

## **Lourdes Gomez, Destination Development Manager**

Lourdes Gomez is Travel Salem's destination development manager and will focus on facilitating the development of new and existing tourism products and opportunities that will bring more visitors to the region.

### **BIO – Lourdes Gomez**

Prior to joining Travel Salem, Lourdes served as International Tourism Sales Manager for Choose Chicago - the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau where she was responsible for opening and developing some of the most important international markets for the city of Chicago. She led teams of global sales agents and public relations professionals based in Sao Paulo and Mexico City who worked to position Chicago as a premier destination in the segments of leisure and luxury travel. She led the effort to launch Chicago's digital and social media presence in Portuguese and Spanish and also developed innovative programming which helped to produce increases in Brazilian visitation by 97% and Mexican visitation (air only) by 41% within the first year of Chicago's investment in those markets.

Lourdes forged strategic partnerships with key industry players which resulted in producing the largest, most widely-attended international sales mission in Chicago's history thanks to an original educational webinar she produced in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Tourism and Travel Industries. She also employed creative methods to reach target audiences such as securing visibility for Choose Chicago such as securing its participation in the historic, first NBA game in South America (Bulls vs. Wizards). Under her leadership, a major promotion was negotiated which was composed of digital, media, and trade elements. It ultimately produced media coverage valued at over \$5 million. She also helped facilitate the signing of a trade agreement between Mexico City and Chicago which involved the financial, diplomatic, and tourism sectors.

Lourdes holds a Master's degree in International Affairs with certifications in sustainable tourism and international marketing. Her career in tourism began in 2010 when she was hired by the Mexico Tourism Board in Chicago to develop the segments of wedding tourism and adventure travel to audiences in the Midwest. Prior to that, she contracted with popular brands to market new products to consumers through direct marketing strategies.

Lourdes's love for Oregon resulted from repeated vacations to the state. She enjoys hiking, camping, and exploring the many treasures of the Willamette Valley and beyond.