

MARCH 2021

# HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

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

## Member Message

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUSAN L. JONES

March always brings a bit of excitement for me as it is the culmination of lots of planning for our Annual Trade Expo. This year is our 47th year holding this long-standing tradition, and my 25th year in bringing together hospitality industry buyers and sellers. I must admit, after our planning call with Chip Rogers, President & CEO of the American Hotel and Lodging Association, I am anxiously awaiting unveiling our Power Panel on March 8th! We will be delivering a State of the Industry beginning at 10am for Lodging and shifting the focus to Restaurants around 11am. This will be a Facebook Live event so be sure to tune-in! [www.Facebook.com/OCTradeExpo](http://www.Facebook.com/OCTradeExpo). See you virtually soon!

47th Annual



**SPRINGTRADEEXPO**  
Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association

**MONDAY  
MARCH 8th**

## POWER PANELS

**FEATURING INDUSTRY INFLUENCERS**

**LODGING - 10AM**

**RESTAURANT - 11AM**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

[www.facebook.com/octradeexpo](http://www.facebook.com/octradeexpo)

## Welcome New Members

ALLIED

Mid American Energy  
Denise Carter

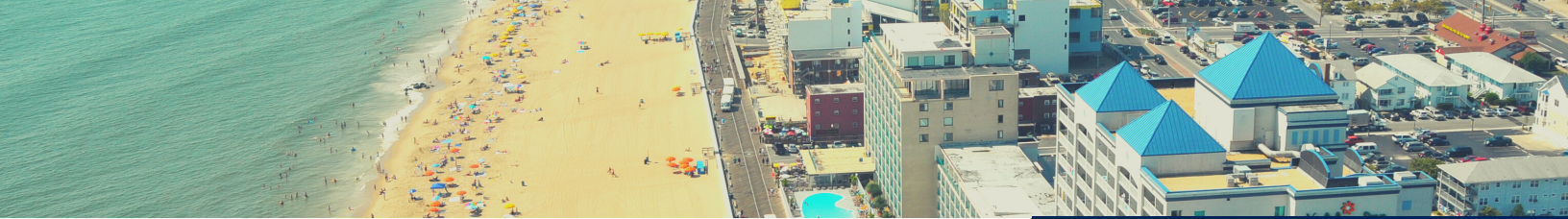
Phillips Foods Corp  
Sarah Palmer

United Shellfish  
Frank Swinski



Restaurants Act, the restaurant industry's grassroots and resource center— a one-stop hub for restaurants, employees, customers, and industry partners.

Click for findings of the:  
**IMPACT OF RAISE THE  
WAGE ACT**



## Business Brief

### OC STRONG & UNITED TOOLKIT

Summer is just around the corner, and we are excited to welcome visitors back to our beautiful beach town. We want to continue to be a helpful resource for our business community and make sure you feel prepared for any challenging circumstances that Ocean City may experience during the peak season. Last June, in response to the difficulties our town was facing between the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in disorderly behavior on the Boardwalk and downtown area, [PARTNERS has launched the OC Strong & United toolkit](#). Thanks to Jessica & Jenna for preparing it.

### TOURISM TAX CREDIT

Recently we testified in support of both Senate Bill 730 / House Bill 1176 which would extend income tax credits to Marylanders for travel 50 miles from their homes. Any funds spent in Maryland on hospitality related products could be deducted. This idea arose from Steve Green owner of High Mountain Sports in Garrett County and was modeled after the Explore America tax credit (which has not yet passed). Many thanks to Senator Edwards, Senator Carozza and Delegate Hartman for their tireless efforts on behalf of this initiative. Cross your fingers for the bills passage!

### DESTINATION CAPITOL HILL March 17th - free to attend!

The event brings travel leaders from across the country together to educate policymakers about the power of travel. The program combines a legislative day on Capitol Hill with advocacy training, guest speakers and peer-to-peer networking. DCH provides delegates with an opportunity to learn about upcoming legislation that impacts travel, network with peers and meet with members of Congress to stress the importance of travel as an economic driver.

Note: This virtual event has two registration links: one for the appointment scheduling process and one for the briefing webinar.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are planning to participate in Hill meetings, we advise you to register for Destination Capitol Hill as soon as possible when registration opens. Soapbox will schedule your congressional meetings and provide a personalized schedule provided the registration is received in ample time prior to the event. It can sometimes take weeks to secure congressional appointments.

More information on this event can be found at <https://www.ustravel.org/events/DCH>



### 5th Annual OC Film Festival

#### VIRTUALLY March 4-11

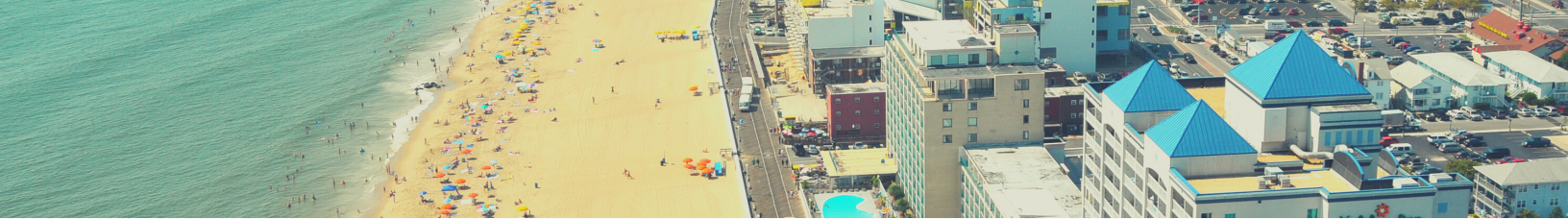
Join the Art League of OC for the 5th annual Ocean City Film Festival, now a week-long event! Watch more than 80 independent films from 15 states and 11 countries, all from the comfort of your own home.

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



### US TRAVEL TRAVEL RECOVERY INSIGHTS DASHBOARD

A comprehensive and centralized source for high-frequency intelligence on the U.S. travel industry and the broader economy has been built by US Travel. Key findings are on page 7.



## Hospitality Highlights

### WARM WELCOMES & SAD GOODBYES

A warm welcome to **Jennifer Sabini Evans** who joined the team at **Princess Royale Oceanfront** as their new Marketing Director. Congratulations to **Shanea Grosso** on her new position at **SYSCO Eastern MD**.

**Dunes Manor** has turned the jewelry shop into **Thelma's Coffee & Confections** - I'm sure Miss Thelma would be quite pleased!

Windsor Resorts, the family-owned entertainment company behind **Trimper's Rides and Marty's Playland**, announces the forthcoming launch of **Inlet Market**. The open-air market, anchored by **Bandits Bar & Grill** and taking the place of The Inlet Village shopping center, will feature nine new chef-driven restaurant concepts, sweeping inlet views, and safe, spacious outdoor seating.

Kudos to **Barry Reichart** of **Bourbon Street on the Beach** who is expanding Bourbon Street's reach by taking over the space at Abbey Burger Bistro.

**Ocean 13** has found a new home and will be occupying the cozy space in the LaQuinta Inn & Suites on 32nd which was most recently Sanibel's.

Condolences to **Kristy Baraniak** of Macky's Bayside Bar & Grill on the loss of her father. The **Purnell family** recently lost Lauralee's father, Ken Wilson and we extend our condolences.

## OC CVB New Meeting and Convention Marketing Video

### FROM TOWN OF OC CVB

We are happy to announce we have a wonderful new tool to market Ocean City as a top East Coast Meetings and Convention Destination! Jenna Knight of our Communications & Marketing team has produced and directed a new short video. She has worked diligently with the hospitality community, working with Kim Mueller of the Harrison Group who helped inspire the idea.

We are all proud to present this new sales tool for your use to share with clients or to post on your sites. We will be posting this to our media platforms and distributing it to advertisers and entities with whom we have relationships.

Our thanks to Kim and to our team colleague, Jenna, and Jessica Waters for making this opportunity possible. Please enjoy and utilize this panoramic view of "A day in the life of meeting attendees in Ocean City!"

Best regards,  
Norma, OC CVB & Destination Sales, Regina, OC Convention Center Sales, Larry, Convention Center Executive Director

Ococean page: <https://ococean.com/explore-oc/meetings-and-conventions>  
Youtube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hpYUT9QFI>

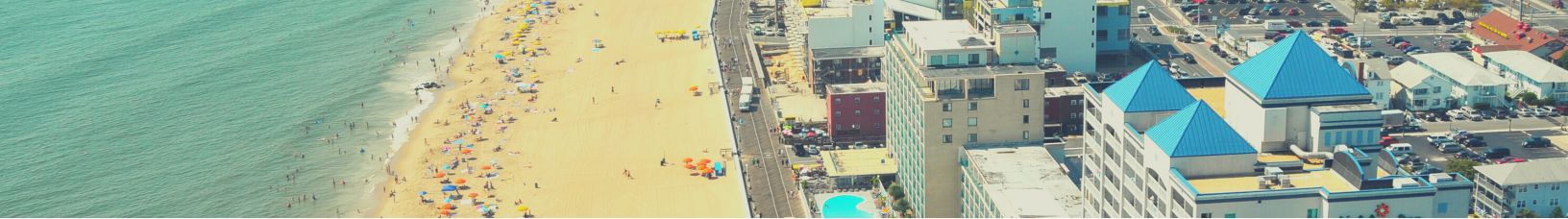
## COVID CORNER

MD remains in Phase 1C of the vaccination plan. *Public confidence continues to increase and it appears pent up travel demand is also on the rise with increased vaccinations.*

[CLICK FOR DESTINATION ANALYST CONSUMER SENTIMENT SURVEY LINK](#)

MD is dependent on the Federal government for allocation of vaccines. To learn the latest on vaccines, visit [THIS LINK MD VAX](#)

CovidLink site - frequently asked questions and answers. Here is a link to that page: [COVIDLINK FAQ](#)



## Community Connections

### PLAY IT SAFE

Dear Play It Safe Friends,

It is with great regret and sadness that I have to announce to you that we, the Ocean City Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Committee, will not be able to present the Play It Safe project to this year's high school graduates who visit Ocean City for Senior Week in June. After very careful consideration of the many aspects of this project, we feel that it is in the best interest of our volunteers, the businesses and community who support us, and the young graduates themselves to not hold our events this year.

For thirty years, we have persevered in presenting so many great and fun-filled events for the grads that have not only brought them joy but have enriched our lives as volunteers. With the health concerns of the Covid 19 virus and the protections necessary to be in place, the state guidelines that must be followed, etc., we did not think it feasible to hold events for large crowds of teenagers. So, we will place things on hold for another year and see where that takes us.

To each of you who have given us your support and helped us have wonderful events and activities for the young graduates over those thirty years, thank you. Thank you! Thank you! It has been appreciated more than we can ever know by the grads who created lifelong memories in our wonderful town of Ocean City.

Sending warmest wishes for better and brighter 2021. May the coming months bring relief and healing to our community and our nation.

Have a beautiful day!

Donna Greenwood, Chairman  
Ocean City Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Committee

### VIRTUAL TOUR - OC LIFESAVING STATION MUSEUM

Virtual tour of the Ocean City Lifesaving Station Museum brought to you by Beach to Bay Heritage Area and the Rural Maryland Council. Explore Ocean City's early years and the role of United States Life-saving Service. ***Click this link: [TOUR HERE](#)***

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**HOTEL, MOTEL, RESTAURANT OWNERS**

**St. Patrick's Day Does not have to be a complete loss**

**YOU and YOUR CUSTOMERS can help support the  
Worcester County RECOVERY COMMUNITY**

**WGP Warriors Against Addiction would like you to sell  
SHAMROCKS for \$1.00 to turn your business GREEN.**

**Shamrocks and Advertising will be provided**

**ALL FUNDS WILL BENEFIT THE LOCAL RECOVERY  
COMMUNITY**



**Contact: Debbie Smullen 410-870-5161**

**[Wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com](mailto:Wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com)**

**Promotion 3/1/2021 – 3/21/2021**

**47th Annual**



# POWER PANELS

## March 8th

### **LODGING State of Industry - 10am**



**Vince DiFonzo**  
TKO Hospitality  
DE Hotel Lodging Association



**Chip Rogers**  
American Hotel & Lodging  
Association



**Ben Seidel**  
Real Hospitality  
MD Hotel Lodging Association

### **RESTAURANT State of Industry - 11am**



**Carrie Leishman**  
Delaware Restaurant Association



**Marshall Weston**  
Restaurant Association of Maryland

Discussion to include: Altered Landscapes, Trends for Survival, Elimination of Tipped Credit, Consumer Sentiment and more.

**[www.facebook.com/octradeexpo](http://www.facebook.com/octradeexpo)**

Free - Register at [OceanCityTradeExpo.com](http://OceanCityTradeExpo.com) - Attend

# Key Highlights

## US TRAVEL DESTINATION RECOVERY DASHBOARD



### AIR TRAVEL

**-62%**

TSA screenings **were 62% lower** in January 2021 than in January 2020, showing no improvement since October

Source: TSA



### HOTEL DEMAND

**-30%**

Lodging demand **was 30% lower** in January 2021 than in January 2020

Source: STR



### EMPLOYMENT

**-39%**

Of all jobs lost since the start of the pandemic, **39% were in the Leisure & Hospitality sector**

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



### DMO GROUP BOOKINGS

**-46%**

Contracted event hotel room nights **were 46% lower** in December 2020 than in December 2019

Source: SimpleView, CRM



### HOTEL RESERVATIONS

**-60%**

Hotels bookings through April 2021 **remain roughly 60% below** last year levels

Source: TravelClick (as of Jan. 26, 2021)



### TRAVEL PLANS

**81%**

81% of travelers have tentative travel plans in the next six months, the **highest since March 2020**

Source: Longwoods International



### LODGING REVENUE FORECAST

**+22%**

After **declining by 50%** in 2020, Revenue per Available Room is projected to **increase by 22%** in 2021 due to a strong expected rebound in the second half of the year

Source: STR and Tourism Economics



### VACCINES AND TRAVEL PLANS

**+97%**

**A nearly perfect correlation** between people having received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and travelers with travel plans in the next six months

Source: CDC and Longwoods International

# Maryland

## Destination Marketing Organizations

# WORCESTER COUNTY

The Tourism Promotion Act of 2008 dedicated \$2.5 million for the 23 counties, Baltimore City, and Ocean City, collectively known as Maryland Destination Marketing Organizations (MDMO).

### STATE OF MARYLAND

### WORCESTER COUNTY



150,000+ full-time tourism related jobs in Maryland



Tourism industry statewide - \$18.6 billion



Generated \$2.6 billion in state and local taxes in FY20



10,929 tourism related jobs in Worcester County



Tourism industry countywide - \$1.9 billion



Generated \$238.4 million in state and local taxes in FY20

## Tourism Works for Maryland



### Tourism Industry

- Visitor spending in Maryland rose for the tenth straight year in 2019 to \$18.6 billion
- Every household would pay \$1,175 more if not for the state and local taxes generated by tourism
- Maryland's Destination Marketing Organizations leverage the State's \$2.5 million investment in tourism marketing with \$13 million in municipal, county, and private partnership funds
- 1 of every 16 jobs in Maryland is sustained by tourism activity



### Local Story

The Maryland Coastal Bays watershed supports significant ecological communities and is the economic engine that drives the large tourist water-based economy in Worcester County. In 1995, the Governor successfully petitioned Congress to designate the Maryland Coastal Bays as one of just 28 embayments in the National Estuary Program in the U.S. The Maryland Coastal Bays watershed contributes over \$1.1 billion in annual economic activity including recreational and public parks benefits.



### Attractions, Lodging, Shopping, Food & Beverage

- Visitor spending rose by more than 75 million dollars in 2019 over 2018
- Worcester County ranks 5th in visitor spending in the state
- Town of Berlin ranked "Top 50 Most Beautiful Towns in America" by Good Housekeeping, Woman's Day & Country Living Magazines
- Assateague Island National Seashore generates \$95 million in economic benefits to Worcester County
- Pocomoke City is home to the award-winning Delmarva Discovery Museum

# MARYLAND

Destination Marketing Organizations

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MARYLAND'S  
*Coast*  
WORCESTER COUNTY