

## REGIONAL & MULTI-COUNTY PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

### Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council

14-county Tourism Promotion Agency program to create top-of-mind awareness of the Finger Lakes Region as a tourism destination.

- Fingerlakestravelny.com
- Facebook: @Fingerlakestravel
- Twitter: @Finger\_LakesNY
- Instagram: @fingerlakes\_ny
- Recipients of a national award with U.S. Travel/Esto and a state award with NYSTIA
- Public Relations program

### Haunted History Trail of New York State

Open 365 days per year with 65 locations spread out over 31 counties, the Haunted History Trail offers serious ghost hunting locations, ghostly events, cemetery tours and other haunted/paranormal activities.

- Hauntedhistorytrail.com
- Public relations
- Group tour itineraries
- Brochure

### Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance

Private organization offering regional marketing opportunities.

- Regional Travel Guide ad
- Group Travel Planner
- AAA/CAA program
- NYS Thruway Information Centers
- www.fingerlakes.org (over half a million visitors annually)
- Brochure distribution at four information centers

### Lake Ontario Sportfishing Promotion Council (LOSPC)

7-county (Jefferson, Oswego, Cayuga, Wayne, Monroe, Orleans, Niagara) initiative to promote sportfishing on Lake Ontario.

- www.ilovenyifishing.com
- Print advertising & fulfillment
- Shows (Niagara Show, Great American Outdoor Show, & others)
- Rack Cards

### Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway

3-county (Cayuga, Tompkins, Seneca) initiative to promote attractions and driving tours around Cayuga Lake.

- brochure
- cayugalake.com
- advertising
- rack cards

### Canal New York

Canal New York Marketing and Business Alliance is the primary private sector organization to promote economic and business development along the entire NYS Canal Corridor.

- Canalny.com
- Familiarization Tours
- Shows
- Media events

### Great Lakes Seaway Trail

10-county initiative to promote the attractions along the 454-mile scenic route paralleling Lake Erie, the Niagara River, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.

- Journey magazine
- www.seawaytrail.com



CAYUGA COUNTY  
OFFICE OF TOURISM

2019  
ANNUAL  
REPORT  
ON TOURISM

## EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

### ADVOCACY

We recognize the need to build long-term public support of the tourism industry in Cayuga County through recognition of the impact of tourism on the local community, particularly in the area of economic development.

- 2018 Annual Report on Tourism distributed to community leaders
- Quarterly e-newsletter to tourism partners
- Collaboration with MGR/FLMTF via enhanced spotlight sponsorship
- Placed 2 local economic impact ads in The Citizen
- Two articles in The Citizen newspaper
- Monthly interviews on WAUB radio
- Presentation for the InterCounty Association of Western NY

### EDUCATION

The Cayuga County Office of Tourism assesses the training needs for tourism organizations and businesses in Cayuga County and provides workshops, programs, and special tools to address those needs.

- Board Development workshop
- Familiarization tour for local and regional tourism industry
- Leadership Cayuga sponsorship
- Annual Meeting & Tourism Awards
- Group Tour workshop
- E-Learning portal offering encouraging cross promotion and high quality service to encourage repeat visitation.

### RESEARCH

- In 2015 we contracted with Young Strategies, Inc. to conduct a travel market research study to provide customer-focused data with recommendations for action that the CCCVB will craft into strategies for future growth. Our strategic plan, Destination 2020 is based on the data provided in this report.
- We continue to purchase a 'Comparative Counties' monthly report from Smith Travel research, which provides us with hotel occupancy and room rate data.
- Tourism Economics an Oxford Economics Company
- In 2019 we conducted the Tourism Sentiment Index (TSI). The TSI is a measure of a destination's ability to generate positive word of mouth about its tourism offering. Cayuga County's study identified 51% of the online tourism conversation was information (without sentiment), 47% as destination promoter and only 2% as destination detractor. This gives Cayuga County an overall excellent score of 45.

## CAYUGA COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CCCVB) is Cayuga County's tourism promotion agency. We increase tourism and related revenues through promotion and research-based targeted marketing, and we improve the visitor experience by providing data and training to local hospitality industry providers. We continuously work to increase tourism and improve the visitor experience, which in turn stimulate economic growth and sustain recreational and cultural opportunities in the County.

### VISION STATEMENT

The Cayuga County Convention and Visitors Bureau will be the primary catalyst for the ongoing development of a dynamic, collaborative and innovative Cayuga County tourism industry which:

- Enhances economic development throughout the County,
- Improves quality of life for its residents, and
- Provides an unparalleled Finger Lakes visitor experience.

### STAFF

Karen Kuhl Executive Director  
Gillian Sears Administrative & Project Coordinator  
Maureen McEvers Digital Marketing Manager

### 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrea Seamans Chair  
Steve Lynch Vice Chair  
Sue Dove Treasurer  
Linda Eldred Secretary

### 2019 BOARD MEMBERS

**Doug Dello Stritto**  
Cayuga County Parks

**Stephanie DeVito**  
Downtown Auburn BID

**Sue Dove**  
Skaneateles Inn on 20

**Linda Eldred**  
Strawberry Fields Hydroponic Farm

**Meryl Eriksen**  
Inns of Aurora

### Brendan Grillo

Grillo Companies

**Jennifer Haines**  
City Planning & ED

**Erin Katzker**  
Finger Lakes MTF/MGR

**Karen Kuhl**  
Cayuga County Office of Tourism

**Dan Larson**  
Bayview Health and Wellness

**Susan Lemon**  
Hardware Cafe

### Cheryl Longyear

Montezuma Historical Society

**Jeff Ludwig**  
Seward House Museum

**Stephen Lynch**  
Cayuga County Planning

**Charles Mason**  
Memorial City Hall

**Connie Reilly**  
Cayuga County Parks Commission

**Andrea Seamans**  
Port Byron Old Erie Canal Heritage Park

### Sallee Ten Eyck

Summerhill Brewing

**Tracy Verrier**  
Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce

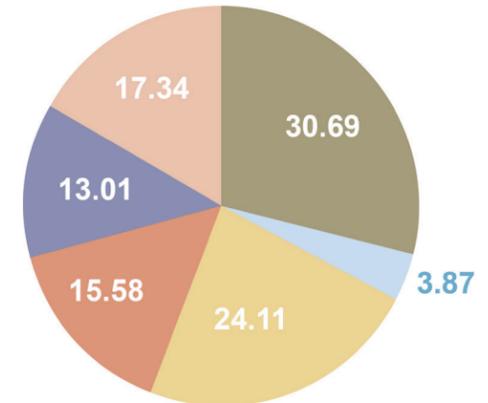
**Adam Winslow**  
Auburn Doubledays at Falcon Park

**Kirsten Wise Gosch**  
Cayuga Museum of History/Case Research Lab.

## OVERVIEW

Visitors to Cayuga County spend **\$104.69** million annually on

Lodging	\$30.69 million
Recreation	\$3.87 million
Food & Beverage	\$24.11 million
Retail & Service Stations	\$15.58 million
Transportation	\$13.01 million
Second Homes	\$17.34 million



Tourism is responsible for the employment of

**1,534** people in Cayuga County.

Tourism generates

**\$12.64** MILLION in state & local taxes in Cayuga County.

Tourism provides

**\$402** in tax relief per Cayuga County household.

Cayuga County Office of Tourism • 25 South Street, Auburn, NY 13021

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# COUNTY PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

## PUBLICATIONS

- Cayuga County Visitors Guide - **UPDATED**
- Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway
- "Did you know?" trivia booklets
- FREE Cayuga County & Historic Auburn maps
- 'Let's Color Cayuga' coloring book
- Route 90 50-Mile Garage Sale - **UPDATED**
- "On the Water" guide/map
- Finger Lakes Sweet Treat Trail - **UPDATED**
- For the Birds guide to bird watching in Cayuga County
- South Street Auburn Historic Walking Tour
- "Odd, Quirky and Offbeat" Cayuga County Heritage Trail brochure
- Lure Show Guide



## INQUIRIES

10,723 inquiries generated from ads placed in print, television, the Internet and social media as well as emails collected at consumer travel shows; the largest trackable generators being Hearst Publications, Haunted History Trail, NYSTIA, New York Times travel shows and the Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council website.

## SHOW PROGRAM

The Cayuga County Office of Tourism distributed our visitors guide **at more than 20 travel shows in the United States and Canada** in conjunction with the NYS Travel Industry Association, the Lake Ontario Sportfishing Promotion Council, Canal NY & I Love NY. The shows ranged from the Columbus Ohio AAA Great Vacations Travel Expo to the Harrisburg, PA Great American Outdoor Show to the New York Times Travel Show.

## TOURISM INFORMATION

Our information is also available at the following information centers:

- Information rack at Pit Stop in Weedsport where 1,641 brochures were distributed during 2019
- NYS Thruway: Pembroke, Warners, Sloatsburg, Plattekill, New Baltimore & Scottsville
- Petro Service Center
- NYS Gateway Center (1000 Islands)
- Preble Area Rest Stop (I-81)
- Chautauqua Lake Rest Area (I-86) eastbound
- BCI distribution points: Rochester, Route 390, Western Finger Lakes areas
- Port Byron Old Erie Canal Heritage Park Visitor Center
- NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center

## DIGITAL MARKETING

- 78,339 unique visits to TourCayuga.com
- Monthly promotional e-blasts
- Tourcayuga.com blogs
- Twitter
- Facebook, including targeted paid campaigns
- Pinterest
- Instagram
- On-line Visitors Guide

Digital Outreach of **OVER 499.61K impressions** on **Social Media Outlets**

## GROUP SALES PROGRAM

Our group sales program works to leverage our tourism assets for meetings and conferences and group tours. Strategically located within New York State with many sought after activities and a variety of lodging options, Cayuga County is positioned for growth in these markets. In 2019, our group sales efforts continued with our contract with Break the Ice Media. BTI represented Tour Cayuga at group tours travel shows, procuring leads and developing relationships with decision makers. These efforts proved beneficial with 1,306 actual room nights from group tours booked in 2019, generating an estimated \$568,023 in economic impact.

Key elements of the program include:

- Trade shows & sales missions
- Direct sales & lead follow-up
- Collateral
- Familiarization tours/site visits
- Itinerary planning
- Giveaway items
- Groups & Meetings e-newsletters
- Sponsorships
- Educational workshops for partners

The 2019 Finger Lakes regional Public Relations Program secured over 300 media placements that resulted in **1.3 billion media impressions.**

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

We recognize the power of public relations to gain added exposure, reach large audiences and garner top-of-mind awareness of Cayuga County and the Finger Lakes Region. We participate in the Finger Lakes Region and I Love NY public relations programs, supplemented with our own in-house promotional efforts.

Tactics include:

- Social media
- Promotional opportunities
- Media visits
- Editorial calendar monitoring
- Media lead tip sheets
- Media pitches
- Press releases

Our public relations efforts generated 52 editorial placements in online and print publications, radio and television. Significant media placements included USA Today Special Edition, Forbes, Macaroni Kid, Ottawa Life, Travel + Leisure magazine as well as many other niche media outlets.

# NEW INITIATIVES IN 2019



Hosted the 2019 NYSTIA Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony - showcasing Cayuga County as a premiere destination in the Finger Lakes Region of NYS.

Launched **two winter marketing campaigns.**

Where Brave Women Winter is a regional campaign promoting women led tourism businesses.

Hibercation is a Cayuga County campaign to inspire short getaways in a cozy lodging accompanied with outdoor activity and a visit to a local winery or brewery.



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In 2015 the Cayuga County Office of Tourism conducted Travel Market Research to address the very unique aspects of Cayuga County as a tourism destination and identify by market segment those attraction features/amenities which drive tourism and generate both overnight and repeat visitors to Cayuga County. In 2019 the Cayuga County Office of Tourism was committed to implementing the following key objectives in year four of our 5-year strategic plan, **Strategic Direction Destination: 2020.**

- Focus future message and imagery around the following **unique assets**:
  - Live entertainment – wide variety throughout the year
  - Auburn – cool, vibrant “creative community”
  - Iconic Americans – Tubman & Seward
  - Aurora – scenic, shopping, upscale luxury lodging & dining
  - Fair Haven – the next great harbor destination
- **Use our updated brand** to create a consistent, cohesive brand message for Cayuga County
- Launched www.hibercation.com, a microsite within tourcayuga.com that houses and promotes the county's winter product
- Continue to drive year-round visitation with focus on **shoulder & off-season promotions**
- Ongoing support of the **PR** efforts of the Finger Lakes Region and New York State to capture the attention of travel writers and bloggers
- Continue to target **group tour** market to fill hotel rooms and increase attraction attendance
- **Shared research data with community leaders** as a catalyst for future development
- **Target markets** within a 6-hour drive, especially the **Route 81 Corridor in PA**
- Maintain Boomer market, while **growing the Millennial, Gen X & Gen Y** markets

