

FEBRUARY 2024

HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

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



Member Message

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUSAN L. JONES

Can you believe our **50th Annual Trade Expo** is just a few weeks away? March 3rd & 4th we will host 442 exhibits in 2 halls - our **LARGEST EVER!** Pair that with the Solutions Showcase educational sessions, in partnership with MD Tourism Coalition, RAM's MD World Food Championship qualifier and a highly motivational keynote, this year promises to be super exciting!

Sitting still is not in our DNA, so we are working feverishly organizing the **2024 OC Keycard Holder** while planning Expo and dinners - we are a busy 2-person office! Shout-out to our Restaurants and Attractions - we only have 4 pages left in this pocket-sized key holder that is placed directly in the hands of visitors! We print 350,000 copies and distribute them to our hotels! Let us know if you want in! Hope to see you at EXPO!



MARCH 3 & 4, 2024



SIP, SAMPLE, & SHOP

Touch and taste the newest, most innovative products on the market! Connect with company reps to get the best deals!

INDUSTRY EXPERTS

Relaxed atmosphere of learning during the Solutions Showcase Sessions - Evolution of the Hospitality Industry, Save our TIP\$, Keynote: Recipe for Reinventing Workforce, & more...

NETWORK

Over 420 exhibits! The Mid-Atlantic's largest hospitality gathering. Meet face-to-face with industry suppliers & colleagues!

REGISTER ONLINE

OceanCityTradeExpo.com

Open to the Trade Only | No One Under 21

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ALLIED

Hospitality Dining Solutions, LLC
hospitalitydynamicsolutions.com

BesTemps
bestemps.com

JDog Junk Removal & Hauling Ocean City
JDogjunkremoval.com

Robert W Nock Insurance Agency Inc.
nockinsurance.com

High Five Tourism Solutions
highfivetourism.com

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDARS

Youth Apprenticeship Interest Luncheon
Worcester Technical High School
February 14th

5-Course Chefs Dinner
February 28 (see pg. 3)

OCHMRA Trade Expo
March 3 - 4

OCHMRA NETWORKING DINNERS
6pm to 9pm

February 15
Princess Royale

April 18
Harrison's Harbor Watch



Coming April 14 - 28

See Page 4 for details on how to sign up!

OCHMRA 5700 COASTAL HWY #302 OCEAN CITY, MD 21842
(410) 289-6733 • WWW.OCVISITOR.COM • INQUIRE@OCVISITOR.COM



Susan Jones
Executive Director



Kaylee Payne
Business Development & Marketing Associate



Hospitality Highlights

WARM WELCOMES & CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome **Carissa Haraczka**, the new marketing coordinator at **Fisher Architecture, LLC** and a belated welcome to **Preston Cook** who is the new Food & Beverage manager at **Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort**. A big thank you to **Scott Heise, Pizza Tugos**, for donating pizza to the Morgan State Choir during Dreamfest weekend. **Bobbi Jones** was named the new General Manager at **Ocean Downs Casino** - congrats!

Congratulations to **Caitlin Evans**, Hospitality Instructor at **Worcester Technical High School**, for being named Teacher of the Year - she was also the 2006 UMES HMRA scholarship recipient - way to go Caitlin!

BEHIND THE BOARD - LORRIE MILLER

Lorrie Miller is currently serving as the Three-Year Director of the OCHMRA. She is the Regional Operations Manager of the hotel portfolio at Blue Water, a leading hospitality development and management company.



In her role, she oversees the operations, performance, and profitability of multiple hotels on the East Coast. Her responsibilities extend to supporting the development and implementation of strategic initiatives, revenue management, and cost optimization. Prior to this, Lorrie held the position of General Manager at various brands including Hilton Garden Inn, Residence Inn by Marriott, Four Points by Sheraton, and Hampton Inn as well as the iconic Dunes Manor Hotel & Suites.

She recently earned an Executive Certificate in Hospitality & Tourism Management from Florida Atlantic University and is currently enrolled with eCornell to earn a Certificate in Hotel Management and Owner Relations, further solidifying her commitment to the industry.

In addition to her professional role, she's also a volunteer Lasagna Chef with Lasagna Love, a global nonprofit and grassroots movement that aims to positively impact communities by connecting neighbors with neighbors. She has delivered over 100 lasagnas to shelters and families in need in her area, and most recently provided dinner on Christmas Eve for the homeless being cared for by the Ocean City Cold Weather Shelter. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, tennis, and spending time on the beach with her son, Eli (12) and daughter, Brielle (7).

Fun fact: I'm originally from Philadelphia. Go Birds!

Member Mentions

Allied member **Dave Carberry, Enradius**, recently launched a new book called "Stop Networking, Start Needworking: The Intersection of Maslow's Needs and Networking". The book shows us how much better networking can be when we take a needs-based approach to helping others and asking for help. He even mentioned the OCHMRA in it, [click here](#) to check it out!

Industry Insights



Restaurant Association of Maryland

Save the Tip Credit

The current tipping system provides an average wage of \$27/hour for servers. However, many servers and bartenders report earning up to \$50/hour throughout a workweek.

Despite this, a national activist group is lobbying Maryland lawmakers to eliminate the tip credit. In 2023, they attempted to pass legislation to eliminate the tip credit at the statewide level, in Prince George's County, and Montgomery County. However, they failed on all three occasions due to opposition from servers, bartenders, restaurants, and the Restaurant Association of Maryland.

If the tip credit is eliminated, menu prices will increase, and service charges will be added to customer checks. Research shows that customers do not tip on top of service charges, especially when employees are paid a minimum wage hourly rate by their employer. This is particularly true at quick-service or fast-casual restaurants. As a result, servers will earn less money, customers will pay higher prices, and restaurants will struggle to retain servers who will not work for a flat hourly rate without tips.

[Click here](#) to donate to RAM. General donations are to assist RAM's Government Affairs & Advocacy.



MTC's **Tourism Day** is February 9th at Rams Head in Annapolis. Register by February 2nd! [click here](#)

FEATURED PARTNER:





5-Course Chefs Dinner by the DCCA

Indulge in a delectable five-course meal prepared by the talented chefs from the DCCA (Delmarva Chefs & Cooks Association) at the **Captain's Table Restaurant and Bar** in the Courtyard Marriott on 15th Street.

This in-person event promises to tantalize your taste buds and leave you craving for more. Immerse yourself in the cozy ambiance, savor each dish, and relish the company of fellow food enthusiasts. Don't miss out on this extraordinary dining event! *All Proceeds go to fund the advancement of culinarians and culinary studies in the Delmarva area.*

Event Details: **Wed., February 28th** from 6 - 10pm. Tickets are \$100/person and includes a 5-course meal with non-alcoholic beverages (*cash bar available*).

For tickets, click this link: [CHEFS DINNER TICKETS](#)

Business Briefs

Beach Heroes - TKU!

In 2023:

- 14.6 tons of trash was collected/disposed
- 1,868 total volunteer hours
- 217 new volunteer members
- Clean-up area: OC inlet to MD state line - Bay to Beach



Beach Heros would like to thank all the dedicated volunteers who generously gave their time and showed their community spirit, the **Town of Ocean City** for supplies/publicity, as well as local businesses for their parking and support to the volunteers, and to **Fagers Island** and **The Dough Roller** for providing the 2023 Beach Heroes t-shirts and hoodies.

Because of you, the 2023 clean-up year was very successful, and they are dedicated to continuing their clean-up efforts, expanding the volunteer team, and building strong relationships with local businesses and the community in 2024.

Special thanks to.....

45th St Taphouse • Alley Oops / Ropewalk / Saltwater75 • Bull on the Beach • Commander Hotel • Days Inn • Dead Freddie's • Dumsers Dairyland • Fagers Island • Guidos Burritos • Hilton Garden Inn • Papi's Tacos • The Bonfire • The Dough Roller • The Hobbit

**If your business would be interested in recognizing our dedicated volunteers with t-shirts or hoodies for 2024, please contact Colleen at cmdegroot@yahoo.com or Leslie at lmeisenhauer@hotmail.com*

Tips for the Trade

Top Insights Winning the Hearts of Travelers in 2024

By: BVK

Consumer relationships with travel are swiftly evolving, both socially and economically. Modern jetsetters don't just care about traditional selling points—they want to identify with the brands they support. With that comes an increased appetite for fresh, authentic and meaningful experiences, all while adjusting to the growing presence of AI in all measures of travel. So, as we carry these insights through the new year, let's harness their influence for a well-traveled 2024.

[Click here](#) to check out their blog and insights decks to join the cultural conversation.



Showcase Solutions PromiseTangible Takeaways

Plan to attend the EXPO - great sessions have been planned offering the opportunity to learn and leave with tangible takeaways! See page 6 for Keynote Speaker!

[Click here](#) for the **EXPO Schedule**

FEATURED PARTNER:



(410) 543-0693 • WWW.RRCOATINGSINC.COM • DAN@RRCOATINGSINC.COM



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Come Join Us!

Wicomico Youth & Civic Center
MIDWAY ROOM



PHVAC TRADE Show



FEBRUARY

21

8am - 3:30pm

PRESENTED BY:
SHORE
DISTRIBUTORS, INC.

Training Classes, Industry Updates & MORE



PRODUCTS
SERVICES
SOLUTIONS



OCEAN CITY TRADE EXPO

March 3 & 4, 2024

Celebrating 50 years uniting hospitality
buyers and sellers!



WHY ATTEND?

INDUSTRY EXPERTS



Relaxed atmosphere of learning during the **Solutions Showcase** - sessions brought to you by MD Tourism Coalition.

SIP, SAMPLE & SHOP



Touch and taste the newest, most **innovative** products and services on the market! Connect with the company reps to get the **best deals!** Discover **new trends!**

NETWORK



Over **420 exhibits!** The largest hospitality gathering in the Mid-Atlantic. Meet **face-to-face** with industry suppliers & colleagues!

REGISTER TODAY

OceanCityTradeExpo.com



Recipe For Reinventing Your Workforce

Key ingredients to control your destiny

- Learn how to adapt to organizational **change** effectively
- Walk away with **leadership** strategies that will increase your “attitudinal potential.”
- Discover ways to be MORE **creative** in their retention of clients and customers.



MONDAY

March 4, 2024
Start at 9AM

Room **208**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

BRIAN BLASKO

Highly Motivated, Nationally Known Speaker,
Trainer and Author

FEATURED PARTNER:

(410) 543-0693 • WWW.RRCOATINGSINC.COM • DAN@RRCOATINGSINC.COM

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OCEAN CITY
**RESTAURANT
 WEEK** *a culinary experience*

APRIL 14-28, 2024

OceanCityRestaurantWeek.com

ABOUT OC RESTAURANT WEEK

We want to give locals and visitors alike the chance to channel their "inner foodie" and finally try that restaurant on their dining wish list. OC Restaurant Week is a member benefit of OCHMRA with primary goals of encouraging dining out, fostering food innovation, and inspiring consumer confidence in our restaurant members.



HOW TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL RESTAURANT WEEK

- Send us your menu *as soon as possible*. Many diners pre-plan their Restaurant Week experiences, having your menu available to them will sell your restaurant.
- Make your menu stand out! Guests love options and creative cuisine.
- Train your staff to upsell, and incentivize alcohol and dessert sales.
- Promote your participation in Restaurant Week to your current diners, through your social media and in your weekly ads.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Fill out the form below and send it to susanjones@ocvisitor.com by April 1st.

Restaurant Name _____

Contact Name _____

Contact Email _____ Contact Phone _____

Check all that apply:

- Please use my last menu (if need, let me know)
- I will be submitting a new menu or deal - send no later than April 5th
- I will offer this menu for the full two weeks
- I will be excluding the following days and/or dates from the promotion: _____

What days will you be open during this promotion:

- Weekends only
- 7 days a week
- Other: _____

Get famous at the OC Film Fest 2024



BE A STAR! ADVERTISE IN THE OFFICIAL FILM FESTIVAL PROGRAM

- Distributed to 1,200+ Film Fest attendees looking for places to go in OC for 4 days - March 7 - 10, 2024.
- Distributed to 45,000 homes as a newspaper insert into OCToday/Dispatch, Coastal Point and Easton Star-Democrat on February 23, 2024

Free program listings for restaurants and locals

- who offer welcoming specials to Film Fest attendees, many first-time area visitors

Advertising opportunities in the official 2024 OC Film Festival Program & Newspaper Insert

- Business card-size ad = \$100
- Quarter page ad = \$250

*PROCEEDS FROM THE OCEAN CITY FILM FESTIVAL
BENEFIT THE ART LEAGUE OF OCEAN CITY,
A NONPROFIT, AND THEIR OUTREACH PROGRAMS*

DEADLINE FOR SPACE & MATERIALS FEB. 7, 2024

Print-ready pdf files required. CMYK/300 dpi
Biz card ad size = 2.3" high x 3.25" wide
Quarter page ad size = 5" wide x 6" high

**Send materials/questions: Nancy Dofflemyer nancyd@artleagueofoceancity.org
elaine@artleagueofoceancity.org 410-524-9433**



FREE ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING FOR VETERANS

**Is Entrepreneurship the right choice for you?
Do you have a business idea but not sure where to start?
Are you a Veteran small business owner looking to expand?**

Want to know more, register for one of the Project Opportunity **Eastern Shore Spring 2024 Orientation Sessions** at www.project-opportunity.com/class/registration.

Tuesday March 5, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Worcester County Economic Development Training Room located at 107 West Green Street, Snow Hill, Maryland

Thursday March 7, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the American Job Center located at 31901 Tri-County Way, Salisbury, Maryland

Attendance at the Orientation Session is a vital step in our application process. If you are interested in this class but unable to attend you must contact Program Director Joe Giordano, joe.giordano@project-opportunity.com

Classes Begins Tuesday March 12, 2024

Project Opportunity is an intensive curriculum based 10-week cohort program. The Spring 2024 program will meet every **Tuesday, March 12 through May 14, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:30 PM. Class sessions will be rotated between Snow Hill and Salisbury during the 10 week cohort.** Through grants and community business support **this program is free to all veterans.** The curriculum and material is facilitated by small business professionals and subject matter experts.

Training Includes:

- ❖ *Assessing Your Business Idea*
- ❖ *Marketing Analysis*
- ❖ *Financing and Financial Management*
- ❖ *Business Structure and Taxes*
- ❖ *Development of a Business Plan*