FY26-27 | Q1 Update

JULY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

FY 2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Thank you for your continued support of tourism in the Hershey Harrisburg Region. It's a privilege to work every day in an industry that's built on saying, "Welcome!" We are proud to share highlights from a fiscal year where our hallmark themes have been organizational growth, embracing new strategies, and a commitment to deepening collaborative relationships.

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

With various positions opening in FY24-25, we reimagined the organizational structure to capitalize on team strengths, better align with new initiatives, and maintain fiscal responsibility. Beyond new faces, new roles add increased support and collaboration across departments and open more opportunities to engage with partners and visitors. We welcomed Strategic Support Specialist Corinne Flemming, Manager of Event Strategies & Marketing Projects Cortney Ranck-Cameron, and Social Media Manager Kayla Sherry. Together, we are moving forward with purpose to provide the best possible destination marketing campaigns, programming, and collaborations.

EMBRACING NEW STRATEGIES

With a consistently changing landscape for how visitors search for and plan getaways, discoverability is crucial. VHH identified the best platform and strategy partner to help us build a website and online experience that meets the demands of AI trends as well as human search. The new website is expected to launch in early 2027.

DEEPENING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

In the annual report, you'll see a Community Vitality Wheel. It's a visual reminder that the work we do is all connected to the overall health of our community. While our core mission is destination marketing for Dauphin County, we understand that a critical strategy to achieve lasting success is embracing our role as a convener, uniting community leaders around a shared understanding of tourism's impact. The progress of VHH, Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority, and ExploreHBG is not possible without the support of the VHH Board of Directors and the collaborative strength of our partners, neighbors, and community leaders.

Your partnership, insights, and dedication to the visitor experience made this year's progress possible, and it will shape what we build together next.

Sharon S. Myers
President & CEO
Visit Hershey & Harrisburg

Janet Rozzi
VHH Board Chair
IHG ® Hotels & Resorts

View the Visit Hershey & Harrisburg FY2025-26 Annual Report

Visit HERSHEY & HARRISBURG FY26-27 | Q1 Update

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MARKETING

CAMPAIGNS

Market & Delivery Key: BALT (Baltimore), PHL, (Philadelphia), NY (New York), PIT (Pittsburgh), DC (Washington, DC), WB-S (Wilkes Barre-Scranton), HLLY (Harrisburg, Lebanon, Lancaster, York), PA (Pennsylvania), HLLY (Harrisburg, Lancaster, Lebabnon, York)

Campaign	What	Where	When	Clicks	Impressions
Spring Campaign	Meta	PHL, NY, DC, BALT, WB-S	7.1 - 7.12	35,251	2M
Spring Campaign	Streaming + Linear TV	PHL, NY, DC, BALT, WB-S	7.1 - 7.12	NA	2.8M

WEBSITE

ACTIVE USERS | **174,931**
SESSIONS | **211,025**
VIEWS PER SESSION | **1.55**

ENGAGED SESSIONS | **116,200**
AVG. ENGAGEMENT PER SESSION | **0m 37 sec**
ENGAGEMENT RATE | **55%**

TOP WEBSITE LANDING PAGES (ORGANIC)

Events | Index
Home Page
Things to Do | Family Fun | Free Things to Do
Things to Do | Family Fun | City Island

TOP REGIONAL MARKETS (ORGANIC AUDIENCE)

Philadelphia
New York
Harrisburg
Hershey
Mechanicsburg

New Website Prep: VHH hosted the TEMPEST team for a content review and site tour of various locations across th eHershey Harrisburg Region. The visit helped to inform the team for functionality priorities plus design inspiration from direct experiences in the market.

GETAWAY GUIDE

TRAVEL GUIDES DISTRIBUTED | **3,836**
TOP 5 STATES | **PA, NY, OH, NJ, VA**

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COMMUNICATIONS & CONTENT

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Hosted Content Collaborators & Writers

- @gotlost.onpurpose and @torytalks trails visited to showcase an adventure weekend both together and as solo travelers mixing work and travel.

- Brand USA India Media FAM - Journalists visited several Hershey area locations as part of a Brand USA x Qatar Airlines site tour to various destinations including VHH, Philadelphia, Lancaster, and Baltimore.

Story of Art in America

- Hosted the documentary team for interviews with four local artists and video capture of public art spaces in Harrisburg. Spring 2027 release.

Releases & Placements

- Release: VHH Announces New Sports & Events Authority Executice Director
- Earned Media Overview: Six (6) mentions, 1.1 million audience, $9K publicity

Education & Conferences

- MATPRA Media Marketplace (Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance) - Dover, DE

CONTENT CREATION | WRITING PROJECTS

Getaway Guide | Developed copy for the 2027 edition

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

VHH posts (not including stories, organic collabs) highlighting events, locations, trails & experiences, seasonal content, and user generated content.

ORGANIC POSTS (All platforms) | **239**
ORGANIC VIEWS (All platforms) | **1M+**
ORGANIC ENGAGEMENTS (All platforms) | **15K+**

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

CONSUMER EMAILS | **2** PARTNERSHIP EMAILS | **14**
AVG. CONSUMER LIST SIZE | **29,371**

COLLABORATOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Hosting/contracting regional and/or local creators to cover Partner locations or experiences.

CREATORS HOSTED | **2**
COLLABORATOR POSTS (IG FEED) | **5**
COLLABORATOR VIEWS (IG FEED) | **164K+**
COLLABORATOR ENGAGEMENTS (IG FEED) | **64K+**

BIG 26 BASEBALL | BUDDY PROGRAM

Led registration and on-site operations for the 2026 Big 26 Baseball Classic Buddy Program featuring a player picnic and game. Produced Buddy Game video for stadium screening.

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EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

VHH's series of experiences package tourism assets in a way that's easily accessible to a variety of specific audiences such as craft beer enthusiasts, outdoor adventurers, art & history buffs, etc.

BREW BARONS BEER TRAIL

A mobile passport featuring 25+ local craft brewery or tasting room locations. Guests win prizes as they reach mobile check-in milestones.

CHECK-INS | **728**
NEW USERS | **256**
PRIZES EARNED | **47**

DISCOVERY PASS

A mobile resource designed to share offers for educational attractions and experiences.

SIGN-UPS | **1,754**
REDEMPTIONS | **550**

HARRISBURG ARTS DISTRICT

A mobile resource designed to help visitors explore the Harrisburg Arts District. The app includes an itinerary feature, audio mural trail, and more.

DOWNLOADS | **89**
TOTAL USERS | **651**
SESSIONS | **664**
APP PAGE VIEWS | **6,289**

TRAILS & EXPERIENCES

A mobile resource designed to help visitors explore the Harrisburg Arts District. The app includes an itinerary feature, audio mural trail, and more.

DOWNLOADS | **104**
TOTAL USERS | **528**
PRIZES EARNED | **12**
SESSIONS | **596**
APP PAGE VIEWS | **8,902**

HIGHLIGHTED INITIATIVES

Harrisburg Arts District Placemaking - Through a PA Creative Communities grant, VHH entered into a contract with a consultant to develop a placemaking strategy for the Harrisburg Arts District. Key events in Q1 included a meet & greet with approximately 20 artists and stakeholders and a tour of several locations including the Whitaker Center, Denim Coffee, Broad St Market, the Millworks, Susquehanna Art Museum, Civic Club, and Riverfront Park.

Chesapeake Gateways Network Tour - VHH led the National Parks Service on a tour to potential network sites, including the Cameron Mansion, Riverfront Park, Pride of the Susquehanna, Broad St Market, Millworks, Midtown Scholar, and Hershey Gardens.

TRADE EVENTS & INDUSTRY MEETINGS

- Planning Meeting for South-Central Trail Network Event
- Governor's Advisory Council Quarterly Meeting (Fish & Boat Commission, PA Game Commission, and DCNR)

Visit HERSHEY & HARRISBURG

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SALES

M&C, GROUP, INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED | **22,509**
ROOM NIGHT LEADS DISTRIBUTED | **11,379**
TRADE SHOWS ATTENDED | **6**
SITE/FAM TOURS HOSTED | **7**

SALES & MARKETING

- Ad - 1/2 page in Tours Unlimited, 1/2 page in Topaz Tours 2027 Global Brochure
- Launched the PA Group Tour Guide (supported by PA Tourism Group Tour grant)
- Distributed PA Teacher's Travel Guide to 50,000 teachers, principals, administrators, and student tour operators
- Launched PA Marketing Co=op with Hotelbeds (supported by PA Tourism office and DMO partners)

TRADE EVENTS & INDUSTRY MEETINGS

- SYTA (Student & Youth Travel Association)
- MPI Middle PA
  - o July Board Meeting
  - o July Education & Networking Event
  - o Membership Recruitment Event
- C-Vent CONNECT
- Brand USA Educational Seminars – Chennai Aug 18, Ahmedabad Sept 10
- PASAE
  - o Summer Social
  - o PASAE September Education & Luncheon
- SYTA (Student & Youth Travel Association)
- PA Sponsored client event at SYTA
- Destination East
- BUSA Europe Travel Week, Amsterdam

SITE TOURS & HOSTED EVENTS

Site Tours/FAMS: Memories & Moments Travel, Tours Limited (Smita), BUSA India Media FAM, Zero to Three (National Center on Childhood Development)

PARTNERSHIP

EDUCATION, EVENTS, & PROGRAMMING

MECUM Auctions Private Tour (July 22 | PA Farm Show Complex & Expo Center)
VHH and HHSE offered an exclusive opportunity for Partners to attend a private, behind the scenes tour at Mecum Auctions. Partners had the opportunity to feel the thrill of opening the auction, walking the show floor and learning how it all comes together. The tour was guided by Mecum team members.

PARTNER PROSPECTS & ADDITIONS

Prospects

- 179 partner visits and prospect contacts

New Partners Added

- Hummelstown Print House
- Premiere #1 Limousine
- Star Express Limousine
- TownePlace Suites
- Travel Champs

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HERSHEY HARRISBURG SPORTS & EVENTS AUTHORITY

SALES ACTIVITY

TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED | **18,635**
ROOM NIGHT LEADS DISTRIBUTED | **15,590**
TRADE SHOWS ATTENDED | **2**
SITE VISITS | **4**

EVENTS HOSTED

- StarQuest International World Finals I
- Hogan Hershey Lacrosse Tournament
- Obstacle Sports Expo
- StarQuest International World Finals II
- YMCA First National Bank Harrisburg Mile
- Professional Bowlers Assoc. of Greater Hershey Open
- Defender Hockey Hershey Summer Sizzler
- My Lacrosse Hershey Lacrosse Shootout
- Mecum Auction Harrisburg
- Big 26 Baseball Classic
- Firecracker Sweet Spot Showcase Classic
- National Hockey 5s Chocolate Cup Challenge
- Break the Chains Chocolatetown Nationals Open & Duals
- Hershey Cup Soccer Tournament
- Special Olympics Pennsylvania State Softball Championships
- YMCA Harrisburg Half & 10k
- Berry Mountain Brawl Powered by HHSE

ESTIMATED TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT | **$49 Million**

TRADE EVENTS & INDUSTRY MEETINGS

Trade Shows & Industry Meetings

- Connect Sports Marketplace – Tampa, FL
- PA Sports Tourism Summit Meeting – Chester, PA
- Sports ETA Mentoring Committee Meeting
- Sports ETA State Association Leaders Meeting

Volunteering

Several HHSE & VHH staff members volunteered at the Obstacle Sports Expo and the Special Olympics PA State Softball Championships.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Website Views = 6.6K
- Social Media Views = 79.4K
- Landing Pages Created: Defender Hockey, MCDA Cheer and Dance, East Roundnet Championships
- Release: “Three Major Events Bring Big Economic Win to the Hershey Harrisburg Region This Holiday Weekend”
- Release: “From Grassroots to Global: Why Hershey Harrisburg Is Investing in Emerging Sports”
- Release: “Hershey Harrisburg Knows What It Takes to Operate an Event”

BIG 26 BASEBALL

- Big 26 Baseball Classic: Hosted the annual Pennsylvania vs. Maryland high school all-star event and special needs Buddy Game (Locations: PSU Harrisburg, FNB Field)
- Earned Media Overview: 90 clips, 16.3 million audience, $640K publicity

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EXPLORE HBG

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Campaign	What	Where	When	Clicks	Impressions
Summer	Display & Search	HLLY	June 29 - Sept. 4	34K	544K
Summer	Meta (Social)	HLLY	June 29 - Sept. 4	28K	417K
Summer	OTT	HLLY	June 29 - Sept. 4		1.28M
Events	Meta	HLLY	June - August	2.4K	61.4K
Restaurants	Meta	HLLY	June - August	76	2.9K
Arts & Culture	Meta	HLLY	June - August	42.3K	976.5K

WEBSITE

ACTIVE USERS | **107,616**
SESSIONS | **99,980**
VIEWS PER SESSION | **2.5**
AVG. ENGAGEMENT PER SESSION | **0m 40 sec**

CONTENT CREATION | WRITING PROJECTS

New Blogs | Happy Hours Spots, Kipona, Restaurant Week, Hispanic Heritage Month, Halloween Activities for the Family

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

ExploreHBG posts (+ organic collabs) highlighting events, locations, trails & experiences, seasonal content, and user generated content.

ORGANIC POSTS (All platforms) | **134K+**
ORGANIC VIEWS (All platforms) | **460K+**
ORGANIC ENGAGEMENTS (All platforms) | **15.9K+**

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

EXPLORE HBG MONTHLY EMAILS | **3**
AVG. CONSUMER LIST SIZE | **1,101**

COLLABORATOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Hosting/contracting regional and/or local creators to cover Partner locations or experiences.

CREATORS HOSTED | **1**
COLLABORATOR POSTS (IG FEED) | **1**
COLLABORATOR VIEWS (IG FEED) | **6K+**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SPONSORSHIPS & EVENT APPEARANCES

Visit Hershey & Harrisburg and Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority proudly support various special events in the region. These strategic sponsorships allow our team to interact with the community and guests to gain important first-hand insights into the guest and event experience, as well as provide an opportunity for us to promote more aspects of the destination.

July 4th Food Truck Festival | July 4 -- Riverfront Park
Activation: VHH sponsorship highlighting Harrisburg Arts District. ExploreHBG was the event's official marketing sponsor.

Perfect Game Baseball Mid-Atlantic Independence Day Invitational | July 3-5 -- Various Fields
Activation: HHSE sponsored tournament.

Obstacle Sports Expo | July 11-16 -- PA Farm Show Complex & Expo Center
Activation: HHSE sponsored the event. HHSE, VHH, Explore staff volunteered various shifts.

Professional Bowlers Association Greater Hershey Open | July 17-19 -- ABC Lanes
Activation: HHSE sponsored the event.

Perfect Game Baseball Select Championships | July 17-10 -- Various Fields
Activation: HHSE sponsored tournament

Dauphin County Brewfest | July 20 -- Fort Hunter -- Attendance: 1,200
Activation: VHH sponsorship with onsite sponsor table, Brew Baron mascot attendance..

Stage at Riverfront Park Summer Concert Series | Various Summer Dates -- Riverfront Park
Activation: VHH sponsorship.

Big 26 Baseball Classic | July 30 - August 2 -- FNB Field
Activation: HHSE owns & operates the event, VHH, ExploreHBG, HHSE videos & logos appear on scoreboard.

Dauphin County Cultural Fest | August 15 -- Riverfront Park
Activation: VHH & Explore sponsorship.

Special Olympics Pennsylvania State Softball Championship | August 21-23 -- In the Net
Activation: HHSE sponsorship, HHSE & VHH staff volunteered variou shifts

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SPONSORSHIPS & EVENT APPEARANCES

(>> continued >>)

Perfect Game Super25 Central Pennsylvania Fall Super Qualifier | September 4-6 -- In the Net
Activation: HHSE sponsorship

City of Harrisburg Kipona Festival | September 5 -7 -- Riverfront Park
Activation: VHH sponsorship with signage and social media featuring Trails & Experiences. ExploreHBG sponsorship featuring signage and giveaways at the info table.

Dauphin County Jazz & Wine Festival | September 12-13 -- Fort Hunter
Activation: VHH sponsorship with A-frame and destination information.

Central PA Family Day | September 12 -- Broad Street Market
Activation: VHH sponsorship with on-site table and destination information

Perfect Game Central PA Fall Elite Championships | September 18-20 -- In the Net
Activation: HHSE sponsorship

NCWM Cocktails & Cannonballs | September 19
Activation: ExploreHBG sponsorship, gift basket donation

PA Chiefs of Police Thin Blue Line Football Game | September 25
Activation: VHH sponsorship with logos in applicable promotional materials

Senstoberfest | September 26 -- FNB Field
Activation: VHH sponsorship with onsite signage

Berry Mountain Brawl Powered by Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events | Sept. 26 -- Wiconisco Creek Disc Golf Course
Activation: HHSE presenting sponorship

Susquehanna Scout Podcast | Various summer dates
Activation: VHH sponsorship of ongoing series that highlights stories related to the Susquehanna River

3rd in the Burg | 3rd Friday July, August, September
Activation: ExploreHBG sponsorship of ongoing event highlighting food, arts, and culture across Harrisburg