



Maryland Tourism Goes to Washington

On April 18 and 19, a team of Maryland tourism professionals gathered for Destination Capitol Hill, the U.S. travel industry's premier legislative fly-in. The event, which draws tourism professionals from across the country, is designed to educate policymakers about the power of travel. The Maryland delegation met with senior staff from the offices of Representatives Ivy, Sarbanes, Harris, Raskin, Trone, Raskin and Mfume and Senators Cardin and Van Hollen. The Maryland team included: Mia Blom, Visit Baltimore; Georgieanna Windley, Kent Island Foundation; Kristen Pironis, Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County; Kristen Hanna, Flying Dog Brewing; Matt Liber, Maryland SoccerPlex; Ruth Toomey, Maryland Tourism Coalition and Erich Jankowski, Host Hotels and Resorts.

Pictured above: Seated: Liz Fitzsimmons, Gigi Windley, and Kristen Hanna. Standing: Marci Ross, Mia Blom, Kirsten Pironis and Ruth Toomey



Chesapeake Bay Research Study Reveals Bay as Key Driver for Tourism

The study, which was commissioned by OTD in partnership with the National Park Service, was done to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role the Chesapeake Bay plays in vacation planning by identifying familiarity with the Chesapeake Bay and related attractions, such as heritage tours, beaches, waterfront towns, unique scenic drives, wildlife programs, and culinary experiences. The research showed that in 2021 the Bay region drew 8.9 million visitors, drove \$2.3 billion in visitor spending, helped support 59,683 jobs (that paid \$1.94 billion in wages), and saved each Maryland household more than \$266 in state and local taxes.

“By understanding what attracts travelers to Maryland, we can be more strategic in our support of tourism-related businesses on and around the Chesapeake Bay,” said Maryland Commerce Secretary Kevin Anderson.

To view the full report, [click here](#).

Photo credit: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum



Second Class of Chesapeake Bay Storytellers Graduates

After eight weeks of coursework and experiential training on Chesapeake Bay heritage, industries, history, ecology, and recreation, participants in this year’s cohort made final presentations and were awarded certificates in a ceremony at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center on April 26. The 2023 Storyteller class had 21 participants, representing 15 businesses and organizations. “With more than 11,000 miles of coastline and endless tourism offerings, the Chesapeake Bay

proves to be a powerful draw and economic driver for tourism in Maryland,” said Liz Fitzsimmons, managing director of the Office of Tourism Development. “The Chesapeake Bay Storytellers bring even greater value to visitors by sharing their meaningful and compelling experiences.”

“The newly expanded Chesapeake Bay Storytellers training program will increase opportunities for visitors to have authentic Chesapeake experiences throughout the watershed,” said Wendy O'Sullivan, superintendent of the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network.



MHLA Celebrates the Industry's Best at 2023 "Stars of the Industry" Awards Luncheon

On April 20, the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association announced the winners of its 33rd annual “Stars of the Industry Awards” at their annual meeting. Held at the College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, the celebration recognized deserving hotels and team members who have gone above and beyond this past year to provide excellent service to their guests and communities.

Nominations were submitted by MHLA members, and 31 winners were announced in 10 categories celebrating the contributions of every hotel department, including managers, general managers, and staff.

“This awards program honors the brightest stars among MHLA member hotels,” said Amy Rohrer, President & CEO, MHLA. “These extraordinary individuals have risen to every challenge and remain committed to driving guest satisfaction at their properties, which in turn contributes to the industry’s success. We are especially proud to

celebrate the accomplishments of all nominees and congratulate our award winners.”

To see the full list of “Stars of the Industry” winners, click [here](#).

Pictured above: 2023 MHLA "Stars of the Industry" Award Winners



Heritage Fund Accepting Applications

The Heritage Fund, a cooperative effort of Preservation Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust, which provides direct assistance for the protection of historical and cultural resources, is currently accepting applications. Non-profit organizations and local jurisdictions are invited to apply. Eligible projects fall into three general categories: education and research, planning and feasibility, and repair and rehabilitation. Historic sites, buildings, districts, objects, and archaeological resources are all eligible for funding.

Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.



National Endowment for the Humanities Public Impact Projects Grants Announced

Applications for the National Endowment for the Humanities Public Impact program, which supports a variety of activities focusing on enriching interpretive strategies, strengthening interpretive skill sets, or enhancing community engagement with public-facing programs, are now available. The program aims to assist small and mid-sized organizations to meet their

community's needs by expanding the scope, reach, and excellence of their programs.

Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.

Photo credit: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum



State Highway Administration Announces \$20 Million in Grant Funding

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration is accepting applications for two grant programs for the 2024 fiscal year: the Transportation Alternatives Program and the Recreational Trails Program. Government-sponsored community groups, local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit authorities, school districts, natural resource or public land agencies, education agencies, tribal governments and nonprofits are eligible to apply. Applications for both programs are being accepted through May 15.

For details and to apply, click [here](#).



Promote Your Events on VisitMaryland.org

Do your partners know how easy it is to add events to [VisitMaryland.org's events calendar](#)? If you or an organization or attraction in your region is hosting an event, it's easy to get the word out through VisitMaryland.org's events calendar. With tens of thousands of regular visitors, it's a great tool, and with our self-entry portal, it's never been easier to use! If you're wondering if an event has the right stuff for the

Visit [VisitMaryland.org](https://www.visitmaryland.org) calendar, you'll find the inclusion criteria [here](#), [follow this link](#) for a step-by-step guide for self entry, or if it's not your first rodeo, jump straight to the entry portal [here](#).

Photo credit: Karmen Osei

IN THE NEWS



Maryland Adds Ninth Mobile Sportsbook as Revenue Grows in March

Baltimore Convention Center Nears Pre-pandemic Event Levels

Maryland Coast Bike Festival Eyes Return to West OC Harbor

Duff Goldman to Collaborate with Upcoming Great Wolf Lodge in Cecil County

Call Goes Out for Artscape 2023; Festival is Now Back to Three-day Event

All Things Go Music Festival Announces Lineup for 2023

The 142nd Maryland State Fair Returns this Summer for 3 long Weekends

Maryland's Office of Outdoor Recreation Welcomes Confluence of States

Leonardtwn Summer Music Festival Returns with Free Concerts, Food and Fun

Maryland Minute

Each week, the *Maryland Minute* provides highlights and insights on this weekend's events around the state. [Maryland Minute](#) is featured on Audacy radio stations in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., WERQ on Baltimore's WBAL-AM 1090.

Maryland Travel Tips

For the latest on events and everything going all around Maryland, view the latest edition of [Visit Maryland Now!](#)

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Wes Moore
GOVERNOR

