been anchored by a casino and would have required at least \$500 million in development.

The proposal held up budget negotiations between the state House and Senate for weeks in 2023, with Senate leaders pushing for it and rank-and-file House Republicans refusing to take it up.

Moore said there's no appetite among House Republicans to return to casino expansion this year, either.

"I think the casino bill last year just kind of went totally off the rails in the way that it was done through the process," said Moore, who is running for U.S. House seat in 2024.

Republicans have super majorities in both chambers, though support and opposition to gambling measures does not often fall along party lines. The legislature returns to work April 24. ([Click to read the entire WRAL article.](#))

