

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



TAUGHANNOCK FALLS OVERLOOK | AVA THOMAS

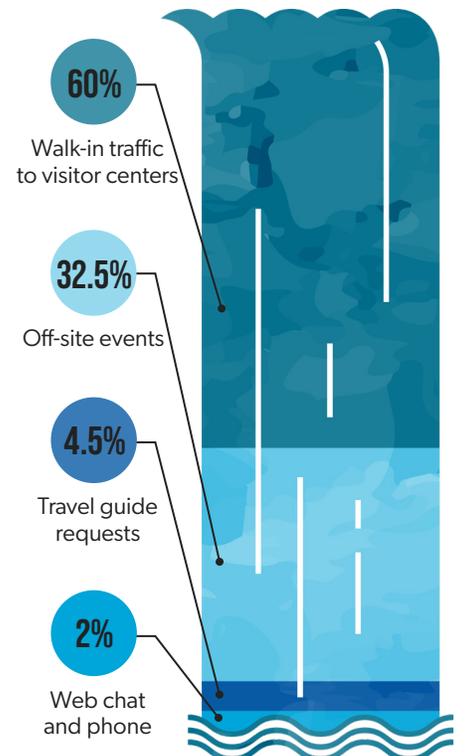
What an exciting year 2024 turned out to be! The Visit Ithaca team implemented data driven programs that produced meaningful growth for tourism partner businesses and increased economic vitality to Tompkins County.

Tompkins County celebrated educators from 477 school districts and multiple states for our nineteenth annual Ithaca Loves Teachers celebration. Our work promoting the Total Solar Eclipse resulted in a community sellout in early April, with visitors traveling across the country to experience this cosmic adventure here. The Ithaca Downtown Conference Center opened in July, the culmination of research, collaboration, negotiation, creative partnerships, and active selling for a decade.

We invite you to review the major accomplishments of the Visit Ithaca team in 2024. We are grateful for the opportunity to promote this wonderful place and look forward to your continued partnership in the years ahead.

## 2024 VISITOR EXPERIENCE TOUCHPOINTS

# 72,918



## 2023 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

 **\$301 MILLION**  
VISITOR SPENDING

↑33% FROM 2022

 **\$35 MILLION**  
GENERATED IN STATE AND LOCAL TAXES

↑2.5% FROM 2022

 **3,050**  
FULL TIME JOBS SUPPORTED BY TOURISM SPENDING

 **\$814**  
TAX SAVINGS PER HOUSEHOLD

Source: Tourism Economics. 2024 data available in Q4 2025.



CASCADILLA GORGE | @LIFE0FSATTY



**SOLD OUT**

Tap & Craft Festival at The Hotel Ithaca

@WILDPRECIOUSNOW

## 19th Annual Ithaca Loves Teachers

**2,642** ↑16%

Teachers and their guests downloaded the 2024 digital pass

**3,400+** ↑34%

Deal redemptions made in February 2024

**100+** **477**

Out-of-State passholders

Different school districts represented

**18,280**

Total webpage views of /Ithaca-Loves-Teachers



**1,429** TICKETS SOLD!

Bored Teachers Comedy Tour at The State Theatre

**“WE LOVE THIS PROGRAM! WE GO TO ITHACA PRESIDENTS' DAY WEEKEND EVERY YEAR BECAUSE OF THIS, IT'S A GREAT WAY TO TRY NEW PLACES OR REVISIT SOME WE LOVE.”** - *Teacher from Pennsylvania*

## VISITOR EXPERIENCE

### Widespread success

In 2024, our Visitor Touchpoints reached people across:

**ALL 50 STATES & 80+ COUNTRIES**



CORNELL BEAR WALK

This year, our team participated in **26 OFF-SITE EVENT ENGAGEMENTS,**

Where we reached a total of:

**19,437 PEOPLE**

on college campuses, at conferences, Ithaca Artist Market, and more!



**“THANKS SO MUCH. GREAT SUGGESTIONS, FRIENDLY, AND WILLING TO ENGAGE IN ACTUAL CONVERSATION!”** - *Webchat user*

TAUGHANNOCK OVERLOOK VISITORS CENTER | AVA THOMAS



REI GRAND OPENING



**“IT WAS SO HELPFUL TO FIND A TRAIL WE COULD VISIT WITH A WHEELCHAIR.”** - *Harrisburg, PA webchat user*

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# MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS



## VISITITHACA.COM

**606,833** ↑11%  
SESSIONS

**426,347** ↑8%  
ACTIVE USERS

**3 MIN. 34 SEC.**  
AVG. SESSION LENGTH

EVENTS  
CALENDAR:

**41,544**  
SESSIONS

**275,242**  
VIEWS

## Actions Taken on Website:



**65K+** ↑25%  
Total Referrals to  
Partner Websites



**1,550+**  
New Consumer  
Email Sign-ups



## BOOKDIRECT:

**19,200+**  
Referrals to  
accommodations  
websites

**4,500+**  
Accommodation  
searches using  
BookDirect widget

**470**  
Direct  
Bookings

## Big Events and Campaigns: Reaching Beyond Ithaca



### WINTER CAMPAIGN COLLAB WITH CORTLAND COUNTY

- **3.1M+** total impressions
- Social and Digital Media results from January 24, 2024–April 2, 2024
  - **2** blog posts
  - **83** Instagram stories
  - **4** Instagram Reels



### BRANDUSA

- Programmatic digital campaign with landing page on Expedia targeting eastern Canada
- Permanent destination page on **VisitTheUSA.com**

- **2.8M+** total impressions
- **3K+** total clicks
- **350+** campaign attributed hotel bookings!



HERITAGE RADIO NETWORK



### DIGITAL PASSES

- Launched new Art Seek Pass!
- **3.6K+** individual sign-ups across all passes: Waterfalls Challenge; Art Seek; Ithaca Loves Teachers
- **5.9K** total deal/prize redemptions
- Users from **45 different states** and **three countries**

### PODCASTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- HRN recorded at Finger Lakes Cider House featuring cideries & wineries
- Collaboration with Seneca and Cayuga counties for Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway
- Paid YouTube Campaign in late fall

### PACK UP & GO

- Partnered with a custom travel experience platform targeting 35–44 year old who are frequent travelers
- **120K+** total impressions across social and email
- **1K+** entries for an Ithaca sweepstakes



RACHEL PHILIPSON



SASHA SAGAN  
THE HANGAR THEATER | RACHEL PHILIPSON



RACHEL PHILIPSON

## TOTAL ECLIPSE

- Eclipse landing page saw **6,622 organic sessions** during Q2 with **67%** of users clicking to other pages on the website
- Eclipse-related content, including partner events, had **13,000+ views**
- **All hotels sold out on Sunday, April 7th**
- **3K Eclipse glasses** distributed throughout the community
- **37%** of the tickets sold for the *Eclipse Bus to Totality* were from outside of Tompkins County
- **26%** of the 350 attendees for the Sasha Sagan event at The Hangar Theater were out of county

# 2024 MEDIA COVERAGE

## Earned media all year long!

Visit Ithaca hosted seven journalists in 2024, resulting in print, digital and audio content on top-tier media platforms, as well as numerous social media mentions.

**97** DIFFERENT TOMPKINS COUNTY BUSINESSES & ATTRACTIONS WERE MENTIONED IN ALL MEDIA COVERAGE OF TOMPKINS COUNTY IN 2024.

## Hosted Media Coverage Highlights



### **Amazing LGBTQ+ Wedding & Honeymoon Destinations 2024**

*Passport Magazine*

By Kelsy Chauvin (hosted in October '23)



### **Wow, It's the Finger Lakes!**

*The Knockturnal*

By Laurie Heifetz (hosted in July/Aug. '24)



### **72 Hours in the Finger Lakes: Adventure Edition**

*Territory Supply*

By Sarah Lamagna (hosted in July/Aug. '24)

## Other Notable Media Highlights



**It's Always Off-Season Somewhere — Here Are 8 U.S. Destinations to Enjoy It Year-Round**



**Short On Cash? 5 Fantastic U.S. Vacations To Save You A Bundle After Labor Day**



**9 spectacular US waterfalls to visit in winter**



### LEVERAGING I LOVE NY:

**51** themed blog posts included mentions for Tompkins County businesses & attractions

**10** additional web and print articles published as the result of Visit Ithaca's pitching stories and responding to media leads

## SOCIAL MEDIA



### FACEBOOK

547.5K VIEWS

377.4K ESTIMATED REACH (ORGANIC + PAID)

15.5K CONTENT INTERACTIONS



### INSTAGRAM

543.4K VIEWS

108.5K ESTIMATED REACH

28.3K CONTENT INTERACTIONS

## Collaborating with Content Creators to promote Winter Visitation

Through direct outreach and partnership, Visit Ithaca hosted four content creators in 2024, with three visiting between February–March and one in November.

Content created and shared included: 1 extensive vlog and 150 social media posts highlighting 42 different partners.



### Pustika Samaddar

@pustika\_samaddar



### Christine Halliday

@wildpreciousnow



### Dominek Tubbs

@domthecity



### Roshni Shah

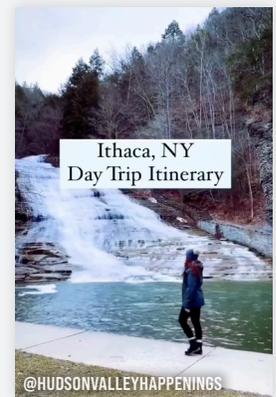
@travelsfillsyoursoul

## Reels get Results

**54 REELS POSTED → 2.6 MILLION VIEWS**



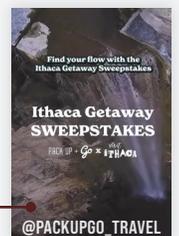
Collaborator Reel  
2.1M views, 42.6K likes



Collaborator/Winter Reel  
180K views, 5.2K likes

## Top Five Instagram Post Stats:

- 70.1K shares  
42.7K likes
- 1.2K shares  
1.3K likes
- 223 shares  
1.5K likes
- 167 shares  
1.4K likes
- 124 shares  
966 likes  
755 comments



# FROM SITE TOURS TO CITYWIDE WINS: 2024 SALES SUCCESS

In 2024, Visit Ithaca's sales team delivered measurable growth in group sales, with notable gains in meeting and conference bookings, sports tourism, international travel trade, and the motorcoach market.

This success was driven by consistent client engagement and a strategic focus on building strong, lasting relationships across key segments.

- **6** Tradeshows attended across all markets with **120** 1-on-1 Appointments
- **2** Collaborative Client Events cohosted with NYSDMO, included **60** influential decision-makers in the meetings and sports tourism sectors
- **2** International FAMs Hosted



## PBA ANNUAL MEETING

We celebrated a major win by hosting the Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting, which brought over **150 professionals from the motorcoach and group tour industry to Ithaca for a citywide event**—made possible through strong collaboration with our local partners.

## CONFERENCES BOOKED BY CVB AND HELD IN 2024

Room nights | [Economic impact](#)

- 2024 NY Bankers Association: **257 RN** | **\$46,003**
- 2024 North American Adaptive Physical Activity Conference – SUNY Collaboration: **224 RN** | **\$35,616**
- 2024 Police Conference of NY Fall Conference: **180 RN** | **\$33,656**
- 2024 American Planning Association Upstate NY Chapter Annual Meeting: **86 RN** | **\$14,535**

**Total: 747 RN** | **\$129,818**

## CONFERENCES HELD IN 2024 WITH ROOM BOOKINGS BY CVB

- 2024 NYS Association of Mobility Management Conference: **45 RN** | **\$6,255**
- 2024 Grow-NY Summit: **450 RN** | **\$78,782**

**Total: 495 RN** | **\$85,037**



Open for BUSINESS!



**20**  
IDCC Site  
Tours

**40**  
RFP  
Responses Sent

**11**  
Conferences  
Booked

The highly anticipated July debut of the Ithaca Downtown Conference Center marked a turning point for our destination unlocking new potential and elevating Ithaca's profile as a premier hub for meetings and events in the Finger Lakes and beyond. Visit Ithaca played a key role in driving early success and remains deeply committed to maximizing the center's potential for the local economy.

YEAR OVER YEAR	2023	2024
Leads Sent	157	218
Leads Booked	62	50
Potential Economic Impact Calculator (EIC)	\$6,201,322	\$15,202,145
Booked EIC	\$1,335,026	\$2,163,810



TRUMANSBURG FARMERS MARKET | AVA THOMAS



## WAYFINDING

The CVB/Chamber team led the committee to develop a list of Points of Interest for Pedestrian and Vehicular signs. Whitham Planning & Design developed the list into the wayfinding sign plan, and subcontracted ideakraft for design work.

The CVB/Chamber scoured each sign to ensure all POIs were captured and signed correctly. Fundraising and grant writing continued throughout the year. Jodi took the lead on the Wayfinding Project in late fall. At least 150 staff hours were spent on the Tompkins County Vehicular & Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Plan.

## INVESTING IN OUR TEAM & COMMUNITY

Advocacy on behalf of the industry, with the biggest victory being for NYS short-term rental regulations signed into law in December.

- Hospitality Employment Training Program (HETP)
- Destinations International Certified Destination Marketing Executive (CDME) courses
- Professional in Destination Management (PDM) courses
- Narcan training
- Emergency Response training
- Annual Partner Marketing Workshops
- Groton Central School District Summer Academy Program
- SEE Conference
- Travel Unity Conference
- Travel & Tourism Research Association (TTRA)
- Diversity Consortium Roundtable
- Local & Regional Brochure Exchanges
- International Food & Wine Travel Writers Conference
- Professional Conference Managers Association Conference
- Sports ETA Conference
- And more!



PADDLE-N-MORE SELECTED FOR A CAMPAIGN PROMOTING OUTDOOR DESTINATIONS ACROSS NEW YORK



Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau is a division of the Tompkins Chamber

### Mission

To foster a healthy economy, a vibrant destination, and improve quality of life in Tompkins County.

### Vision

To be an inclusive organization that supports thriving communities with successful businesses, inspiring nonprofits, and flourishing tourism economies.

### Values

- Participation & Collaboration
- Free Enterprise & Commerce
- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Involved Leadership
- Integrity & Accountability
- Environmental Stewardship
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Commitment to Community