

2018 - 2019

ANNUAL

REPORT

visit
knoxville
TENNESSEE



Honeycomb Mural
by Curtis Glover



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

We predicted that FY2018-19 would be our biggest and best yet and we were right. It's been a truly amazing year, not just for Visit Knoxville, but all of Knoxville. Some of the most significant events of the year impacted our community at large. Events like the record-setting 2019 Bassmaster Classic, an event that generated more than \$32 million in economic impact, helped create enhanced infrastructure at Governor Ned McWherter/ Riverside Landing Park. Other sporting events including the NASC Symposium and USA Cycling Pro & Para Road National Championships garnered a lot of attention, but they're only part of this year's story.

We started the year with these organizational goals:

- Continue to enhance local amenities (docks, boat ramps, murals, etc.) and improve infrastructure to support tourism-based initiatives, including festivals and events
- Pursue the opening of a second staffed visitor center by December 2019
- Timeline the creation of a new Knoxville Film Festival for late FY18-19 or early FY19-20
- Pursue a partnership that will facilitate a regional tourism shuttle based out of the Visitors Center
- Develop a stake-holder/tourism dashboard based on ongoing in-house data collection and analysis
- Create an annual fundraiser for the VK Sports Commission

We have achieved nearly all of these goals. In fact, a regional Shuttle to the Smokies was soft launched in 4Q for a 1Q FYE20 activation.

This annual report features some additional highlights of the year. For the details of the year, I encourage you to view the quarterly highlights online under media at visitknoxville.com.

As always, none of this would be possible without the incredible support we receive from the City of Knoxville, Knox County, the State of Tennessee and our amazing local tourism partners. Thank you for helping us show the world all the wonderful things Knoxville has to offer.

We appreciate you!

Kim Bumpas

Kim Bumpas
President
Visit Knoxville



visit
knoxville
TENNESSEE

CONVENTION SALES & SPORTS COMMISSION

The Visit Knoxville Sales Team once again exceeded several goals in a very exciting, successful year. Detailed information is listed below. These numbers include the activities of the Convention Sales team and the Visit Knoxville Sports Commission.

BOOKED EVENTS

135

(EXCEEDED GOAL OF 132)

Of the **135** events, **65%** were new business. **34** booked at the Knoxville Convention Center.

PRODUCED OVER \$102.5 MILLION OF FUTURE ECONOMIC IMPACT

TOTAL LEADS

374

(EXCEEDED GOAL OF 326)

More than **40% (151)** went to the Knoxville Convention Center.

HOSTED SITE VISITS

52

Among them, Alpha Kappa Alpha, American Society of Biomechanics, Awesomesauce Events, Building Industry Association, Rotary International, Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals, Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Miracle Classic Basketball and Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association. VK has booked **21** groups as a result.

HOSTED FAMILIARIZATION (FAM) TOUR WITH A TOTAL OF

15

 MEETING PLANNERS

REPRESENTING

12

 GROUPS

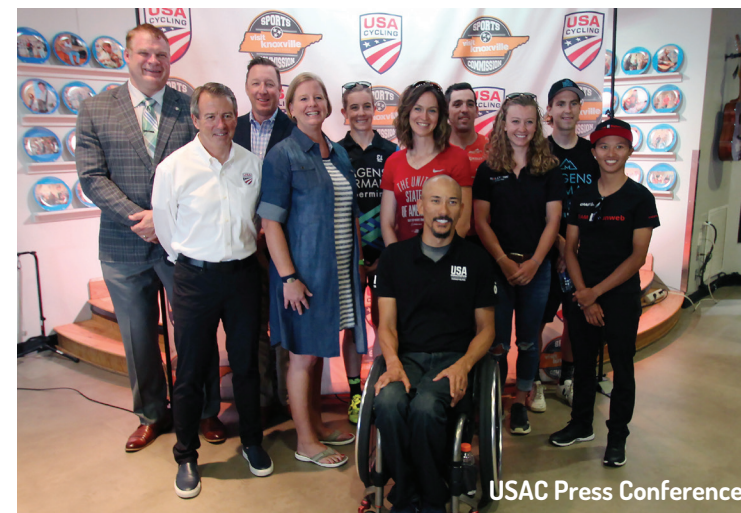
As a result, the Tennessee State Chapter of the PEO Sisterhood has chosen Knoxville for their future conference. Additionally, CDISC, National Academic Advising Association, Professional Fraternity Association, Southern States Correctional Association and New Beginning Ministries are considering Knoxville for future events.

CONDUCTED MORE THAN

99

SALES APPOINTMENTS

These appointments were conducted in the target markets of Chicago, Indianapolis, Nashville, and Washington, DC. Notable appointments include Aerospace Industries Association, American Burn Association, National Apartment Association, Parthenon Management Group, Tennessee Grocers & Convenience Store Association, and Tennessee Hospital Association.



ATTENDED TRADE SHOWS:

24

537 appointments/meetings were conducted by Visit Knoxville Sales Directors and attending partners. Shows included TN Society of Association Executives, USSSA National Convention, Connect Diversity, Experient Envision, ConferenceDirect, HelmsBriscoe and PCMA. Visit Knoxville issued **32** leads resulting from show activity and has currently booked **4** groups for future years.

VK CONCIERGE VISITS

338

The VK staff made a total of **338** visits to Knoxville hotel properties to provide information, promotional materials and tokens of appreciation.

EXECUTED

6

EVENT SCOUTING TRIPS

VK Sports Commission completed **6** scouting trips this fiscal year. These trips included visits to: Major League Fishing, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), USA Cycling, B.A.S.S., American Junior Golf Association, and Tennessee Miracle Classic.

CONVENTION & SPORTS SERVICES

The Convention and Sports Services Team is tasked with enhancing the overall planner and attendee experience with a focus on services designed to add value, maximize group efforts to grow attendance and retain group business. Providing planners with a high level of customer service and visitors with an enhanced experience will positively influence the opportunities for repeat business and visits. The Visit Knoxville Convention Services Team provides services, such as partner referrals, itinerary suggestions, visitor information, and off-site special event assistance for conventions, trade shows, events and festivals utilizing a consultative approach based on the unique needs, specific goals and attendee interests of each group.

SUPPORTED
230

CONVENTIONS, SPORTING EVENTS,
FESTIVALS & MEETINGS



FEATURED GROUPS INCLUDE:

- Cities United Annual Convening
- Classic Thunderbird International Convention
- Gold Wing Road Riders Association Wing Ding 40
 - Tennessee Recreation & Parks Association Annual Conference
- American Astronomical Society Division for Planetary Sciences Meeting
- National Youth Football Battle in Rocky Top
- Tennessee Public Transportation Association
- AAU Cross Country National Championship
 - Cirrus Aircraft Business Meeting
 - TYR Pro Swim Series
 - Varsity Spirit Ozone Invitational
- Southeastern Theatre Annual Conference
 - Bassmaster Classic
 - KIVA Showdown in the Smokies
 - National Association of Sports Commissions Symposium
 - AAU Girls Basketball Southeast District Championship
- Tennessee Miracle Classic (Girls)
 - Tennessee Miracle Classic US Amateur State (Girls & Boys)
- Bike Boat Brew & Bark with Powerboat Nationals
 - Grassroots Outdoor Alliance Summer Show
- American Baptist Association Annual Conference
- USA Cycling Pro & Para National Championships



CONVENTION SALES & SPORTS COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

CONVENTION SALES HIGHLIGHTS

Booked **\$57 million** in future economic impact.

Generated more than **\$82.9 million** in economic impact for events held during FYE19.

Executed bulk mailouts of Meeting Planner Guide and Health & Medical Meetings Booklet to targeted lists of planners including medical meeting professionals in the Greater Chicago area and third party meeting planners located throughout the Southeast. The guides and booklets were accompanied by customized marketing pieces including FAM invitations, destination snapshots and KCC booking incentives.



Established a Preferred Hotel List for 2019 film projects. The list is designed to create efficiency when sourcing and securing film rooms in the destination. There are 19 participating hotels on the list which represent downtown and each region of the county.

Created a countywide venues map that allows VK Sales Team and hotel partners to communicate to planners the proximity to hotels in which meeting facilities are located throughout the county.

SPORTS COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Booked **\$45.5 million** in future economic impact.

Generated more than **\$85.8 million** in economic impact for events held during FYE19, a **46.5%** increase over economic impact produced in FYE18.

This impact was achieved through the combined totals of a number of sporting events, including the 2019 Bassmaster Classic and the following notable events:

2019 USA Cycling Pro & Para National Championships - 2019 marked the third straight year for Knoxville to host the Pro Road and Time Trial Championships and the second to host the Criterium Championships. The Para-Cycling National Championships were held for the first time in Knoxville. All events will return in 2020 and 2021.



2019 NASC Symposium - The 2019 Symposium was the largest event in NASC history with **1,009** attendees.



2019 TYR Pro Swim Series - The event will return in January 2020 with swimmers from around the globe preparing for their run to the 2020 Olympic Games. The series is televised on NBCSN and the Olympic Channel and live streamed at usaswimming.org

The sports courts purchased by the VK Sports Commission in FYE17 continue to draw more and more basketball and volleyball teams to Knoxville. In that first year, 320 teams played on the courts. In FYE19, a total of **1,076** teams from across the country played on the courts - up from 540 teams in FYE18, representing a 100% increase.

NOTABLE EVENTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Hosted the Largest Bassmaster Classic in B.A.S.S. History

The event set a number of records including a total 3-day attendance of **153,809**. The event generated a total of **\$32.2 million** in economic impact.

Partnered with TDTD for Tennessee Songwriters Week

Knoxville's Open Mic Night was part of TDTD's inaugural Roadshow that also made stops in Memphis, Chattanooga and Johnson City.



Successfully Facilitated the Launch of Scooters in Knoxville

From the initial launch through June 25 (most recent data), a total of **31,381 users** have registered for a total of **73,925 rides**. Ride time averages **11.1 minutes**.

NOTE: The Pace Bike Share Program continues to be popular as well. Year-to-date, a total of **8,451 rides** have been taken for an average time of **20 minutes**. A total of **3,196** new users have downloaded the app.



Hosted More than 4,500 Attendees for the Southeastern Theatre Conference & More than 8,000 Attendees for the GWRAA 40th Annual Wing Ding



Hosted the 2019 USA Cycling National Championships

This was the third year for the Pro Road and Time Trial Championships and the second for the Criterium Championships. The Para-Cycling National Championships were also held for the first time in Knoxville.

Partnered on Ken Burns' New Documentary "Country Music"

The VK Film Office and the VK Visitors Center, along with WDVX and East Tennessee PBS, worked with Ken Burns and his filmmaking team as they screened clips from their new documentary celebrating 100 years of country music that will begin airing in September on PBS. The Film Office is sponsoring the documentary series on East Tennessee PBS.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications Team utilizes a variety of marketing tools and strategies to direct people to VisitKnoxville.com

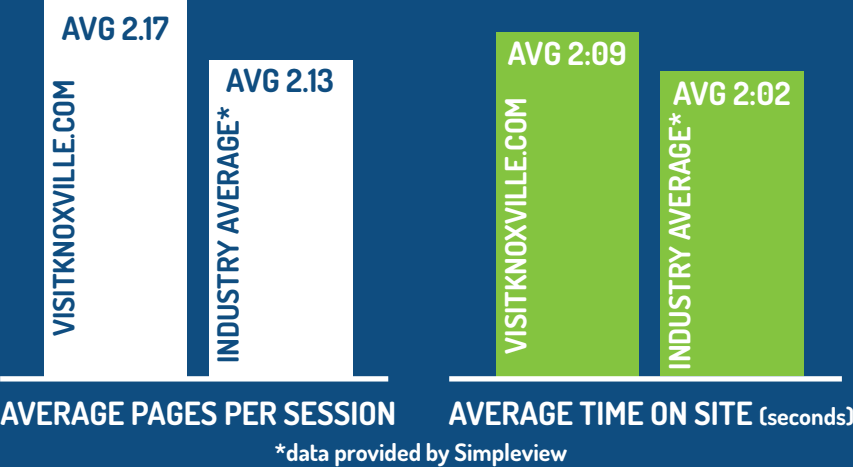
The success of this year's efforts are reflected in part by the numbers below. Site traffic increased more than **37%** over last year. Hotel bookings based on site traffic are also being tracked. Results can be found on the Market Research page of this report.

Knoxville continues to be viewed as a top of mind travel destination.

TOTAL NUMBER OF WEBSITE VISITS:
1,290,906 (up 25%)

UNIQUE VISITS:
934,840 (up 24%)

PAGE VIEWS:
2,799,083 (up 9%)



TOP TEN LANDING PAGES

1. Things to Do

2. Events

3. Restaurants

4. Blog

5. Plan a Trip
6. USA Cycle Knox

7. Hotels

8. Urban Wilderness

9. Bassmaster

10. Knoxville First Friday

CREATED

8

LANDING PAGES FOR MEETING SALES GROUPS

CREATED

13

LANDING PAGES FOR VK SPORTS COMMISSION SPORTING EVENT GROUPS

ADDED

48

NEW LISTINGS TO THE VISIT KNOXVILLE WEBSITE

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

VISIT KNOXVILLE APP:
3,102 Downloads (up 80%)

19,012 Sessions (up 61%)

Average Time on App 1m 49s

ENEWSLETTER SIGNUPS:
1,925 (up 45%)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Generated more than **\$5,358,000** in earned/unpaid media via PR efforts

- Partnered with TDTD on:
- Southeast Regional Press Tour to Asheville, Greenville & Charlotte
 - Tennessee Songwriters Week
 - TN Music Pathways launch
 - Travel influencer visit with Jasmine Sweet
 - International journalist visits (Ireland and UK), including Petit Fute (a French guidebook similar to Lonely Planet)
 - Spring Pinterest promotion
 - Press Tour with Geiger & Associates
 - "Kid Reviewed" state campaign

Launched a new partnership with Dollywood featuring a billboard campaign in Atlanta



Partnered with Knoxville Area Transit to graphically enhance two bus/trolley shelters and promote local tourism partners including Knoxville Ice Bears, Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, James White's Fort, Women's Basketball Hall of Fame and Outdoor Knoxville Adventure Center

Contributed Knoxville/VK branding to the Visitor Center inside UT's new Student Union

Partnered with Downtown Knoxville Alliance on Elf on the Shelf, the Peppermint Trail and Where's Waldo Scavenger Hunt

Partnered with Curtis Glover on a new mural at Dream Bikes in the Old City

Hosted the production crew for TV show "Pets Welcome Here" (show will air in more than 38 markets)

Began producing the VK e-newsletter in-house

Launched a WhyKnox podcast

Produced **17** new videos (in-house) for the VK Network

Produced/partnered on **109** blog posts for the VK website (all shared on social media)

Created new pages for the VK website including:

- LGBTQ page at visitknoxville.com/pride
- French Broad Driving Tour and Maker City Tour pages (featuring new interactive maps)
- Trip Ideas/Suggested Itineraries page under Plan a Trip

As part of Bike Boat Brew & Bark, facilitated production of a 30-minute Powerboat Nationals show for Fox Sports Southeast. FSSE is seen in over 16 Million homes.

Brought the FilmKnoxville.com website in-house under the Visit Knoxville URL

Hosted a variety of national and international journalists including bloggers/influencers The Traveling Newlyweds, Those Crazy Nelsons and Eric Jackson Kayaks; members of Midwest Travel Journalists Association; editors from Dirt Rag, Charlotte and Southern Lady magazine; freelance contributors to FoodieTravelUSA.com, Atlanta Journal Constitution and Convention South



VISITOR SERVICES

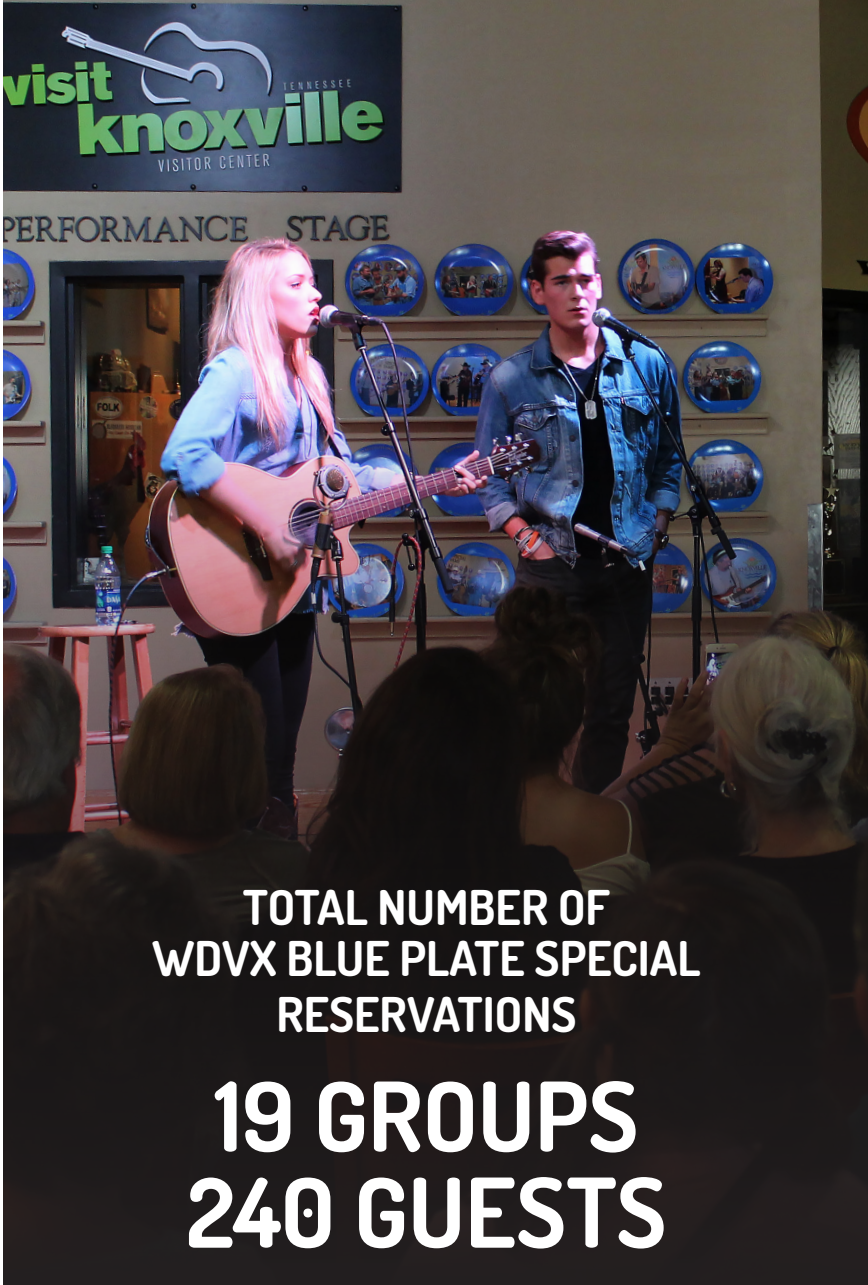
The Visitor Services Team serves as the face of Knoxville, helping visitors and locals find information as well as souvenirs and gifts. Our commitment is to provide the best possible experience for everyone we encounter.



DISTRIBUTED VISITORS GUIDES
179,147
 VISITORS GUIDE REQUESTED STATES

Visitors Guide requests are received from around the world. Within the U.S., the most requests came from the following states:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. Florida | 6. New York |
| 2. Tennessee | 7. Pennsylvania |
| 3. Illinois | 8. North Carolina |
| 4. Texas | 9. Georgia |
| 5. Ohio | 10. California |



TOTAL NUMBER OF
 WDVX BLUE PLATE SPECIAL
 RESERVATIONS
19 GROUPS
240 GUESTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF
 WALK IN VISITORS
52,854
 - 7,506 PARKING PERMITS -

TOTAL NUMBER OF
 BROCHURES PICKED UP
 AT VISITORS CENTER
37,215

TOTAL NUMBER OF
 UNIQUE BROCHURES OFFERED
 IN THE VISITORS CENTER
97

TOTAL NUMBER OF
 RIDE ALONG PIECES
 SENT THIS YEAR
49,246

TOTAL NUMBER OF
 GKK AMBASSADORS
 THAT WERE TRAINED
145

TOTAL NUMBER OF
 ASSISTED CALLERS
3,135



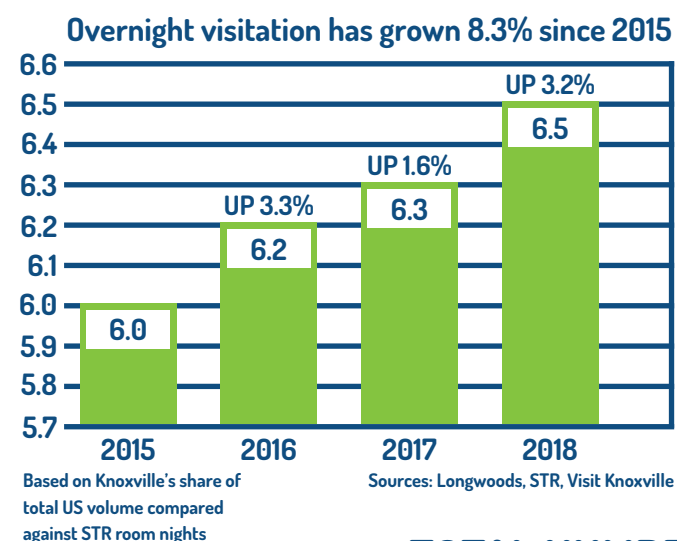
TOTAL NUMBER OF
 VOLUNTEER HOURS
2,653

MARKET RESEARCH

VK's Department of Market Research collects and analyzes data from sources including Longwoods International, Smith Travel Research (STR) and ADARA to compile information related to Knoxville's travel market. A quarterly Tourism Dashboard is also available for viewing under Public Notices on the Media section of visitknoxville.com.

TOTAL OVERNIGHT VISITORS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018

6.5 Million



HOTEL DATA

Growth from 2012 to 2018

Occupancy 11.9%
ADR* 25.6%

*ADR = average daily rate
Source: STR

TOTAL NUMBER OF ROOM NIGHTS

JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019

2,055,352

Source: STR

BOOKING DATA

VK's digital ad placement and organic website visitation attributed to nearly **10%** of these **2+** million room nights generating the following:

85,054 bookings
153,080 room nights
\$17,423,330 revenue

ADARA tracks a 60 day booking window.
The booking data above is current as of 7-18-19

TOP 10 BOOKING MARKETS

Atlanta	Knoxville*
Chattanooga	Nashville
Chicago	New York
Detroit	Tri-Cities
Greenville	Washington D.C.

*The Knoxville DMA (Designated Market Area) consists of 22 counties within East Tennessee and Southeast Kentucky

Source: ADARA

VK FILM OFFICE

The Visit Knoxville Film Office had its busiest year to date as it continues to promote Knoxville and Knox County as a top choice for film projects from all over the country. Knoxville is officially on the map as a film destination, making MovieMaker Magazine's 2019 list of Best Places to Live and Work as a MovieMaker.

Continued to work with the Tennessee Entertainment Alliance, meeting with legislatures in Nashville with the mission of highlighting the importance of strong, competitive Film Incentives in our state.

Made MovieMaker magazine's "Best Places to Live and Work as a MovieMaker". The issue premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival putting Knoxville in front of some of the world's best filmmakers and producers.

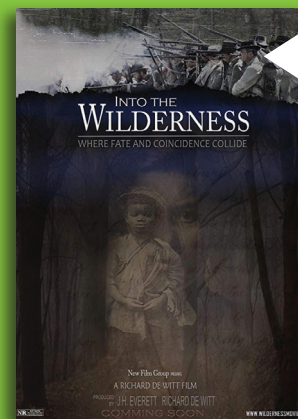


Worked closely with Stargazer Entertainment on bringing their feature film Purity Falls to Knoxville. The film office recruited this project out of Kentucky and provided assistance with locations, lodging, crew, talent, film incentives, city services, and more. The film wrapped in September of 2018 and will be airing on the Lifetime Movie Network in July of 2019.

Worked closely with local filmmaker, Paul Harrel, and Sailor Bear Productions out of Texas on the feature film Light From Light starring Jim Gaffigan and produced by Emmy winner, Elizabeth Moss. The film office helped with crew, permitting, locations, film incentives, and more. Light From Light premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival in January and has secured a theatrical release.



Worked with Elevating Entertainment on their feature film, No Time to Run which was recruited by the film office out of Nashville. The Film Office provided assistance with crew, lodging, talent, city services, locations, permits, film incentives, and more. The film wrapped in the Fall of 2018.



Worked closely with New Film Group on their feature film Into the Wilderness starring Tony Award winner, Shular Hensley. The Film Office recruited this project out of California and provided assistance with locations, lodging, crew, talent, city services, film incentives, and more. The film wrapped in the Fall of 2018.

Worked with East Tennessee PBS to host a Q&A session in May of 2019 with acclaimed documentarian, Ken Burns, about his new documentary series, "Country Music", which will be airing on PBS in the Fall of 2019. The Film Office is also sponsoring the series on East Tennessee PBS.





The Official Destination Marketing Organization for
the City of Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee

#KNOXROCKS

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