

VISIT HOWARD COUNTY

Promoting Howard County near and far



This year, how are you rolling out some of the “lessons learned” from the COVID-19 pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic took “thinking-out-of-the-box” to a whole new level. To me, it was as if the world as we knew it was turned upside down, and we had to reverse the way we approached everything. Coming out of it, we have learned to be more flexible and ready to not only do things differently but do things we have never done before.

Would you like to share the latest news about you and your staff?

I am incredibly proud of our rockstar staff. Each is dedicated to what they do and has a great appreciation that our collective work is for the betterment of Howard County’s hospitality community. I am also honored that two of our team members were award recipients at the 2021 Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit. Eric Teisch was presented with the New Tourism Professional of the Year award and Mike Dwyre with the inaugural COVID Frontline Hospitality Hero award.

What makes you optimistic for tourism businesses as the beautiful, colorful fall season approaches?

Overall visitation to Howard County is on the rise, and we are seeing an increase in hotel night stays. All of the events and festivals are back, some of which are seeing record attendances. Despite inflation, consumers’ pent-up demand is still strong, keeping our restaurants, retail, and attractions busy. Our member businesses are also more engaged in our programs which tells us they are open for business.

Q&A

By the Business Monthly Staff

Amanda Hof, executive director of Howard County Tourism, reflects on coming back after COVID-19, the HoCo Gratitude campaign, and other successes this year.



What has made tourism in our area especially resilient?

Support from the community has been a huge factor in our hospitality community’s survival and ultimate success. We are also very fortunate for Howard County Government’s early and ongoing support of our small businesses. Our positioning as a nearby destination with plenty of fun outdoor activities has also been key throughout the pandemic, especially in the beginning when people were timid to travel.

What is the biggest success so far this year?

Our HoCo Gratitude campaign is by far the project I am most proud of. This year we felt it critical to raise awareness and appreciation for all the individuals, no matter what their walk of life, that keep our restaurants, hotels, retail operations, and attractions running. HoCo Gratitude, thus far, has publicly recognized 20 individuals on social media and radio. Our hope is for HoCo Gratitude to encourage patrons to show their gratitude to hospitality workers through acts of kindness such as words of thanks, compliments, practicing patience, and tipping up when possible.

How is the 250th anniversary celebration of Ellicott City going?

Visit Howard County is a proud partner of the EC250 Celebration. We support in various ways, including paid advertising for all the great EC250 events. We are also thrilled to be hosting the Milltown To City exhibit at the Howard County Welcome Center. EC250 has been a huge draw for Ellicott City’s Historic District and Howard County as a whole. We are also looking forward to the all-new, “On National Road—the EC250 Musical” that is set to premiere in December. This original show will chronicle historic milestones during the last 250 years in Ellicott City and Howard County.



About Visit Howard County

Founded in 1981, the Howard County Tourism Council, Inc. trades today as Visit Howard County.

Visit Howard County is recognized by Howard County Government and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development as the official Destination Marketing Organization for Howard County. Visit Howard County serves as the lead organization to market and develop the county as a premier leisure and business travel destination and achieves this through integrating the organization’s work with industry partners to create innovative marketing campaigns that drive economic activity through visitor spending. Visit Howard County additionally serves as a credible resource for Howard County’s tourism community.

Why Join Visit Howard County

For as little as \$50 a year, businesses can become members of Visit Howard County, a nonprofit that markets the efforts of its members and helps visitors and residents alike enjoy what the community has to offer. With different levels of membership – tiered at \$50, \$500 and \$1,000 per year – businesses can choose their level of exposure. “One hundred percent of the membership dues that are collected go directly towards our marketing efforts of members,” explained Eric Teisch, sales & membership director for Visit Howard County. “As the lead marketing organization for Howard County, we value the opportunity

to support our members through print, radio, television, targeted digital, and social media marketing campaigns.” Members’ listings, information, and events on Visit Howard County’s website are seen by more than 300,000 unique visitors each year.

“Visit Howard County bridges the hospitality and business communities together while consistently sharing important information that impacts everyone in Howard County,” said Teisch.

How do businesses join? Visit <https://www.visithowardcounty.com/about/tourism-council/membership/>

Testimonial

“As a restaurateur in the Greater Baltimore and DC area we are so blessed to have supportive memberships like Howard County Tourism. Eric and his entire team are so organized and thoughtful in communicating opportunities to collaborate. In fact, the Restaurant Week put forth by Howard County is exemplary and should be duplicated across other counties. Even during COVID we managed to hold virtual meetings promoting a healthy and safe workspace while conducting business. They do a wonderful job of connecting industries and creating a Win-Win environment. I speak for myself, the Liberatore Family and the rest of the organization... Thank you for everything you do for small businesses and our community.”

Nick Liberatore
Owner
Lib’s Grill

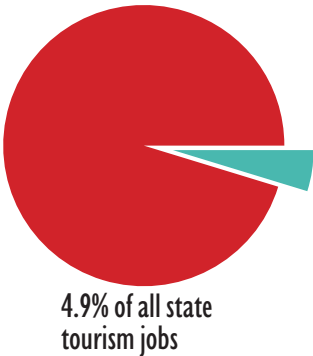
TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS

Pandemic impact on visitor spending and jobs

Visitor spending dropped 38% with job losses reaching more than a quarter of all tourism jobs pre-pandemic, which is in line with the state visitor spending drop and job losses for 2020.

The industry is still noteworthy

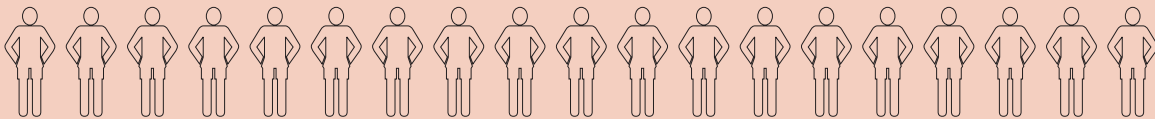
Even in the pandemic, tourism's total impact of \$433 million to Howard County businesses, along with the support of 8,266 jobs, 4.9% of all state tourism jobs, was an important piece of the state economy in 2020.



Fiscal Contributions

Visitors to Howard County generated \$37.8 million in state and local taxes in 2020.

Visit Howard County continues to provide its own updates to members with information as it pertains to Howard County's hospitality community.



1.9 million visitors
spent \$433 million

IN HOWARD COUNTY IN 2020



= 100,000 people
 = \$100 million

VISIT HOWARD COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

75+ Marketing Campaigns

500 K Visithowardcounty.com Website Users,
up 30% over previous year

1.3 M Visithowardcounty.com Pageviews,
up 38% over previous year

10.5 M Social Media Impressions

18.5 K Facebook Likes

4.5 K Instagram Followers

292 LinkedIn Followers

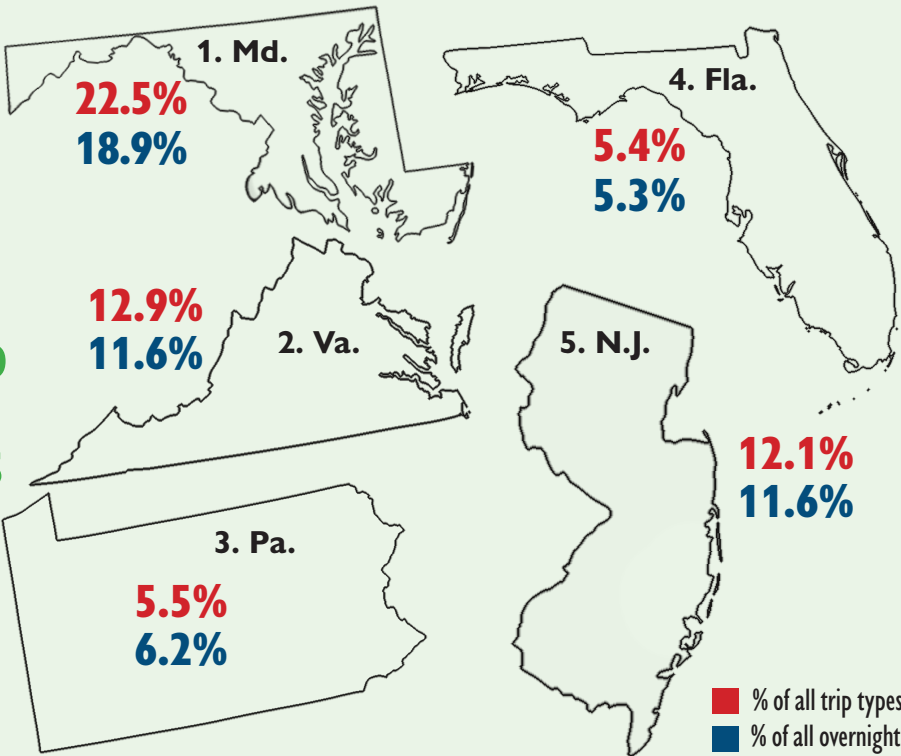
6000+ Email Subscribers

3 NEW Exhibits in the Howard County Welcome Center

10,000+ Visitors to the Howard County Welcome Center (15,000 estimated visitors for 2019)

40,000 Visitors Guides Printed

WHAT ARE THE TOP 5 STATES THAT HOWARD COUNTY VISITORS COME FROM?



WHAT REGIONS DO THEY COME FROM?

Washington D.C. 19.5%
Baltimore, Md. 9.5%
Philadelphia, Pa. 6.2%
Harrisburg-Lancaster, Pa. 4.1%
Salisbury, Md. 3.4%
Norfolk-Newport News, Va. 2.2%
Richmond-Petersburg, Va. 1.8%
Raleigh-Durham, N.C. 1.7%
Pittsburgh, Pa. 1.7%

WHERE DO THEY GO?

Columbia 41.77%
Ellicott City 27.17%
Elkridge 20.44%
North Laurel 19.37%
West Howard County 4.23%
Savage 0.84%
Maple Lawn 0.83%
Historic Ellicott City 0.70%
Other 8.10%

WHERE DO THEY SPEND?

Food 61.5%
 Accommodations 12.7%
 Transportation 10.6%
 Retail 8.2%
 Specialty Retail 4.3%

VISIT
HOWARD
18 COUNTY 51
MARYLAND

VisitHowardCounty.com
@visithocmd
Sources:
Near via Zartico Dashboard
Affinity via Zartico Dashboard

VISIT HOWARD COUNTY

Executive Committee



Yolande Lacan
Homewood Suites Columbia
President



Trish Hudson
Hudson Coastal Raw Bar & Grille
President- Elect



Barbara Nicklas
Immediate Past President



Jim Starke
Best Western Plus Bwi Airport
Finance Chair



Martha Clark
Clark's Elioak Farm
Nomination Chair



Chuck Chandler
Residence Inn by Marriott
Fulton at Maple Lawn



Pete Mangione
Turf Valley Resort



Debbie Slack Katz
Ellicott City Historic District Liaison

Ex-Officio Members



Dan Burns
Columbia Association



Terry Hasseltine
Maryland Sports



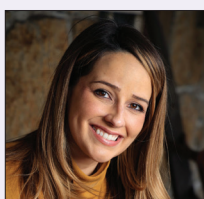
The Honorable Katie Fry Hester
Maryland Senate



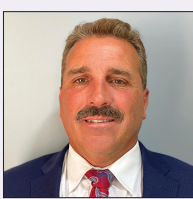
Kathy Johnson
Howard County Economic
Development Authority



Jennifer Jones
Howard County Government



Jillian Joseph
Ellicott City Partnership



Mike Milani
Howard County Dept. Recreation & Parks

Outgoing Members

Thank you for your service



The Honorable Eric Ebersole
Maryland House of Delegates



Becky Mangus
Independent Consultant



Donna Wilner
Savage Mill

Board Members



Margaret Barry
Independent Consultant



Nina Basu
Inner Arbor Trust



Mae Beale
Community Activist



Jayquin Bella
The DoubleTree by
Hilton Columbia



Steve Carne
Terrapin Adventures



Cheryl Clemens-Everidge
Toby's Dinner Theatre



Vince Culotta
Cured | 18th & 21st



Phillip Dodge
Downtown Columbia Partnership



Julie Eurice
Savage Mill



Ian Kennedy
Downtown Columbia Arts
and Culture Commission



Soo Park
Korea Town Council

VISIT HOWARD COUNTY STAFF



Amanda Hof
Executive Director



Eric Teisch
Sales & Membership Director



Denisa Smith
Office & Member
Operation Manager



Alex Sullivan
Visitor Services &
Community Engagement



Mike Dwyre
Marketing Coordinator II



Keith Shuey
Full-Time Visitor Services
Specialist II

