

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

# HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Ocean City  
Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association



## Member Message

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUSAN L. JONES

Where did January go?! Time goes way too fast and it is hard to believe that it has been almost two years since our Trade Expo was the last large gathering prior to the State shutting down! Last summer when we began thinking about the return of an in-person expo, there was no question in my mind that I had to figure out a way to ensure face-to-face selling returned. Relationships are a vital part of hospitality and our society. So, I am super excited to share that we will have close to 400 exhibit spaces for our 48th Annual Trade Expo -- Exhibitors are eager to share their latest, most innovative products with our hospitality members. And, Attendees are calling and eager to return to the sampling and sourcing. It is time to come out of hibernation and our Expo provides the perfect setting for such! Mark your calendar! 😊

## OCHMRA Dinner Meetings

**February 17**  
Princess Royale

**April 14**  
Centerplate  
OC Convention Center



Mark your calendars for the return of the annual RAM Awards Gala- back from hiatus since 2019! The party of the year will be complete with live music, entertainment, open bar and food served by some of Maryland's most coveted restaurants!

This celebration of our industry will be held on **Sunday, March 27th** from 5-10pm at Live! Casino in Hanover, MD.

For more info and to purchase tickets:  
[marylandrestaurants.com/gala](http://marylandrestaurants.com/gala)

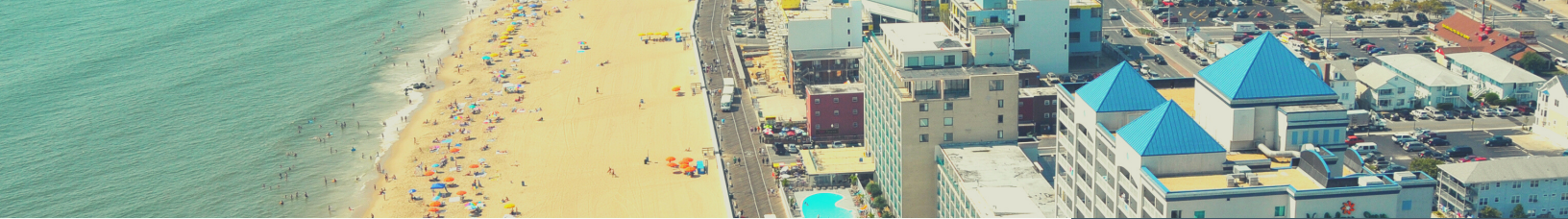


# We're Back!

**SUNDAY, MARCH 6 11A-5P**

**MONDAY, MARCH 7 11A-4P**

**OCEAN CITY CONVENTION CENTER**



## Business Briefs - All Things Trade EXPO!



The **Restaurant Association of Maryland** qualifier for **World Food Championship** is coming to Ocean City as part of the OCHMRA 48th Annual Trade Expo. The competition takes place on **Sunday, March 6** on the Showcase Stage at the Convention Center. Because the response to compete in the seafood qualifier was strong, there will be (2) rounds of three chefs cooking their best seafood dish. The winner of each round will then go head to head, live on stage with that winner receiving \$500 and a Golden Ticket to compete in the World Food Championship in Dallas Texas in November - where the big prize is \$100,000! Additionally, competing on the national stage brings lots of publicity and attention.

The World Food Championships is a five-day outdoor cooking competition where top chefs from across the globe compete in any of the 10 cooking categories. Winners of each category advance to the WFC finals for a shot at \$100,000 prize.

[World Food Championship site: WFC link](#)

Competitors are being solidified now, and will most likely include chefs from Matt Ortt Companies, Hooked Restaurant Group and Worcester Tech Culinary Instructor, Phillip Cropper who were the first to reach out. For more details, connect with Kim Brennan at RAM - 443-539-2464 or [kbrennan@marylandrestaurants.com](mailto:kbrennan@marylandrestaurants.com)



### Coffee with the Commissioner

Join Labor & Industry Commissioner Matt Helminiak on Sunday, March 7 to learn Employers top 10 pitfalls and how to avoid them. This session will be in Room 210 on the Second Level.

### New Products & Show Specials

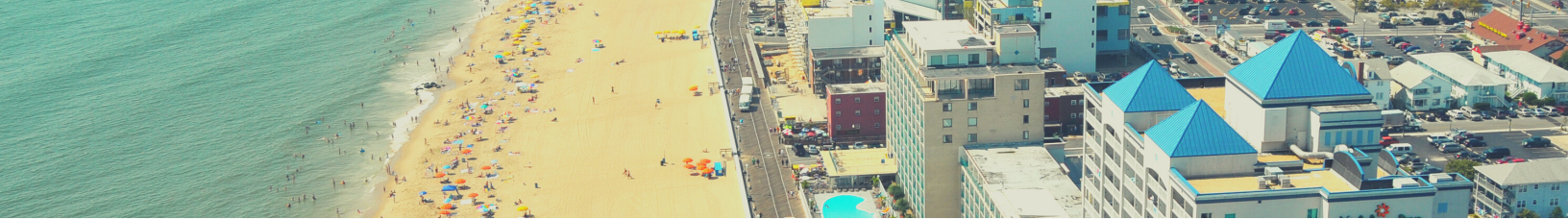
Exhibitors are eager to return to face-to-face selling. As part of the Expo, many exhibitors will showcase their newest products. Additionally, several will offer special deals only available at the Expo. Make sure you check them out - we are continuously adding them at this link:

[OceanCityTradeExpo.com](http://OceanCityTradeExpo.com)

### EXPO Volunteers Needed

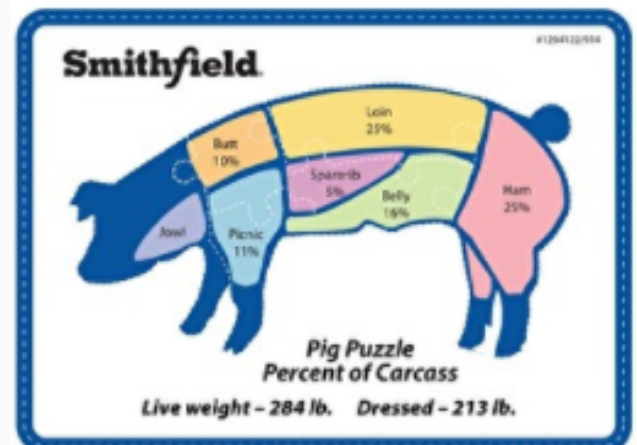
Each year, our Expo relies on our members to help us with the registration desk, serve as greeters, sign hangers and lots of other duties. It takes about 60 volunteers to make this Expo happen. If anyone would like to volunteer please email

[SusanJones@ocvisitor.com](mailto:SusanJones@ocvisitor.com)  
Shifts are 3 hours on Sunday March 6 and Monday March 7.  
Thank you for considering!

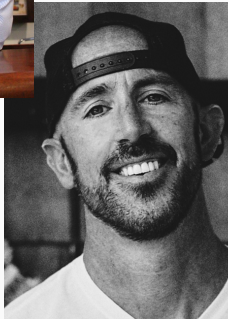


## Pig Puzzle Presented at EXPO

The Delmarva Chefs & Cooks Association, Smithfield and Roso & Pakula have partnered to bring the "Pig Puzzle" to the upcoming Trade Expo. Join Smithfield's Southeast Director as he walks through everything from the "the rooter to the tooter." The Pig Puzzle is a half a hog, already cut into primals and Smithfield will share how the hog was raised, where each cut of meat is located and basic uses. After that, the DCCA chefs will prepare special dishes and serve samples. The Pig Puzzle will take place on **Monday, March 7th at 1pm on the Showcase Stage.**



## Beverage Power Panel



Join industry experts from the beverage industry as they explore the latest trends and techniques. Moderated by the Maryland Breweries Association, Kevin Atticks, this session includes craft beer pioneer Hugh Sisson, Heavy Seas and local Danny Robinson whose Hoop Tea invention was just picked up by Anheuser-Busch. Mark your calendar for **Sunday, March 6th at 1pm Room 210.**

## HOSPITALITY POWER PANEL



Vince DiFonzo, TKO Hospitality  
DE Hotel Association



Ben Seidel, Real Hospitality  
MD Hotel Lodging Association



Melanie Pursel  
Worcester County Economic  
Development & Tourism



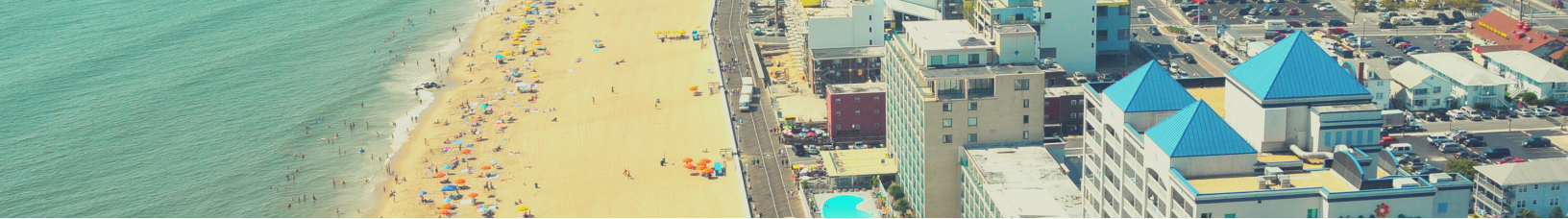
Marshall Weston  
Restaurant Association  
of Maryland



Carrie Leishman  
Delaware Restaurant  
Association

Join Thought Leaders for a State of Hospitality Session

**Monday, March 7th - 10am - Room 210**



## Hospitality Highlights

### WARM WELCOMES

Congratulations to **Spiro Buas** on the recent purchase of the **Park Place Hotel** - and welcome to the new management team which includes **Melora Olexo** as the General Manager and **Karen Rittershofer** as Operations Manager.

The **Monte Carlo Hotel Group** has welcomed **Shawn Damiano** as the General Manager at the Hotel Monte Carlo and **Vinnie Perotti** joined the team in Sales & Marketing. Monte Carlo hotels are managed by **TKO Hospitality** who also manages **Hyatt Place**. Congrats to **Andrew Friedman**, GM and **Skip Coleman**, AGM, at the Hyatt Place for being ranked in top 5 revenue producing hotels for 2021 in overall brand system for Hyatt Place worldwide.

**Ocean City Department of Tourism** has a couple new faces to assist in the promotion of OC. Welcome to **Jennifer Evans** who will be handling Social Media and content creation and **Davis Mears** who is filling Jenna Knight's shoes as Internal Marketing Coordinator. Davis will oversee the newest marketing partner benefit of the **OC Convention & Visitors Bureau** which is Threshold 360; the leading provider for 360° virtual tour creation and publishing.

There are new babies to welcome - **Ashley Johnson**, Blue Water Hospitality had a boy, **Jackie Weisenberg** from Seacrets also had a boy. Belated congrats to **Danielle Rickett** from Princess Bayside on her December birth of a boy.

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### 2022-2023 SLATE FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It's that time of year again - we are pleased to announce the upcoming slate for the OCHMRA Board of Directors. Incoming *President* is Spiro Buas, OC Rooms, *1st Vice President* will be Ryan Wilde of BEST Motels, *2nd Vice President* will be Garvey Heiderman from The Hobbit Restaurant and Shawn Harman from Fish Tales continues as *Secretary-Treasurer*.

*3-Year Directors* include the following: Carl Bozick Macky's Bayside Bar & Grill, Jeremy Brink Ocean 13, Michael James Carousel Hotel Group

*2-Year Directors* include the following: Dave Robinson Boardwalk Hotel Group, Ruth Waters Harrison Group Hotels & Restaurants, Keith Whisenant Palmer Gosnell Residence Inn

*1-Year Directors* include the following: Dan Jasinski REAL Hospitality Group, Mike Gershenfeld Taustin Restaurant Group, Spencer Byrd Blue Water Hospitality

The new slate will be voted on at the February dinner meeting.

### Thoughts on Seasonal Workforce

by Annemarie Dickerson, Hospitality Consultant

The recruitment for the 2022 season is going extremely well. The interest in coming to the United States is very high, but unfortunately has significant hurdles. The biggest one as you are well aware is housing.

We lost several traditional seasonal rental units to weekly rentals, and we do not anticipate that changing in the near future. It also is a possibility that some countries may not have timely Visa approval which could impact the number of students. As of now, we are hopeful that we will have at least half the students we've had in years past. For Sponsor companies to work with your business, it is best to arrange housing so they can recruit on your behalf. We are told the average per student rental rate is between \$2400 and \$2600. Providing housing for a J1 student does not guarantee the student will remain employed at your business for the entire season. You may want to consider offering incentives such as an end of season bonus, or partial rent refund, for students who remain employed the entire summer. Also, offering a competitive wage will decrease the chances of the J1 student job jumping after arrival.

Bottom line, if you are an employer of J1s, offer a competitive wage, treat your students well, give them an incentive to stay the summer, and you'll likely be okay.

Finally, if you are considering host housing please be aware that each person living in a home that is providing housing must have a criminal background check.

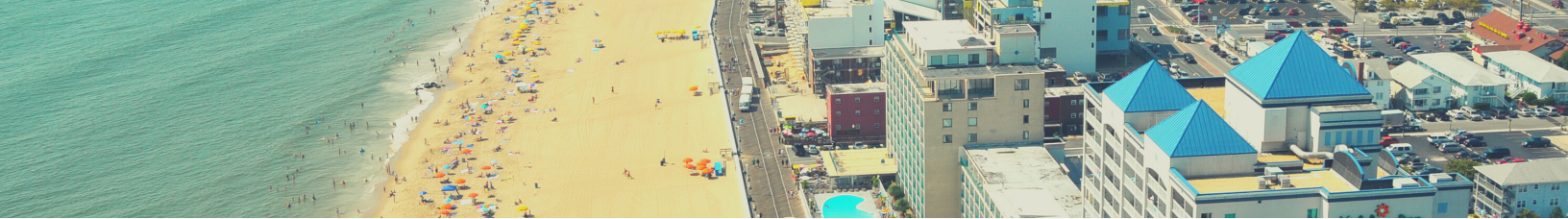
#### SOME SPONSOR CONTACTS

Aspire: Carrie Linch 410-524-0901  
clinch@asse.com

United Work & Travel: Anne Marie  
Conestabile 443-664-6519

AnneMarie@unitedworkandtravel.com  
InterExchange: Clay Lewis 917-305-5419  
clewis@interexchange.org

Intrax: Jenn Yildiz 804-672-7323  
jyildiz@intraxinc.com



## Community Connections - American Legion



**The American Legion members, your neighbors and customers, would like to thank our local businesses for their loyal support and show you how we can share our common interests and goals.**

*Join us*

**February 24**

for a Complimentary Drink and Lite Fare  
*In-House Poker Run — Win a Cheer Basket!*

**5 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

**American Legion Post 166**

2308 Philadelphia Avenue, OCMD

***Attendance is Free!***

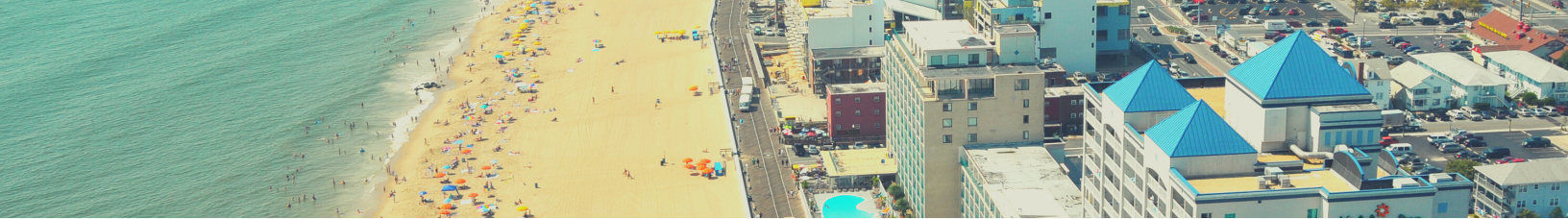
***Learn how by working together we can continue our commitment to community service.***

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*RSVP requested but not required*

**Sam Wiley, Steward, American Legion Post 166**

**443-235-0876/steward166@comcast.net**



## Community Connections - Worcester Goes Purple

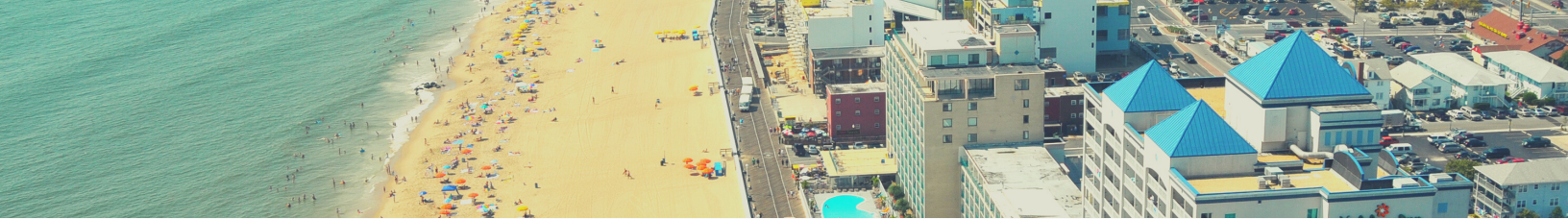


# OC GOES GREEN FOR RECOVERY

## SHAMROCK FUNDRAISER

**WE ARE ASKING BUSINESSES TO  
SELL SHAMROCKS, BEADS, LUCKY  
COINS, OR SKINJEWELRY FOR A  
MINIMUM  
DONATION OF \$1 TO BENEFIT  
WORCESTER GOES PURPLE  
THE COMPETITION WILL RUN FROM  
MARCH 1-31, 2022**

**CONTACT DEBBIE SMULLEN TO PARTICIPATE  
410-870-5161 | [WGPWARRIORS2021@GMAIL.COM](mailto:WGPWARRIORS2021@GMAIL.COM)**



## Community Connections - Diakonia

# SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



## COASTAL RESORTS GOLF CLASSIC

*Benefiting DiaKonia Homeless Shelter and Food Bank of Delaware*

• • • • •

### **Plantation Lakes Golf & Country Club**

*Featuring the New Arthur Hills' Designed Championship Course*

• • • • •

**Millsboro, Delaware**

**Friday, April 29, 2022**

**1pm Shotgun Start**



**CoastalResortsGolf.com**



## COASTAL RESORTS GOLF CLASSIC

# Sponsorship Opportunities

### ***Golf Towel Sponsorship – \$1,500 Exclusive Opportunity!***

- Your company name and logo embroidered on a tri-fold grommeted plush golf towel that will be given to each golfer in the field.

### ***Golf Cart Sponsorship – \$750 Exclusive Opportunity!***

- Your company name and logo will be placed on every cart in the event.

### ***Win \$10,000 Hole-In-One! Sponsorship – \$500 ea.***

- Your company name and logo will be placed prominently at competition hole.

### ***Lunch Sponsorship – \$500 ea.***

- Your company name and logo will be displayed at the lunch stations.

### ***Longest Drive Sponsorship – \$250 ea.***

- Your logo will be displayed.

### ***Practice Area Sponsorship – \$250 ea.***

- Your company name and logo will be placed throughout the Practice range, putting and chipping green.

### ***Big Drive For Charity – \$250 ea.***

- Your logo will be displayed.

### ***Closest to the Keg Sponsorship – \$250 ea.***

- Your logo will be displayed.

### ***Sponsor-A-Hole – \$100 ea.***

- Your company name (sorry, no logos) will be placed at one of 18 holes.

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*Your sponsorship/contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Tax ID #46-4613986*

For more information or to sign up as a sponsor, contact Rick Hundley at 703-447-5979, [rick@focusmultisports.com](mailto:rick@focusmultisports.com) or Ernie Felici at 610-613-4425, [ernie@focusmultisports.com](mailto:ernie@focusmultisports.com)





# 2022 GOLF EVENT: 4 PERSON SCRAMBLE TEAM

*Delaware's newest award winning golf course  
designed by renowned course designer Arthur Hill!*

**Start Time:** 1pm EDT

**Registration Limit:** 32 Teams

**Team Price:** \$650 Registration Fee  
plus Processing Fee

**Registration:** Registration ends April 8, 2022  
at 11:59pm EDT

**Registrations must be done on-line at  
CoastalResortsGolf.com**

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**11:30am:** Practice Facility is Open

**11:30am:** Orange Crush Bar Opens on  
the Patio. Baja Margarita Bar  
open at Practice Area.

**11:30am-12:40pm:** Big Drive For Charity

**11:30am-1pm:** Lunch is served in the Clubhouse

**1pm:** Shotgun Start

**1pm to 5pm:** Grotto Pizza Served

**5pm to 6:30pm:** Winners determined.

### SPONSOR/CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION:

Selected Sponsorship Category: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

In-Kind donation of: \_\_\_\_\_

### PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Enclosed is a check in the amount of: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to 'Focus Multisports, Inc.'.

To pay by credit card please go to: [www.coastalresortsgolf.com/Race/Store/DE/Millsboro/Golf](http://www.coastalresortsgolf.com/Race/Store/DE/Millsboro/Golf)



*Please send this form along with your tax-deductible sponsorship check or  
donation made out to Focus Multisports to:*

31322 Terry Circle  
Bethany Beach, DE 19930

All information subject to change without notice.

We're  
Back!  
and ready to  
reconnect!



**SPRING TRADE EXPO**  
Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association

Mid-Atlantic's Largest  
Hospitality Expo  
New Ideas &  
Innovative Products  
Sample & Source  
Unrivaled Networking

**March 6 & 7, 2022**



**Sunday 11AM - 5PM**

**Monday 11AM - 4PM**

**1 PM in Room 210**  
*Beverage Power Panel*

featuring Craft Pioneer, Hugh Sisson  
and the MD Breweries Association



**10 AM in Room 210**  
*Hospitality Power Panel*

featuring thought leaders from the MD & DE Lodging and  
Restaurant Associations, moderated by Melanie Pursel,  
Worcester County Economic Development & Tourism Director



**TEAM  
MARYLAND**

**World Food Championships  
Qualifying Competitions**



**Smithfield**  
presents the

**"Pig Puzzle"**  
deconstructing a half of a pig!

Register for FREE at [OceanCityTradeExpo.com](http://OceanCityTradeExpo.com) no later than Feb. 28th

After 2/28, you will be charged \$25 (per person) at the door.

Exclusively for the trade • No one under 21 admitted

**OceanCityTradeExpo.com**



**MARYLAND  
TOURISM  
COALITION**

## NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK 2022

### ● **TELL ME MORE!**

Held the first full week of May, National Travel and Tourism Week is an annual tradition for the U.S. travel community. It's a time when industry professionals across the country unite to celebrate the value travel holds for our economy, businesses, and personal well-being. During NTTW 2022, the Maryland Tourism Coalition will recognize and celebrate those across the state who serve in the travel and tourism industry.

### ● **WHEN IS IT? IS THERE A THEME?**

National Travel and Tourism Week is scheduled for May 1-7, 2022. "Power of Travel" was last year's theme. U.S. Travel will share the theme for the week in early 2022. Learn more at [ustravel.org](http://ustravel.org).

### ● **WHY SHOULD I GET INVOLVED?**

National Travel and Tourism Week is our chance to recognize and thank those frontline professionals in lodging, dining, attractions, retail, and other tourism-related positions for excellence in tourism service. The travel and tourism industry is one of Maryland's top employers, and no part of the economy has been harder hit since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020.

### ● **HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?**

In partnership with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development, the Maryland Tourism Coalition will provide a number of ways you can participate in NTTW 2022. Those include:

- Sharing worker success stories via social media and other public relations channels.
- Holding events such as a Tourism Appreciation Day.
- Developing proclamations in partnership with local government entities.
- Creating incentives, deals, discounts, and giveaways for travel industry workers.
- Promoting NTTW 2022 to your local media outlets via press releases and OP/EDs.

### ● **MORE INFORMATION?**

Sign up for Maryland Tourism Coalition and Maryland Office of Tourism newsletters for updates on what's planned. You can also contact MTC Executive Director Ruth Toomey at [ruth@mdtourism.org](mailto:ruth@mdtourism.org) or 336-254-4648 with questions or to volunteer.

**#NTTW2022**

In partnership with

