



### **Helen Marano, Senior Vice President Longwoods International**

Helen Marano joined Longwoods International in September 2022 to lead the production and client services teams in their stellar efforts for providing the industry and especially the destination management organizations (DMOs) with the empirical evidence needed to support their efforts with understanding consumer trends in travel and managing tourism in their area.

Previously Helen founded her own company in January 2019, Marano Perspectives, to further the value and importance of Travel & Tourism for the economic development and social benefits for global communities. This followed her 7 years at the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) where she built the Government and Industry Affairs Department for the advocacy efforts of WTTC in presenting the industry perspective to government leaders and organizations. As an Executive Vice President, she also expanded the engagement of WTTC and the T&T industry with academia, and other key tourism stakeholders.

Helen is a seasoned leader, having previously led the National Travel & Tourism Office of the United States for over a decade. This involved industry relations, policy formation, and oversight and interpretation of the statistical system for Travel and Tourism for the USA. Some of her key accomplishments included negotiating the opening up of Chinese group leisure travel for the USA, building the first US Travel & Tourism Satellite Account, serving as the Chair for the Tourism Working Group of APEC, and collaborating in the formation of the Brand USA Corporation for marketing the USA. She oversaw the team who launched the first media campaign from the US Department of Commerce in 2004-2005 for welcoming back the Japanese and British travellers following the downturn from the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US. The return on investment (ROI) assessment for the campaign was measured by Longwoods International.

Her career spans key positions including Director of Research and planning for the former Visit Orlando, Senior Project Director for the Gallup Organization, and ten years in the financial services industry with experience in designing a customer information system, new product development assets and market feasibility assessments for several mergers. Her technical proficiency is in market research.

Helen's experience and expertise in policy development, and government and industry relations inspires thought leadership and cooperation among stakeholders for improving

the environment for Travel & Tourism to flourish sustainably. She is a passionate advocate on the value of the industry and an experienced speaker.

Helen serves as: Chair of the Travel Foundation Board of Trustees dedicated to community development; Secretary of the Board for ArtWorks for Freedom dedicated to raising awareness of human trafficking; Advisory Board member for Blacks in Travel and Tourism Collaborative; and Advisory Board member for the Bella Vista Higher Education Institute Switzerland.

Helen has been honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women in Travel and Tourism International (witti) for leadership and contributions to the sector and the Celebrating Her Award for building global alliances that promote tourism as a force for good by the International Institute of Peace.