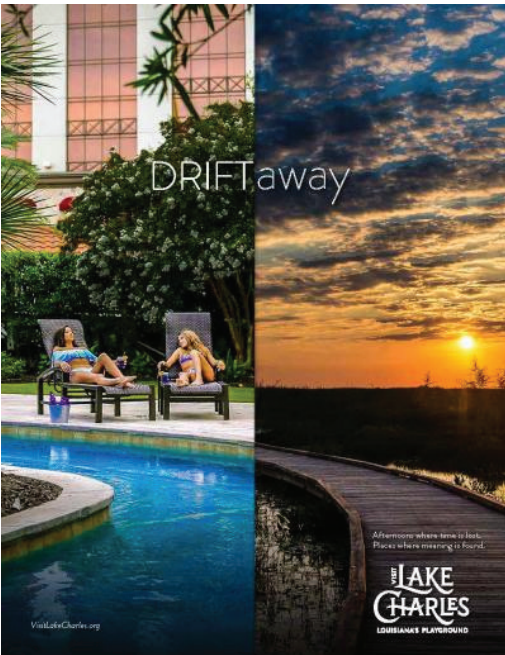


GATOR GRAM



VISIT LAKE CHARLES – LOUISIANA’S PLAYGROUND™

Visit Lake Charles launched a new brand for Southwest Louisiana. Read below for a taste of the brand description and marketing materials.



The Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau (Visit Lake Charles) revealed a new brand for the destination on Oct. 18 at Golden Nugget Lake Charles, surrounded by colleagues, community leaders and hospitality industry executives from around the country. Miles Partnership, a strategic marketing company focused exclusively on travel and tourism, conducted an extensive research study to determine the brand essence of Southwest Louisiana.

While in market, Miles Partnership interviewed stakeholders and explored the destination. The team also conducted local and regional online surveys to learn more about what visitors and residents think about Southwest Louisiana. Additionally, they worked with Downs & St. Germain Research Firm to perform focus groups in Houston and Dallas to hear directly from consumers about their perceptions and experiences.

“It is so important to completely assess branding creative and messaging for every destination. The assets of an area evolve and develop over time, and along with that, the messaging needs to shift to align with the reality of the destination’s offerings, attractions and experiences. Miles Partnership did a thorough evaluation, and the research speaks for itself for the new brand and direction for marketing Southwest Louisiana,” said Kyle Edmiston, President/CEO of Visit Lake Charles.

The idea that rose to the top across all market segments is that Lake Charles is a mixture of

contrasts. There is an intriguing juxtaposition that exists to create the identity of Lake Charles as a destination. It’s what makes Southwest Louisiana stand out when considering the abundance of casino resort experiences compared to the natural wonders found alongside the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road. One statement from the brand position that resonated with the focus groups was “a little black dress paired with flip flops.” The attitude of the people is friendly and outgoing, and the destination as a whole was described as a place to have fun, unwind and relax – hence – “Louisiana’s Playground,” the new tagline for Visit Lake Charles.

“The most remarkable observation with the research study was that the logo and brand essence both surfaced in an obvious way for Visit Lake Charles. The focus groups almost unanimously chose the new logo design from a pool of selections, and that means that the new direction for the brand is solid and has a high probability to strongly resonate with target markets. The idea of the juxtaposition of nature compared to luxury rang true with frequent travelers to Lake Charles. The Miles Partnership team is looking forward to seeing the new brand yield results for the destination,” said Jay Salyers, Senior Vice President at Miles Partnership.

For a full brand description, guidelines and a view of marketing materials, go to VisitLakeCharles.org/Brand.



What a year 2019 has been for Southwest LA and especially the tourism industry! During the course of the year, the President of the United States visited twice, Port Wonder and then Crying Eagle

Brewery/Restaurant were announced to build on the lakefront, and four nationally known sports events were announced – PGA Tour Korn Ferry Lake Charles Championship, USA Boxing National Championships and 2020 Olympic Trails for Boxing, Pro Watercross National Championships, and New Balance Future Stars Series National Championships, a premier showcase baseball event. Along the way, we were able to garner the first international conference in the history of SWLA, World LNG & Gas Americas Summit, and the return of the Louisiana Lt. Governor's Travel Summit to Lake Charles in 2020.

Throughout 2019, the marketing team at Visit Lake Charles has worked toward defining the destination brand of Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, and all of Southwest Louisiana. Visit Lake Charles was fortunate to work with a world-renown agency in the travel and tourism space, Miles Partnership, to answer those questions and align the true brand essence of our area with the perceptions and reality of what people know to be Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana. The Miles team is an award-winning, highly successful strategic marketing company that focuses exclusively on travel and tourism, working with more than 90 destinations. If you haven't already

seen the new brand, I encourage you to have a look, VisitLakeCharles.org/Brand.

The much anticipated 2020 Olympic Trials for Boxing and USA Boxing National Championships will take place on December 9-15. The bulk of the events will take place at the Lake Charles Civic Center with the finals occurring at Golden Nugget. This event will provide a healthy boost to the local economy during a traditional slow period with over 7,000 room nights and significant earned media coverage. Next summer, watch for the boxers that fight in Lake Charles as they participate in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan.

As I conclude this letter, I thank the many partners that collaborate and cooperate with our organization to make all of these meetings, conferences and sporting events happen. It takes the entire village to be able to host the world and share some of our SWLA hospitality. Our successes are the communities successes and we never forget that we have a special corner of Louisiana and look forward to welcoming our many guests.

Please use social media to highlight the culture, culinary, visuals and fun that you experience while in SWLA...
#VisitLakeCharles, #LouisianasPlayground, #EatLakeCharles, #YouthSportsCapitalofLA, #getDOWNtownLC, #SWLARocks, #FishSWLA.

Kyle Edmiston, CDME | President/CEO

THE STAFF

Kyle Edmiston, CDME
President/CEO

ADMINISTRATION

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Director of Administration & Satellite Office

Heather Savoie
Accounting/HR Director

Alecia Acosta
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Senior Sales Manager

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Amos Orr
Digital Marketing Strategy Manager

Will Precht
Senior Media/Public Relations Manager

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Kristen Shiver
Tourist Information Weekend Manager

Melanie Stahl
Tourist Information Assistant

Will Nidecker
Adventure Point Guide/Project Manager

Angela Hammond
Tourist Information Assistant/Adventure Guide

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Oliver G. "Rick" Richard, III, Chairman
Arts & Humanities of Southwest Louisiana

Evette Gradney, Vice Chairman
Southwest Louisiana Lodging Association

Jonathan Ringo, Secretary/Treasurer
Calcasieu Parish Police Jury

Lauren Cooper
West Calcasieu Community Center Authority

Edwina Medearis
City of Lake Charles

Mark Lavergne
Southwest Louisiana Festivals

Rob King
Southwest Louisiana Restaurant Association

Nimesh "Nick" Zaver
City of Sulphur

Alan Trantina
Southwest Louisiana Lodging Association

Willie Mount
Chamber Southwest

Kane Mitchell
West Calcasieu Association of Commerce



KATHRYN DUNCAN, MEDIA/ PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER

Kathryn Duncan is the new Media/Public Relations Manager. She comes to Southwest Louisiana from her position in Crowley with the Acadia Parish Chamber of Commerce where she was responsible for digital marketing, media and public relations, and event planning. She is a former International Rice Festival Queen and a graduate from University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

FUTURE STARS SERIES

Visit Lake Charles (VLC) is pleased to announce that New Balance Future Stars Series National Championships, one of the most prestigious high school showcase baseball tournaments in the United States, will call Southwest Louisiana home for the next four years. The first National Championship event will be held in the summer of 2020, taking place over a 4-week period beginning June 30. The total room count in excess of 10,000 room nights and annual estimated economic impact of over \$7.5 million, makes the National Championship tournaments the largest single sporting event in the history of Southwest Louisiana, followed only by the 2020 U.S. Olympic Trials for Boxing and USA Boxing National Championships coming to the Lake Area this December.

“The entire team at Visit Lake Charles is pleased to be the host for this world class baseball event in the Youth Sports Capital of Louisiana. We invite all team members, family, friends and the community to enjoy the excitement of the games at our sports facilities along with the attractions, food, culture and the great outdoors that Southwest Louisiana has



With an annual estimated economic impact of over \$7.5 million, it will be the largest single sporting event in the history of Southwest Louisiana.

to offer,” said Kyle Edmiston, President/CEO of Visit Lake Charles. “I also want to encourage the community from around Southwest LA to come out to watch these young men play. I guarantee that several of the participants will be playing major league baseball in the not too distant future.”

For additional details on the tournament, log on to www.futurestarsseries.com or follow #MakeYourName, or check out VisitLakeCharles.org for area information or follow #VisitLakeCharles and #LouisianasPlayground on social media.

WORLD LNG & GAS SERIES: 18TH AMERICAS SUMMIT TO BE HELD IN LAKE CHARLES

City of Lake Charles, Cameron Parish Port District, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury, Cameron Parish Police Jury, Southwest Louisiana Alliance, Port of Lake Charles and Visit Lake Charles are proud to announce that the World LNG & Gas Series: 18th Americas Summit will be held in Lake Charles, November 8-11, 2020. Presented by The CWC Group, the Summit will be hosted at the Golden Nugget and is expected to bring more than 350 C-suite attendees and generate an estimated economic impact of over \$250,000 for Southwest Louisiana.

“There’s little doubt that Southwest Louisiana is a major player in the worldwide LNG



industry, so it only seemed fitting for us to work with other local partners to bring the World LNG & Gas Series: 18th Americas Summit to Lake Charles next year,” said Mayor Nic Hunter. “This high-level summit will attract CEOs of major corporations and garner positive media attention at the state, regional and national level. It’s quite a feather in our cap to host an event of this magnitude in Southwest Louisiana.”

The Americas Summit is the longest-running LNG and gas event in the Americas region and will be the first international conference held in Southwest Louisiana.

The summit will generate an estimated economic impact of over \$250,000.

IN THE NEWS |



TAYLOR STANLEY



AMOS ORR



COLTEN MILLER

SIMPLEVIEW USER GROUP

At the end of this year, Colten Miller will complete a two-year term as a member of the Simpleview CRM User Group. The Simpleview CRM User Group team is an expert panel of destination marketing organization (DMO) professionals that gains insights on roadmaps and beta test features to help guide Simpleview's product and development teams. Ultimately, the user group's feedback shapes the tools that the DMO industry relies on every day.

Moving into 2020, Taylor Stanley, senior sales manager, will represent Visit Lake Charles as a member of the CRM user group. Additionally, Amos Orr, digital media strategy manager, will also represent Visit Lake Charles on the CMS user group, focusing on web standards, functionality, and other web-related activity.



The user group's feedback shapes the tools that the destination marketing organization (DMO) industry relies on every day.

RTO SUMMIT FLORIDA



Anne Klenke, Tourism Director, attended RTO Summit Florida Oct. 23-24,

on behalf of Visit Lake Charles. Over the past few years, more receptive tour operators have opened headquarters or tour operations in Florida in order to take advantage of its great weather, reasonably priced office space and the 55 million travelers who visit the area's theme parks each year. Today, Florida is home to over 120 receptive companies most of which service Latin American markets, Europe and increasingly, Asia and Middle East. RTO Summit Florida is a great way to meet with multiple Receptive Tour Operators (RTOs) in just one day, which helps to develop new international business relationships that ultimately mean new business for Southwest Louisiana. In addition to the appointments, presentation sessions were also provided by leading RTO's about trends, what's new in the industry and how to market to specific international destinations.

TEAM USA SALES CALLS & EVENT

Eric Zartler, Sales Director, along with the delegates from Team Louisiana and the Louisiana Office of Tourism (LOT), traveled to Colorado Springs, Colorado, for a sports sales mission targeting the Olympic National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and additional sporting events rights holders. LOT and its partners held appointments with offices throughout the Colorado Springs area sharing valuable information about Louisiana communities and their available facilities and attractions. Louisiana recently hosted Team USA's FIVB Volleyball Intercontinental Olympic Qualification in Shreveport last August and will host the U.S. Boxing Olympic Trials and National Championships in Lake Charles in December.



PRESS ROOM |



LOUISIANA CHEFS BRING THE HEAT IN ATLANTA

Visit Lake Charles worked with Chef Lyle Broussard and Chef Dave Evans to take over two restaurants in Atlanta.

The Louisiana Office of Tourism, the Louisiana Travel Association, the Louisiana Seafood Promotion & Marketing Board, and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC) teamed up to promote Louisiana Culinary Trails in Atlanta, Georgia for a Louisiana-themed media reception and restaurant night on October 22-23. Thirteen chefs from eleven Louisiana restaurants showcased local flavors to a crowd of local Atlanta media/influencers, plus editors and guests of the AJC.

The two-day event included an invite-only Media Preview where media and key influencers mingled with the chefs and tourism partners to learn more about

Louisiana cuisine. The next evening featured a collaborative Atlanta Restaurant Night where each of the Louisiana chefs partnered with a different Atlanta restaurant featuring Louisiana dishes. Representing the Seafood Sensation Trail, Visit Lake Charles worked with Chef Lyle Broussard of Jack Daniel's Bar & Grill at L'Auberge Casino Resort and Chef Dave Evans of Luna Bar & Grill to take over two restaurants in the area.

In addition to the Louisiana Culinary Trails, the Visit Lake Charles team works with local restaurants to host culinary writers and tour groups, as well as promote the Top 20 Local Favorites restaurant contest.



CULINARY MEDIA GETS A TASTE OF SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA



The Visit Lake Charles public relations team members, Will Precht and Kathryn Shea Duncan, showcased Southwest Louisiana to six culinary-focused travel writers and bloggers from all over the United States, Oct. 31-Nov. 3. While in Southwest Louisiana, the media group was able to experience our unique culture through an array of culinary offerings and demonstrations, and by attending local events and festivals, including

the inaugural Southern Cast Iron Cook-off, which capped off the night with a concert from Country music star Craig Morgan.

The Public Relations team showcased Southwest Louisiana to travel writers and bloggers from all over the United States.

CRYING EAGLE LAKEFRONT RESTAURANT AND MICROBREWERY

Construction on the restaurant could begin as early as next summer with a target completion date of spring 2021.



Mayor Nic Hunter and the City of Lake Charles, recently announced plans for the proposed Crying Eagle Lakefront Restaurant and Microbrewery. The announcement, which was held at the proposed site location immediately west of the Lakefront parking garage, was in response to a recent request for proposals for a Lakefront restaurant issued by the City.

“Crying Eagle, at its current location, has been wildly successful at creating a gathering space for nearly 60,000 people each year. These patrons are not only local residents, but also tourists, drawing both

in-state and out-of-state visitors,” said Lake Charles Mayor Nic Hunter. “The Avery family has a proven track record of success in this community. We are excited to work with them on the development of their full-service restaurant on the Lakefront.”

The proposed project will consist of a family-friendly, full-service restaurant, small brew house to service the restaurant, covered patio, rooftop seating and an open courtyard. The modern façade will showcase the many offerings of Southwest Louisiana and will create an attractive and alluring first impression for motorists traveling on

Interstate 10 through the City. Construction on the restaurant could begin as early as next summer with a target completion date of spring 2021.

Also located on this tract of the Lakefront will be the \$20+ million Port Wonder project announced last November. Slated to be home to the Children’s Museum and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Science and Educational Complex, site improvements, such as raising the base flood elevation and renovation of the parking garage, are expected to begin before the end of this year.

LHSAA SWIMMING RETURNS

The Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) State Championship Swim Meet returns to Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana area for the 13th consecutive year, Nov. 19-23 at the Sulphur Parks and Recreation natatorium.

“The LHSAA tournaments that have been awarded to the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana area are tremendous testimonies to the hospitality community, leadership and facilities in Southwest Louisiana as well as the genuine relationships that have been built over the years through hosting

successful tournaments. We are fortunate to have a thriving fanbase in Southwest Louisiana with people who love to volunteer and cheer on the teams. We could not do what we do without everyone working together,” said Eric Zartler, sales director for Visit Lake Charles.

Southwest Louisiana is known as the Youth Sports Capital of Louisiana, and as such, the area has benefited greatly from youth sports being an economic driver from softball, baseball and basketball to swimming and a myriad of other tournaments.



E-TOURISM SUMMIT

In October, Amos Orr, digital media strategy manager for Visit Lake Charles attended eTourism Summit in San Francisco, CA. Founded in 2000, eTourism Summit is the glue between destination promotion and the latest trends and innovations in digital media. Throughout the summit, attendees were able to get up-to-the-minute, real-life

examples of the latest applications in video, content marketing, email marketing, search, social media, mobile and web design. The summit encouraged tourism marketers and their media agencies to share best practices on utilizing the newest tools to build incremental traffic at every stage of the funnel.



SPORTS EVENTS & TOURISM ASSOCIATION 4S SUMMIT



Emilee Hoenes, sales coordinator for the sports market, recently attended the Sports Events & Tourism Association 4S Summit. The 4S's of sports events and tourism: strategies, services, sales, and sponsorships, were covered during general sessions, small group discussions, and off-site excursions. By attending this summit,

participants are able to takeaway key tools, resources, and best practices from peers, as well as experts in the sports events and tourism industry. This summit is an ideal learning opportunity for sports commission and DMO sales, services, events, and business development staff.



GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST & DISPLAY

The aroma of holiday spices, candy canes, sugar gumdrops, and gingerbread will soon swirl through the air. The Visit Lake Charles annual Gingerbread House Contest is a wonderful way for visitors to feel the community's Christmas spirit when they see the houses on display at the Welcome Center throughout December. The awards ceremony, sponsored by Visit Lake Charles, will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at the



SATW ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The communications department attends conferences throughout the year that offer opportunities to meet with journalists and network with travel media to pitch story ideas. Will Precht, senior public relations/media manager, attended the Society of American Travel Writers' (SATW) Annual conference in El Paso, TX this past October. SATW is home to the travel industry's most experienced journalists, photographers, editors, broadcast/video/film producers and bloggers. Throughout the conference, he was able to promote Lake Charles' culture, cuisine and attractions to travel media through one-on-one appointments.



Welcome Center, located at 1205 North Lakeshore Drive in Lake Charles. The public is invited to attend the awards ceremony and to view the entries on display. Residents and tourists visiting the Welcome Center are also invited to cast their vote for the "People's Choice Award," which will be announced at center on Dec. 26. For more holiday activities taking place in Southwest Louisiana, go to VisitLakeCharles.org/CajunChristmas.

VISIT LAKE CHARLES

LOUISIANA'S PLAYGROUND

1205 N. Lakeshore Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601
1-800-456-SWLA | VisitLakeCharles.org

MISSION

To provide leadership in initiating and coordinating the worldwide marketing of Calcasieu Parish as a highly desirable leisure and convention destination; to solicit and service convention and other group-related business; and to engage in visitor promotions which generate overnight stays in Southwest Louisiana.

VISION

To enhance and develop the economic fabric of the parish.



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SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA SPOTLIGHT |



2020 U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS FOR BOXING - TICKETS NOW ON SALE



U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS BOXING

USA BOXING

More than 700 of the nation's best male and female boxers will step into the ring beginning Dec. 9 looking for their chance to win a national title, in addition to the opportunity to represent Team USA at Tokyo 2020. This exciting week-long event will bring in more than 1,200 boxers, coaches, officials and family members to the Lake Charles area.

USA Boxing, the national governing body for Olympic-style amateur boxing, chose Lake Charles to host the 2020 Olympic Trials for Boxing and USA Boxing National

Championships. The trials will be held at the Lake Charles Civic Center, with the Olympic Trials taking place at Golden Nugget Lake Charles on Dec. 15. In conjunction with the trials, the 2019 USA Boxing National Championships will be held to determine USA Boxing's junior and youth high performance teams for 2020.

2019 will also be the 25th anniversary celebration of the 1984 USA Boxing Olympic Team, who made history on the Olympic stage, winning a total of 11 medals.

A free tailgate party & cracklin' cookoff will also take place on Saturday, Dec. 14. Admission is free Monday-Friday. Tickets for the National Championships at the Civic Center on Dec. 14 and the Olympic Trials finals at Golden Nugget on Dec. 15 are available for purchase.

For more information, go to
VisitLakeCharles.org/USABoxing.