



JULY 2019

# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

## News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Welcome New Members  
Active  
The Simple Life Motel**

**You're invited to the MD Tourism  
Coalition Summer Soiree**

The 4th Annual Summer Soiree Member Appreciation & Legislative Reception hosted by Maryland Tourism Coalition & Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organizations will take place at the Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort Hotel & Conference Center on Wednesday, Aug 14th from 4pm-6pm. MTC would like to thank our MTC members and the General Assembly of Maryland for all they do to support Tourism in Maryland. This event is free for MTC members in good standing and for County & State Legislators. Non-members are welcome to attend for a \$25 registration fee, \$30 at the door.

**Please register by clicking here.**

### Support Fellow Allied Members

Founded in 1971, our local non-profit trade Association has been in existence for 48 years! The original founders, many of whom are still in operation, have always made it a point to support our "Allied" members. These Allied members are businesses who sell and service the hospitality industry. Given today's climate, it is critically important that we maintain our local connections and support our Allied Members who help to support our Association.

Here is the link to our Allied Members  
- check it out here.

## OC BIKEFEST GETTING READY TO RALLY!

With just a little over 2 months to go, we are getting excited for the return of OC Bikefest on September 12th through the 16th. If you recall, the weather did not cooperate last year and the declaration of a state of emergency sent everyone scrambling. That declaration also led to the event owner allowing last years unused tickets (approximately 2,500) to be used at this years event. It is imperative that as a community, we do everything we can to help the event continue to take place in Ocean City. This event needs our support in the way of comp or drastically reduced rooms for bands, security and staff, as well as, support in the way of sponsorships. This years awesome entertainment includes Cheap Trick, ZZ Top, Stone Temple Pilots, Rival Sons, Hairball and Kix. With such a great line-up, we'll most certainly have lots of economic activity ~ keep in mind, (unfortunately) there are many short term-rentals now competing for the same guests as our members, so make sure you're rates are attractive.





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**Clare Shockley** has joined **Stillwater Provisions** as the account manager for Sysco. **Alexandra Marginean, Princess Royale**, has been promoted to Assistant Director of Sales. Also at **Princess Royale**, **Julianne Mills** has joined the team as the new Catering Sales Manager and **Lauren Broussard** is the new Sales Administrative Assistant. Congrats to **Denzil Kentebe**, who is the new General Manager at the **Fairfield Inn & Suites**. Welcome to **Courtney Hastings**, who is the new Marketing and Events Coordinator at **United Way**. Congrats to **Patricia Ilczuk (Lavanceau) Shaffer, Branch Out Marketing**, who married partner, **Dave Shaffer**.

## Condolences

Condolences to **Lisa Layfield** and **Danielle Davis**, both of the **Ocean City Chamber of Commerce**, who both lost their mothers. Condolences to **Norma Dobrowski, OC Convention Center**, who lost her mother.



## THE DISH: Restaurant industry trends

### WHAT CAN RESTAURANT MANAGERS GLEAN FROM CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

From the takeaways restaurant managers can glean from the feedback that customers leave, and how they can turn that feedback into actionable items for improvement.

#### Learn Which Menu Items Are Most Popular

Feedback can help restaurant owners learn how to stock their kitchens to serve popular menu items more effectively. Whether your restaurant has a lengthy menu or just a few options, your customers likely have a handful of favorites that they turn to time and again.

With customer feedback in partnership with your inventory management software, you can discover your most popular, and unpopular, menu items – which can help you make strategic business decisions such as stock management, sales promotions, and menu modifications. Don't underestimate the power of a curated menu. You can cut costs with a smaller menu and use your savings to create seasonal specials that loyal customers are more apt to try.

Google recently announced a new feature to its Lens project which will make it easier to read and review restaurant feedback. Using your smartphone, you can look at a paper menu and "click" on certain items to read their reviews. Your customers will be able to see what your cheeseburger looks like through curated photo uploads and determine whether or not to order it. With features like Lens, there will be more feedback flowing from your customers than ever. It's up to your brand to listen and make adjustments based on what your customers have to say.

#### Reward Top Staff Members for Their Hard Work

Some restaurants collect customer feedback to see which employees made the best impression on customers. They have competitions (with financial rewards) to see which staff members are mentioned in a positive light and how many surveys a staff member can collect. This incentivizes staff members to offer high-quality service that motivates customers to leave feedback. Over time, you are likely to recognize a pattern with your staff members. You can see who goes the extra mile and leads the team. Alternatively, you can also see who fails to make a positive impression which can help you make critical human resources decisions.

#### Collect New Ideas to Improve Your Restaurant

If you have vocal customers, then your feedback might be the next best way to come up with new ideas for improvement. Ask your customers what you can do to create a better experience or what they wish your restaurant offered but doesn't. By the way, if you do pick up an idea that a customer suggested, thank them for their feedback! Promote your new option or menu item to your diners and explain that it came from customer feedback. This motivates your diners to leave feedback on their own because they know that their ideas will be heard – which also increases their loyalty.

#### Find Out How Your Restaurant Compares

You might think that you are offering the best customer experience in town, but your fellow diners may believe otherwise. Use your customer feedback to determine how your restaurant stacks up in cleanliness, friendly staff, portions, and food quality. You may discover that something you think you are handling well (like clean bathrooms) actually needs improvement. You can also learn about your competitors from online customer feedback. Look at what your competitors have in their reviews that you don't have. You could use their customer feedback to discover the edge they have on you.

#### Turn Qualitative Insights into Quantitative Data

As you start to review your customer feedback, whether you are collecting it through diner surveys or online reviews, you should organize that data into a central source for analysis. There are several data management tools that curate information and allow you to upload it from multiple sources. These management resources are often CRMs or software solutions that are easy, intuitive, and affordable – built specifically with the small business owner in mind.

Use your software tools to look at the overarching themes in your customer feedback. Find common threads that point to problems within your business. If you can fix these problems, you can have a significant positive impact on your restaurant. More data is created every day than we've ever seen in our lifetimes before. As a restaurant owner, you have the power to collect feedback from reviews, surveys, social media and more. However, it doesn't matter how you collect the data as much as what you do with it. If you're not using your customer feedback to improve your menu, operations, customer experience, then you might as well not collect it at all.



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Please help Ocean City start a full time compost program!

of any kind. The more money we raise, the more restaurants we can include in our program by paying for transportation, materials, and infrastructure needs. (Essentially funding everything used in a conventional waste management program) A gift of any amount would mean the world to us and be the start of something bigger than ourselves.

To donate, simply click the link to our fundraiser below:

<https://www.gofundme.com/ocmdcompost>

It would also be very helpful if you could share our fundraiser link on social media. The more exposure we get, the faster we will reach our fundraising goal.

We'd love to talk to you in person about our fundraiser, so please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. Thank you very much for your time.



From Go Green OC-

After running a four week pilot program in 2018 we are fundraising to raise money for a city-wide

compost program in Ocean City. This cause is very important to us because it will have a huge impact on the environment and can help save the city money.

We are encouraged by the support we've already received over the past year, but we still need help raising money to grow the program as all our expenses to date have been out of pocket. Because Ocean City does all the waste pickup themselves (and they do a great job!), there is no mechanism in place for us to take in revenue for waste removal



*OCHMRA Executive Director, Susan Jones, was named Worcester County Volunteer of the Year by the United Way of the Eastern Shore for her work with the Stay & Dine United Programs! Congrats Susan!*



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## ELEVEN TIPS FOR MOTIVATING YOUR EMPLOYEES

By: Dr. George Ojie-Ahamiojie

Department Head and Associate Professor, Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Management, Wor-Wic Community College

The employees are the nerves that make every organization function efficiently. If the nerves in the body are not transmitting messages between the brain, spinal cord and other parts of the body correctly, there is something wrong somewhere. If employees are not motivated to do their best on the job, some of the employees may become complacent and apathetic. Motivating the employees could be easy by using some of the following 11 motivating tips.

1. **KNOW THE EMPLOYEES.** Make a point of duty to know the names of the employees that you supervise. Ask which name they prefer to be called; use that when calling or referring to them.
2. **YOU ARE THE MANAGER, SHOW SOME GUSTO!** As the supervisor, you set the mood and tempo of the operation. Come in to work with zeal, energy, enthusiasm, passion, and veracity.
3. **ACT AS A "ROLE MODEL" FOR THE EMPLOYEES.** As a supervisor, your credibility is only as good as what you say and do. When you "talk the talk," you must also "walk the walk!"
4. **BE AVAILABLE AND VISIBLE.** Always make sure that the employees can find and reach you when they need you. Having to look for you when they need you is an unwanted stress and hassle.
5. **ASK THE EMPLOYEES ABOUT THE JOB.** Apart from providing the tools to do the job, ask what you can do to make their job easier. Asking this question is an indication that you care about them. This can also improve employee morale and self-esteem.
6. **ASK WHAT THEY WANT OUT OF THE JOB.** Everyone works for a reason. Some people want a job, others want a career. So, take the time to ask each employee what they want from the job, and what they think you can do to help them achieve this goal.
7. **EMPOWER AND DELEGATE.** Empower your

employees to make decisions. Coach and teach the employees on how to handle that unhappy customer. Delegate some of your duties to the best and most skilled and efficient employee, and hold the employee accountable. This builds trust between a manager and the employee.

8. **MONITOR EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE.** Routinely engage the employees in discussions about their job performance. If an employee is not performing well, find out why, and address the issue genuinely with the employee.
9. **PROMOTE CREATIVITY AND INGENUITY.** Creativity does not only invigorates, it breeds new ideas. Allow the employees free thinking and the use of their imaginations; then, watch the employees shine. You may have the future CEO of the company under your tutelage.
10. **BE SUPPORTIVE ALL THE TIME.** The hospitality industry is very stressful, show some sympathy and empathy. Support and encourage the employees when they make mistakes or make the wrong decisions.
11. **RECOGNIZE AND REWARD EXCELLENCE.** Always remember to recognize and reward the employees. Praise the group, recognize the team, and reward the individuals. Always give recognition and praise in public. If you practice some or all of these tips, you will spend 80 percent of your time leading the employees and 20 percent running the operation. The employees will feel energized and enthusiastic, and the customers will receive excellent customer service. After all, the success of the employees and organization is a measure of your leadership abilities.

Until next time, let the muzik play .....

Books written by me:

- Essential Leadership Skills for Hospitality Supervisors: An Experiential Approach. ISBN#: 978143890146
- Upward Mobility. ISBN#: 9781438947389 Available from publisher: [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com)



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## REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

### ENSURING HOTEL WEBSITES ARE ADA COMPLIANT

BY SCOTT TOPOLSKI

Hotels, as places of public accommodation, have long been targets of lawsuits by individuals and public advocacy organizations under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the ADA as it is commonly referred. These lawsuits traditionally followed a fairly basic pattern with claims directed to the alleged failure of a hotel to remove physical or architectural barriers on its property that prevented a person or persons with disabilities from fully enjoying the benefits of the property.

Lawsuits under the ADA have taken a dramatically different turn in recent years. Yes, the lawsuits geared toward physical or architectural barriers are still being filed, but the new trend in ADA suits involves lawsuits alleging that an owner or operator of a website has failed to make that website accessible to persons who are either visually impaired or legally blind. Hotels have not been immune from such claims.

To date, there is only one known website accessibility case that has actually gone to trial in that the overwhelming majority of these cases, like other ADA cases, settle long before trial. In *Gil v. Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.*, a federal district court judge in South Florida ruled against Winn-Dixie and concluded that the company's website violated the disabled plaintiff's rights under Title III of the ADA. The case is on appeal, and oral arguments were recently presented on that appeal.

There is pending before the United States Senate the ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017, a bill which has already passed the House of Representatives and which would, amongst other things, provide owners and operators of places of public accommodation notice and an opportunity to cure prior to being sued under the ADA. It still remains to be seen if the bill in its current or even amended form will pass the Senate and, if so, whether it will apply to website accessibility cases.

Although the ability to maintain a claim against the owner or operator of a website that does not have a physical structure associated with its business is

impacted by where the business is located, since hotels will always have a brick and mortar building or buildings linked, for lack of a better term, to their websites, no hotel is immune from a website accessibility lawsuit under Title III of the ADA.



## IMPORTANT

Presently, there are no regulations addressing the issue of whether websites are compliant with the ADA. The Department of Justice has, to date, not issued any such regulations—unlike the scenario with physical or architectural barriers to places of public accommodation where fairly comprehensive regulations have long been in place. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), the guidelines relied upon by the court in *Gil v. Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.*, are all that really exist to provide guidance and direction to hotels and other owners and operators of websites, but these are merely guidelines and not law.

In dealing with website accessibility issues, proactive rather than reactive needs to be the approach. Waiting to be sued is simply going to cost more money at the end of the day, in that the hotel will then have to hire its own expert, correct the website, pay for an attorney to defend the lawsuit, and pay for the other side's attorney if and when the case settles. If, however, that hotel takes the initiative and corrects the ADA-related issues with its website prior to being sued, yes, it will have to pay the fees of a website expert and fix the website—and those fees likely will not be cheap—but it will not incur all of the other costs and expenses associated with litigation. In addition, it will avoid the frustration and aggravation that is all-too-common with litigation and not have valuable resources diverted from day-to-day operations to defending an ADA lawsuit. The focus should be on paying some money early to avoid paying a whole lot more money later.



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## Worcester Goes Purple



The 'Worcester Goes Purple' event is an awareness project to engage the community in preventing substance abuse and promoting healthy life choices. WGP is an initiative supported by Worcester County Public Schools, Worcester County Health Department, Atlantic General Hospital and the Worcester County Sheriff's Office.

WGP welcomes partnerships with community organizations and businesses who support their mission.

Our plan is for all "Lights On" at 6:00 pm on Saturday August 31, 2019 which is Overdose Awareness Day. September is the Official Purple Month so we would appreciate all of your support during that month. If any business has paid advertising that they would like to donate to this cause, please contact us.

### Ideas:

- Purple lights - single lightbulb, strings of lights, spotlights
- Purple pool lights or Purple Water with pool dye
- Purple Window Displays -T-shirts, clothes, toys, surfboards
- Purple decorated tree - Walmart.com - Homegear 6Ft Artificial Purple Tree \$39.99
- Purple ribbons and bows
- Purple placemats or napkins
- Worcester Goes Purple Menu Special
- Purple Food - Pancakes, desserts, be creative
- Employee Wear Purple Day
- Purple Business Shirts
- Signage and Marque with Worcester Goes Purple
- Purple Candy - Mints, Lollipops

We want to know about everything you do to support our project. Send us your pictures for Facebook and a little free advertising. To get involved or volunteer, or if you have questions, call/email: Debbie Smullen, WGP Event Coordinator at 410-870-5161, [dasmullen@worcesterk12.org](mailto:dasmullen@worcesterk12.org)

## Celebrate the History of Surfing with the OC Life Saving Station's Tandem Surfing Challenge

During the months of June and July the Ocean City Life- Saving Station Museum is celebrating the history of surfing within Ocean City with our Repeat the Past Tandem Surfing Challenge. Whether you are an experienced long-time surfer or someone who just enjoys wading in the waves, we invite you to take part in the tandem surfing challenge!

This means getting out there and tandem surfing whether it be on a surfboard, body board or paddle board! It can be you and a friend, child, or beloved pet, anything goes in this tandem surfing challenge! Make sure you snap a photo and send it to [christine@ocmuseum.org](mailto:christine@ocmuseum.org) or post your photo to Instagram using #tandemsurfingocmd. From June 1st to August 1st the Museum will be sharing your photos and surfing photos from decades past on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

"This tandem surfing challenge serves as an opportunity for novice or experienced surfers to celebrate the ever-changing sport of surfing," stated museum curator, Sandy Hurley. "Tandem surfing started in Hawaii in the 1920s soon migrating to California then making its way to the East Coast. When the 1960s rolled around the surfing culture in Ocean City was in full swing. At that time George Feehley, long time Ocean City local and Geni Chaski partnered up and took tandem surfing by storm! This tandem team could be spotted surfing on 12th Street and were a source of entertainment for evening boardwalk strollers."





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*Out and About with  
OCHMRA*



HSMP crew enjoying a day on the water with Princess Bayside and 48th St. Watersports.



Ribbon Cutting for Jolly Roger's newest ride, The Shaker Experience!



Bad Monkey West OC Ribbon Cutting with Gov. Hogan!



Having fun at the Assateague Visitors Center!

The opening of the new exhibition, The Enslaved at Rackliffe Plantation House.



A Waterfront  
Heritage Festival

# Harbor Day At The Docks

Saturday, Oct. 19, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



• JOIN US FOR A DAY CELEBRATING  
OCEAN CITY'S MARITIME HERITAGE,  
CULTURE, TRADITIONS,  
COMMERCIAL AND SPORT FISHING •

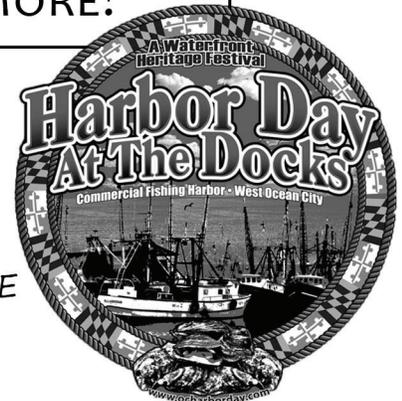


FAMILY FRIENDLY FOR ALL

FISHING DISPLAYS  
LOCAL ARTISANS  
FOOD  
LIVE MUSIC  
FREE KIDS ACTIVITIES  
COOKING DEMOS  
BLESSING OF THE FLEET  
...AND MUCH MORE!



FREE PARKING!  
COMPLIMENTARY SHUTTLE  
SERVICE FROM WEST  
OC PARK N' RIDE



On the commercial fishing harbor...

Sunset Ave. West Ocean City, MD

[www.harbordayoc.com](http://www.harbordayoc.com)

# 2019 Harbor Day Sponsorships

## Unlimited Mates \$100

- Name listed in program as sponsor

## 1 Presenting - \$5,000

- Event naming and inclusion of logo on all event material, advertising and press releases.
- Full page ad in event program
- Inclusion in all pre event email distribution and official website
- On-Site Signage

## Unlimited Captains \$250

- Name and logo in program with business description

## 10 Commodores \$1,500

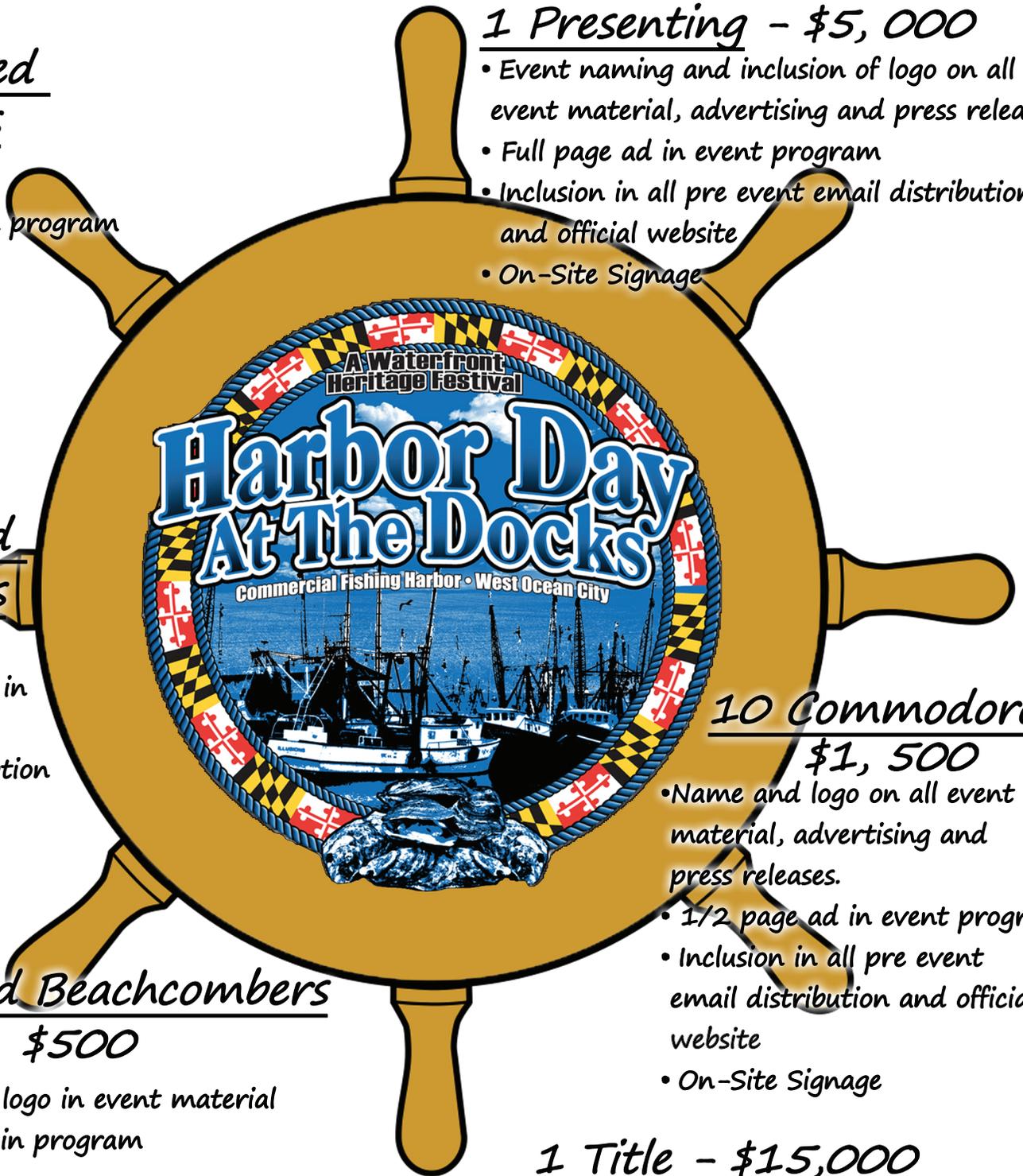
- Name and logo on all event material, advertising and press releases.
- 1/2 page ad in event program
- Inclusion in all pre event email distribution and official website
- On-Site Signage

## Unlimited Beachcombers \$500

- Name and logo in event material
- 1/4 page ad in program
- Email blast
- Name in press release

## 1 Title - \$15,000

- Event naming and inclusion of logo on all event material, advertising and press releases.
- Center Spread in event program
- Inclusion in all pre event email distribution and official website
- On-Site Signage
- Event reserved vendor table



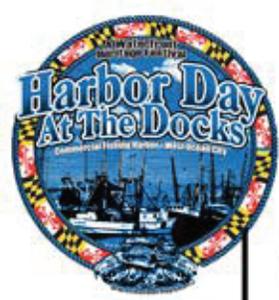
The HD Committee reserves the right to modify sponsor opportunities.

For questions, call 410-213-0144 or 410-289-6733.

Checks payable and mailed to Worcester County Rec & Parks

Attn: Brianna Goddard

6030 Public Landing Rd Snow Hill MD 21863



# 2019 Harbor Day Sponsorships Contract

## 1 Fill in contact information

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of company/institution (print exactly as it should appear  
in print publications)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # Email

## 2 Choose Sponsor Level

Title

Beachcomber

Presenting

Captain

Commodore

Mate

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## 3 Sign

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Sponsor Contract Signature Date

The HD Committee reserves the right to modify sponsor opportunities.

For questions, call 410-213-0144 or 410-289-6733.

Checks payable and mailed to Worcester County Rec & Parks

Attn: Brianna Goddard 6030 Public Landing Rd, Snow Hill, MD 21863

Visit [www.harbordayoc.com](http://www.harbordayoc.com)  
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@harbordayoc