

# TOURISM WORKS

for SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

LAKE CHARLES/SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

▶ VISITLAKECHARLES.ORG



## 2020 OLYMPIC TRIALS IN BOXING AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

A Knockout Athletic Event for the SWLA Economy!



for the right to represent the USA at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

In December of 2018, Eric Zartler, sales director at the Lake Charles/Southwest

Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau (LC/SWLA CVB) made a presentation to the USA Boxing Board of Directors in Salt Lake City on behalf of the LC/SWLA CVB, Lake Charles Civic Center and local event partners. There were multiple destinations bidding to host this significant tournament.

"We are proud to be chosen as the host for the 2020 Olympic

Trials in Boxing and National Championships this December. 2019 will also be the 25th anniversary celebration of the 1984 USA Boxing Olympic Team, who made history on the Olympic stage. We are looking forward to working with the entire hospitality community in the Lake Area to treat USA Boxing to Southern Hospitality – Southwest Louisiana style," said Zartler.

The '84 Olympic boxing team was arguably the best team ever assembled, winning a total of 11 medals in 12 weight classes – 9 gold medals, 1 silver and 1 bronze. The team featured boxing greats such as Evander Holyfield, Pernell "Sweet Pea" Whitaker and Tyrell Biggs.

The LC/SWLA CVB team will work with partners in tourism, the hospitality community and the City of Lake Charles to extend a warm welcome during this tremendous event that is sure to garner national and global media attention.

Check out [VisitLakeCharles.org/USABoxing](http://VisitLakeCharles.org/USABoxing) or [TeamUSA.org/USA-Boxing](http://TeamUSA.org/USA-Boxing).



## THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

From the Desk of  
Shelley Johnson, CDME,  
LCTP, Executive Director

Mardi Gras season is in full swing, and team members of the LC/SWLA CVB are actively engaged in promoting our culture, music, food, King Cakes, chicken runs, parades and all things festive. As the second largest Mardi Gras in the state relative to the number of krewes in the area, not only is Mardi Gras popular with locals, but it is also a draw for visitors and travel media. Mardi Gras also provides a healthy, energetic boost to the local economy.

Last year, the LC/SWLA CVB worked with Dr. Michael Kurth to conduct an economic impact study of Mardi Gras on Southwest Louisiana. Dr. Kurth is a professor emeritus at McNeese State University and former director of the H.C. Drew Center for Business and Economic Analysis.

Overall, the results showed that the total economic impact of Mardi Gras festivities in 2018 was \$22,141,842. This is money that was either brought into our economy or kept from leaving had local residents chosen to go elsewhere to celebrate Mardi Gras. The direct spending had a multiplier



effect of \$4,847,622 (1.29%), creating 194 work-year equivalent jobs, \$4,700,000 in earnings and \$1,007,490 in local tax revenue.

Mardi Gras is culturally significant to the area, and it has a recognizable brand world-wide. Mardi Gras is one of the few festivals that is almost exclusively synonymous with Louisiana. With each Louisiana destination having a different spin on Mardi Gras, it is an attractive event for outside media to cover, which in turn for Southwest Louisiana, amplifies our family-friendly version of Mardi Gras. In fact, this year, the LC/SWLA CVB will host nearly 10 media professionals to experience not only Mardi Gras events but significant cultural offerings of Southwest Louisiana.



The LC/SWLA CVB is a proud financial supporter of Mardi Gras of Southwest Louisiana. Be sure to check out all the events at [www.swlamardigras.com](http://www.swlamardigras.com). Laissez les bons temps rouler!



Shelley Johnson, CDME, LCTP  
Executive Director

*Shelley Johnson*



## GATOR BITES

### LOUISIANA TRAVEL ASSOCIATION Louisiana Tourism Leadership Academy

Taylor Beard Stanley, senior sales manager, and Melissa Trahan, tourist information manager at the LC/SWLA CVB both graduated from the year-long Louisiana Tourism Leadership Academy, a program designed and implemented by the Louisiana Travel Association. The goal of the academy is to equip tourism professionals with the knowledge and skills that will enrich their careers as well as strengthen the tourism industry in Louisiana.



▶ Jill Kidder-LTA, Taylor Beard Stanley-LC/SWLA CVB, and Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser.



▶ Jill Kidder-LTA, Melissa Trahan-LC/SWLA CVB, and Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser.

## Awareness & Image Research DID YOU KNOW?

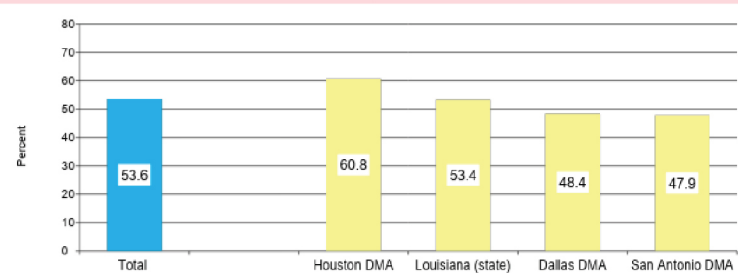


The Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau (LC/SWLA CVB) worked with Longwoods International to evaluate the effectiveness of its marketing for awareness and image in relation to comparable destinations, specifically Baton Rouge, Mississippi Gulf Coast and Lafayette. The research was designed to provide strategic image data relative to the image factor and attributes that are important in destination selection and the essence of Lake Charles' image as a travel destination.

The good news is that not only do the campaigns change perceptions of the area in a positive direction, but those who have visited Lake Charles and experienced what the destination has to offer, have a substantial increase regarding the positive impression of the destination.

Stacking up to the competition, Lake Charles and Lafayette were more on par with each other and falling slightly behind Baton Rouge and Mississippi Gulf Coast. The Lake Charles area was strongest in the adult destination category, still falling short of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; however, Lake Charles has a better rating for being the right distance for a weekend getaway.

Longwoods  
INTERNATIONAL



Overall, the spring, summer and fall campaigns generated considerable awareness, reaching over 54% of intended audience travelers, and the campaigns were successful on changing perceptions of Lake Charles. The ad awareness was the highest in the Houston area, and second highest encompassed Louisiana. Of the travelers surveyed, 54% were aware with 46% unaware of Lake Charles' advertising campaigns.

Overall, there were no weaknesses with the perceived product versus the image of Lake Charles, and if anything, it was recommended for advertising to continue or increase as the messaging has a positive impact on the perception, visitation and eventually word-of-mouth as visitors have stronger, favorable views of the destination after experiencing Southwest Louisiana's hospitality.

Learn more about the business of tourism at [VisitLakeCharles.org/ImpactOfTourism](http://VisitLakeCharles.org/ImpactOfTourism).



## MARDI GRAS BY THE NUMBERS



Direct Impact  
**\$17,294,220**

Multiplier Effect (1.29%)  
**\$4,847,622**

Total Impact  
**\$22,141,842**

### Total Economic Impact of Mardi Gras in SWLA

★ Effect on Earnings .....\$4,700,000

● Effect on Employment .....194 Jobs

★ Effect on Local GDP .....\$9,000,000

● Effect on Local Sales Tax .....\$1,007,490

★ Effect on State Sales Tax .....\$810,000

1205 N. Lakeshore Drive, Lake Charles, LA

**LAKE CHARLES**  
SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA  
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1-800-456-SWLA | [www.visitlakecharles.org](http://www.visitlakecharles.org)  
Photos courtesy of LindseyJanies.com, USA Boxing & Louisiana Travel Assoc.