

HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

May 2025



Susan Jones
Executive Director



Kaylee Payne
Business Development &
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Dates For Your Calendar

Ocean City Restaurant Week
April 27 - May 11

Nat'l Travel & Tourism Week
MTC 150th Anniv. Tour
OC Life-Saving Station Museum
May 8 from 2pm to 6pm

TIPS/TAM Class
Ocean Pines Library
May 21 at 9am

Front-line Customer Service Training
with HMRA / Chamber / UMES
June 3rd - 2 sessions
10am - Noon or 6 - 8pm

Member Message

From Executive Director, Susan L. Jones

Spring has sprung - it's the perfect time to move forward with open hearts, open minds, and a shared purpose. One fun and impactful way to do that is by taking part in DINE STAY PLAY United! This program is a great way to engage customers and get some extra exposure for your business - all while supporting folks and causes in our backyard!

As we head into the season, don't forget—we all play a role in shaping how people experience summer here in our resort town. We're all ambassadors for Ocean City, and together we can show off everything that makes this place amazing. **Start with a simple smile—greet your team each day and set the tone.** When your employees feel valued and appreciated, they'll pass that good energy on to your guests. Great hospitality keeps both your team and your customers coming back!

Mark your calendar for June 3rd - we're bringing back front-line Hospitality Training - we'll have a morning and an evening session. Details coming soon! 😊



Hospitality Highlights

Whats new in the industry?

WARM WELCOMES & CELEBRATIONS

Giving a warm welcome to **W.B. Mason Company's** newest team member, **Dalton Foxwell**. Congratulations to **Michael James, James Hospitality**, on the birth of his newest granddaughter, Charlotte. A great example of a Hospitality Career Path, **The View** hired a new head chef, **Jackson Lewis**, who graduated from **Worcester Tech** & was the Sous Chef at **Ocean 13** for 3 years! **Phill Cropper, Worcester Technical High School**, was named Teacher of the Year - way to go Phil! **Adela Byrne** was promoted to Regional Director of Revenue Management at **Stonebridge Companies**. **Marwan Ayeshe, Carousel Oceanfront Hotel**, will be filling in as GM until the end of the summer and, the Carousel Oceanfront Hotel welcomed a new HR Manager, **Kyra Baynard**. **Kelsey Batchellor** is the newest Inside Sales Representative at **Action Elevator**. Congrats to **Lisa Ayedolette**, new GM at the **Lankford Hotel**. The **Town of OC** announced **Raymond J. Austin's** appointment as the new Chief of Police for OCPD. With over 30 years of experience in law enforcement and a long history of community engagement, Chief Austin returns to lead the department he has served since 1991.

Congratulations to the **Hyatt Place Ocean City** on their expansion with 63 new city-view rooms and studio suites one block west of their main hotel. The **Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort** just completed its \$20 million renovation to enhance luxury in Ocean City. We have a few new restaurants in town opening this summer - **Seacrets Hideaway** is set to have its grand opening this summer. **Dough Roller** is now serving Dayton's Breakfast from their carry-out window at their S. Division St. location near the inlet. **Jolly Jellyfish Beach Club's** opening date should be Thursday May 8th. **Matt Ortt Companies** has taken over the old Tony's Pizza location which will become **Flamingo Coast**.

SAD GOODBYES

Our sincerest condolences to **Gary Leach, Sodexo**, on the loss of his father.



Pictured L to R: Chad Olenchick, Melissa Laws, Megan Alvarado, Dan Jasinski, Ruth Waters, Jeremy Brink, Keith Whisenant, Garvey Heiderman, and Nadine Horsey.

(not pictured - Cole Taustin, Dave Robinson, Michael James, Wes Hanna, and Rick Staub)

2025 - 2026 OCHMRA Board of Directors

On Thursday, April 17, we installed our 2025 - 2026 Board of Directors. **Ruth Waters**, Harrison Group Hotels & Restaurants, was installed as the incoming President. **Dan Jasinski**, Stonebridge Companies, remained as the 1st Vice President, and the 2nd Vice President is **Cole Taustin**, Taustin Restaurant Group. The newly installed Secretary-Treasurer is **Keith Whisenant**, Residence Inn Marriott OC.

The 3-year Board of Directors installed included **Jeremy Brink** of Ocean 13, **Michael James** of James Hospitality, and **Wes Hanna** of Harpoon Hanna's. The 2-year Directors included **Megan Alvarado** of Happy Jack Pancake House, **Dave Robinson** of Boardwalk Hotel Group, and **Melissa Laws** of Hampton Inn Bayfront. Serving as 1-year Directors are **Chad Olenchick** of Cabanas Beach Bar & Grille, **Nadine Horsey** of Pit-n-Pub, and **Rick Staub** of Princess Royale Resort. **Garvey Heiderman** of The Hobbit is the Immediate Past President.



FEATURED PARTNERS:



VALCOURT
BUILDING SERVICES



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ACTIVE

OC Resorts
ocresorts.com

ALLIED

Verizon - TCC
tccrocks.com

W.B. Mason Company
wbmason.com



Member Mentions

Once again, we've partnered with the United Way Lower Eastern Shore (UWLES) to produce **DINE STAY & PLAY United**. This program has raised over \$345,000 for our local community since 2016. 100% of Dine, Stay & Play United proceeds stay local, benefiting our Lower Eastern Shore communities through more than 60 partner & direct service programs in Education, Health, and Financial Stability, impacting more than 150,000 local neighbors annually.

How It Works

Hotels, restaurants, and attraction venues give back to the community and create local impact in Worcester County throughout the summer. It's simple - participants choose a promo item and track sales from Memorial Day through Labor Day through your POS system, and a portion of the proceeds (your choice!) benefit UWLES - OR pledge a donation amount of your choice to give at the end of the season.

Why it Works

Helping Local Neighbors. All proceeds stay local for UWLES and their 60 nonprofit partners to help vulnerable neighbors who in Worcester and nearby Lower Shore counties.

[Click Here](#) to see all their marketing benefits



On behalf of Jolly Roger Amusement Parks, Suzanne Jackson accepted this year's Spirit Award from UWLES for participating in their Dine, Stay & Play United program.

Artists Paint OC Festival 2025

Save the Date: August 13 - 17, 2025

Join us for the 20th annual Artists Paint OC, where artists bring the Ocean City area to life through plein air painting! By bringing together talented artists, engaged locals, and visiting art enthusiasts, this event generates a significant economic impact beyond the Art League's regular operations.

[Click here to view their sponsorship opportunities](#)



Condé Nast Traveler recently opened up submissions for their Readers' Choice Awards, and Spain Wine Bar has been nominated for the 2025 Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards in the Restaurant category, and Ashore has been nominated for the Resorts category. And, OC was one of best beaches!!

It would be a great publicity for Ocean City if they win - [cast your vote here!](#)

Summer Work Travel Conference Recap

The Community Support Group, led by the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, recently held their annual Summit. Several sponsors and businesses gathered to learn from the Department of State, Social Security, the Alliance for International Exchange and others. There are 300,000 Exchange Visitors (EVs) from 200 countries, and Ocean City is the number 1 destination for students in the Bridge USA program! Last year, 376 employers welcomed 3,678 J1 Summer Work Travel EVs with a majority from Romania, Bulgaria, and the Dominican Republic. When connecting with sponsors to bring the EVs to your business, keep in mind that the goal is to offer a cultural exchange. We want the student experience during their summer in OC to be a good one; when they return to their home countries, they will sell our destination, so we can remain number 1!

Lots of useful information was shared by the Social Security Administration, including that they will no longer accept walk-ins and appointments must be made. Additionally, they suggested having the EVs fill out the application online to receive a "control #" which would then be brought to the appointment, along with proof of visa, a passport, and immigration documentation.

For all the FAQs and other information from the Summit, [click here](#).

For onboarding your EVs, remember to share the [Overview of Ocean City Video](#).



FOOD/MEALS IN OC 2025 (tentative)	
MONDAY Son's Spot 12 Worcester St. ~ Breakfast 7:30 - 9am Shepherd's Crook 302 N. Baltimore Ave. Dry food pantry 10am - 12pm OC Baptist Church 102 N. Division St. ~ Dinner 6 - 8pm	TUESDAY Son's Spot 12 Worcester St. ~ Breakfast 7:30 - 9am Shepherd's Crook 302 N. Baltimore Ave. Dry food pantry 10am - 12pm
WEDNESDAY First Presbyterian Church 1501 Philadelphia Ave. Breakfast 7 - 9am (through mid Aug.) Food pantry 9 - 11:30am St. Peter's Lutheran Church 103rd St. Lunch/Soup Kitchen 12 - 1:30pm	THURSDAY Shepherd's Crook 302 N. Baltimore Ave. Dry food pantry 10am - 12pm Son's Spot 12 Worcester St. ~ Dinner 5:30 - 7pm
FRIDAY Son's Spot 12 Worcester St. ~ Breakfast 7:30 - 9am Atlantic United Methodist 4th St. Lunch/Soup Kitchen 11am - 12:45pm	SATURDAY Son's Spot 12 Worcester St. ~ Breakfast 7:30 - 9am Shepherd's Crook 302 N. Baltimore Ave. Dry food pantry 10am - 12pm (until end of June) Holy Savior Catholic Church 17th St. ~ Dinner 6 - 9pm June 24, June 8, July 29, & August 12
	Diakonia 12747 Old Bridge Rd., West OC Pantry open daily 8am - 4pm Can only be used ONCE per month



Member Furniture for Sale

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Northside is selling mirrors and lighting, \$25 for both.

If interested, contact Marie Hopper at marie@hiexocmd.com!



Marketing Opportunities

Ways to promote your businesses






Rising Tides Festival Opportunities

The Ocean City Convention Center will be hosting the Rising Tides Festival Saturday, November 22, 2025—a brand-new event celebrating music, arts, and coastal culture. This festival is expected to draw a vibrant crowd of attendees looking for exceptional accommodations and unique local experiences to enhance their stay.

The Tourism Department invites you to collaborate with them by providing special hotel room rates, packages, and custom events to help create an unforgettable festival weekend. **This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase your property, drive additional bookings, and be part of an exciting new tradition in Ocean City.**

How You Can Get Involved:

-  Hotel Blocks, Packages & Rates – Special festival pricing, bundled experiences, or value-added perks for attendees
-  Custom Events & Activations – Exclusive happy hours, themed brunches, wellness sessions, or entertainment at your venue, 90's karaoke, yoga on the beach etc.
-  Experiential Additions – Unique guest experiences that highlight the best of Ocean City

All participating partner offerings will be featured on the official Rising Tides Festival website, giving your business increased visibility among thousands of festival attendees.

For more details on the Rising Tides Festival, visit the [Rising Tides Festival Website](#).



Free Promotional Opportunity

List your deals, packages, and events on [VisitMaryland.org](#)

Hotels, dining, retail, attractions, and all tourism-related businesses are invited to list deals, packages, bundled multi-day experiences, incentives, loyalty programs, and discounts to be featured on [VisitMaryland.org](#).

The Maryland Office of Tourism's promotions reach millions of potential visitors, targeting the state's overnight travel markets through interactive advertisements, social media, and e-newsletters encouraging them to enjoy getaways in Maryland and find deals on [VisitMaryland.org](#)

Check out their [flyer for more details](#)

Midweek Smiles Campaign

Attract Visitors to Ocean City Sunday through Thursday.

We recently launched our Midweek Smiles campaign — designed to give your business a Midweek boost during the slower Sunday through Thursday stretch.

As a hotel, restaurant, or attraction member, you have the opportunity to create a special Midweek offer that gives visitors a reason to Stay, Play, & Dine — Midweek!

We've teamed up with the Town of Ocean City to help spread the word — all Midweek deals will be featured on [OCVisitor.com](#) and [ococean.com](#). This is a year-round campaign, so you can submit your Midweek offer anytime! To get started, email kaylee@ocvisitor.com!



Business Briefs



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Family and Medical Leave Insurance

Paid Family and Medical Leave is coming to Maryland

Maryland is preparing to launch a new paid family and medical leave system! When the program launches, workers will be able to take time away from work to care for themselves or a family member and still be paid up to \$1000 a week for up to 12 weeks.



The Maryland General Assembly [passed a final bill](#) to establish new implementation dates for Maryland's paid family and medical leave insurance program:

- Payroll deductions will begin January 1, 2027
- Benefits will become available by January 3, 2028

The Governor is expected to sign the bill in the coming weeks, and MD Labor will begin updating our proposed regulations. They will share changes to the proposed regulations via this listserv and on [their website](#).

The Moore-Miller Administration understands the value that paid family and medical leave will offer to Maryland workers, families, and employers. [The decision to extend the implementation timeline](#) for this critical program was not made lightly, but it was the responsible path to take given the unprecedented level of uncertainty resulting from recent federal actions. They remain firmly committed to building a program that will support Marylanders for generations to come.

Your Voice Matters

Worcester County Health Department releases new Community Health Assessment Survey

The Worcester County Health Department (WCHD) is proud to announce that the [Community Health Assessment \(CHA\) survey](#) is officially open to anyone who lives, works, or plays in Worcester County - it is completely voluntary, anonymous, and all information provided will be kept confidential.

The goal of the survey is to gather the community's opinions about the health of themselves and the community overall. The WCHD and partnering agencies will use the results of this survey and other information to identify the most important health issues that will be addressed in the 2026 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

For questions about the survey, please contact [worcesterc.health@maryland.gov](mailto:worcester.health@maryland.gov).

Key Requirements: Maryland Heat Stress Standards

The COMAR 09.12.32 Heat Stress Standards are effective as of September 30, 2024

Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) Heat Stress Standards apply to both indoor and outdoor workplaces where employees are exposed to a heat index at or above 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

The heat index, or apparent temperature, is an indication of what the temperature feels like to the body while taking into account relative humidity and air temperature. Occupational exposure to heat stress may cause employee injuries or illnesses. The Heat Stress Standards were implemented to protect employees from heat hazards.

[MD Heat Illness Prevention Standard Powerpoint Key Requirements](#)

Utility Advisor

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- NO COSTS TO JOIN
- CANCEL AT ANYTIME
- NO ROOF NEEDED

Maryland has a goal to be 50% Renewable by 2030

HB 908 was signed in 2023, establishing Community Solar as a permanent program in Maryland. This allows consumers to access energy from local solar farms at reduced costs compared to the utility, all while supporting MD's efforts in renewable energy initiatives.

Click Here To Claim Your Spot
Limited Space Available

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Resources

[Hospitality Hiring Resources](#)

Are you in need of hiring resource that are either FREE or LOW-COST? These resources may be able to guide you or provide the support you need.

[Ocean City Parking Information](#)

The Town is upgrading its parking system by removing parking kiosks and implementing payment via ParkMobile.

National Travel & Tourism Week

Mark your calendar for #NTTW25—May 4-10, 2025—as we celebrate an industry that fuels opportunity and connects us all.

[National Travel and Tourism Week](#) (NTTW) is an annual tradition that highlights travel's essential role in driving economic growth, creating jobs, and enhancing quality of life across the United States. Since 1983, the industry has come together each May to recognize and amplify the impact of travel in communities nationwide.

Travel is one of America's most powerful economic engines—supporting 15 million jobs, generating \$2.9 trillion in economic output, and funding essential public services. It strengthens every sector of the economy, from restaurants and retail to tech, manufacturing, & agriculture.

[Resources to help you engage in NTTW are now available.](#)

Find-A-Kid Program

The "Find a Kid" program is a comforting service that hotels can offer to guests with young children. Already successfully launched last year, this program gives parents peace of mind, knowing there's a reliable system in place to help reunite them with their child quickly if they get lost.



OCHMRA will supply the first box with your property name, address, & phone number **at no cost to you.**

- Hotels with less than 100 rooms will receive a box of 500
- Hotels with more than 100 rooms will receive a box of 1000

For more details or if you want to sign up, go to page 9.

Have questions? Reach out to Kaylee at Kaylee@ocvisitor.com or give us a call, (410) 289-6733!

Community Connections



National Travel & Tourism Week: Historic Walking Tour

Join **MTC, OC Tourism & HMRA** to celebrate Ocean City's rich history in tourism and hospitality, beginning with the "Petticoat Regime." On **May 8th**, from 2 - 4 pm, starting at the OC Life-Saving Station Museum, this historic walking tour will honor the individuals whose innovation and vision built Ocean City into the thriving resort it is today. By focusing on 150 years of tourism, the event will shine a light on the pioneering spirit, determination, and resilience of those who shaped the town's identity. Finish with an optional Happy Hour at the Plim Plaza from 4 - 6pm.

[Click here for details](#)

OCEAN CITY MUSEUM SOCIETY PRESENTS

LOUIS PARSONS III MEMORIAL PHOTO CONTEST



CONTEST CATEGORIES

- Adult Category (18 and over)
 - Ocean City Beach
 - Ocean City Boardwalk
 - Assateague Bay or Ocean City Bay Sunsets
 - Each category winner will be awarded \$250.00
- Youth Category (17 and under)
 - The photograph can be of any subject as long as the location of the image is in Ocean City, Maryland
 - One winner will be selected and awarded \$250.00

ADDITIONAL CASH PRIZES FOR GRAND PRIZE WINNER, SPONSOR PRIZE AND PEOPLE'S CHOICE VOTE.

ONLINE ENTRIES ACCEPTED FROM

APRIL 1- SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

ENTER FOR \$5, VOTE FOR \$1.

FIND MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.OCMUSEUM.ORG



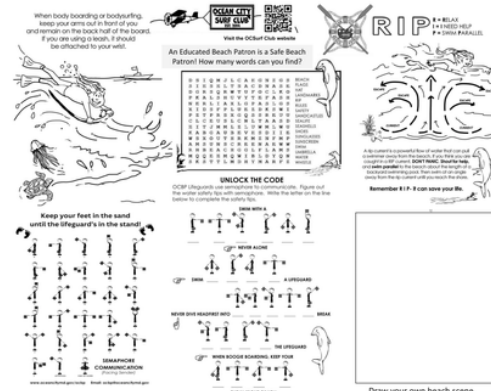

OCSC/OCBP Kids' Placemats

The Ocean City Surf Club has partnered with the Ocean City Beach Patrol to create educational kids' placemats, now available for local restaurants and businesses. These 10" x 14" placemats are a great way to teach children about ocean and beach safety, while keeping them entertained with coloring activities and puzzles.

By using these placemats in your business, you're helping to educate both children (*and adults*) on how to stay safe at the beach.

This is not a fundraiser—the placemats are offered at cost. They will be delivered directly to your business. To order, contact Tommy Vach (OCSC) at tommyvach@voxpops.com / (443) 366-5885 or Kevan Thompson (OCBP) at kevansueoc@yahoo.com / (443) 783-7776

[Click here](#) to learn more!





HOTEL • MOTEL • RESTAURANT • ASSOCIATION • INC.

FIND-A-KID PROGRAM

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OCHMRA will supply the first box with your property name, address, & phone number **at no cost to you.**

- *Hotels with less than 100 rooms will receive a box of 500*
- *Hotels with more than 100 rooms will receive a box of 1000*

If the child is wearing a wristband & wanders away, here's what will happen:

1. If the OC Lifeguards or OCPD see a child wandering, they will first attempt to reunite the child with a parent.
2. If the parent cannot be located, the child will be taken to the hotel on the wristband. The lifeguard/police will notify the hotel desk clerk of the lost child.

If interested in participating, please fill out the form below and email it to susanjones@ocvisitor.com:

Property: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Property Phone # (for wristband): _____

Please return no later than May 16, 2025!



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James Hospitality is a premier privately owned hotel management company, bringing extensive experience and a proven track record of success to hotel operations throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

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TESTIMONIALS

James Hospitality has been a valued partner for over 10 years. They manage all operations, HR, and marketing with exceptional professionalism.

Their team has created a world-class experience for our guests—an experience that has directly translated to our bottom line. I can't recommend them highly enough!

-Crystal Beach Hotel

HOTEL PORTFOLIO



Carousel Oceanfront Resort



Cayman Suites Hotel



Crystal Beach Hotel



Tideland's Caribbean Hotel & Suites



Fenwick Inn



Bonita Beach Hotel



Coastal Palms Beach Hotel



The Bay Resort Waterfront Hotel



410-390-0354



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