



**explore**  
LAWRENCE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

We, staff and board members, of eXplore Lawrence are pleased to present our 2018 Annual Report.

This report showcases our accomplishments and provides goals that we will be working towards in 2019. eXplore Lawrence (EL) is a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to promoting Lawrence and Douglas County as a premier tourism destination. Funding for our organization is a portion of the Transient Guest Tax (TGT) collected at hotels, bed & breakfasts and short-term rentals located within the city of Lawrence.

The 2017 Economic Impact in Douglas County issued by Tourism Economics highlights the significant role tourism plays in the local economy. Visitors spent \$265 million in 2017 which ranks Douglas County 5th among all counties in the state. Visitors spending directly supported 2,853 local jobs in addition to generating \$42.9 million in tax revenues, with \$24 million accruing to state and local governments.

We welcomed three new staff members in 2018. Kendra Schultz joined us as our Director of Sales. Lauren Driessel was hired as the Higher Education Account Manager to complete our Sales Department. Autumn Whitt joined the Visitor Center staff as a part-time Travel Counselor.

eXplore Lawrence offered practical training to local businesses and organizations in 2018. A Safety Summit included active shooter training provided by the Lawrence Police Department as well as crisis communications planning led by Julie Boyle of USD 497. We also partnered with the Red Cross of Douglas County to offer Adult and Pediatric CPR training.

2019 will see a number of new initiatives, foremost relocating our Visitors Center from North Lawrence to 812 Massachusetts St., which we expect to open in May. A new technology tool, UTRIP – a personalized trip planner, and finally, we will be rolling out our new Tourism Ambassador program with the goal of empowering front line staff and citizens to engage with visitors and become advocates for tourism in Lawrence & Douglas County.

We are committed to being a data-driven destination management organization that assures the greatest possible return on investment. Looking forward, we will continue to employ best practices in marketing and sales as we work together to grow tourism in Lawrence and Douglas County.



MIKE LOGAN  
Board Chair



MICHAEL DAVIDSON  
Executive Director

## 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

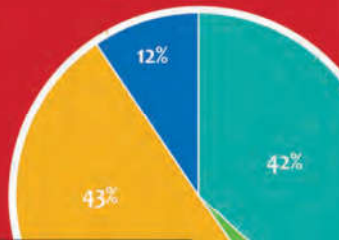
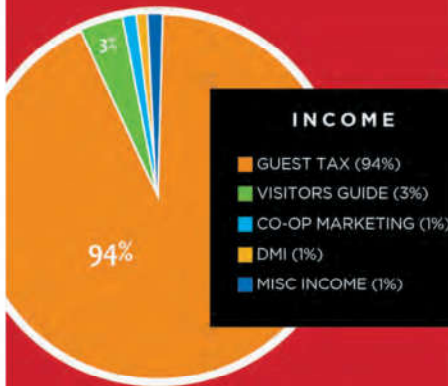
- MIKE LOGAN, CHAIR, Granada
- DEREK FELCH, VICE-CHAIR, Hampton Inn
- DONEASE SMITH, Kansas Athletics
- CHARLIE PERSINGER, University of Kansas
- PORTER ARNEILL, EX OFFICIO, City of Lawrence
- RACHEL BLACK, Americana Music Academy
- STEPHEN HORTON, TREASURER, DoubleTree by Hilton
- LISA LARSEN, City Commission
- LARRY MCELWAIN, EX OFFICIO, Lawrence Chamber
- SALLY ZOGRY, EX OFFICIO, Downtown Lawrence Inc.

## STAFF

- MICHAEL DAVIDSON, Executive Director
- KIM ANSPACH, Director of Community Relations
- KENDRA SCHULTZ, Director of Sales
- LAUREN DRIESSEL, Higher Education Account Manager
- ANDREA JOHNSON, Director of Marketing & Communications
- VICTORIA CLEARY, Director of Visitor Services
- KEITH MANIES, Visitor Center Manager
- AUTUMN WHITT, Travel Counselor

## INCOME & EXPENSES

\$1,127,135 total income  
\$985,772 total expenses



## ECONOMIC IMPACT

- VISITORS SPENT** nearly \$265 million in Douglas County in 2017 as spending increased by more than \$15 million, a jump of 6.2%
- VISITOR SPENDING** in Douglas County ranks 5th among all counties in the state
- THIS SPENDING** directly supports 2,853 jobs
- TOURISM** in Douglas County generated \$42.9 million in tax revenues in 2017, with \$25.3 million accruing to state and local governments

### DOUGLAS COUNTY VISITOR SPENDING



**THE MISSION** OF EXPLORE LAWRENCE IS TO BROADLY MARKET THE AREA AS A YEAR-ROUND VISITOR DESTINATION THEREBY POSITIVELY IMPACTING THE REGION'S ECONOMY BY RETAINING AND ATTRACTING VISITORS TO THE CITY OF LAWRENCE & DOUGLAS COUNTY.



200 W 9th Street, Lawrence, KS 66044  
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LAWRENCE

### WEBSITE

- 157,754 individuals visited UnmistakablyLawrence.com
- 161,152 times

### SOCIAL MEDIA

- 5.2 million social impressions
- 4,028 new social media fans

### ARRIVALS\*

- 2,052 arrivals
- 20,520 estimated arrivals
- \$7,325,640 estimated revenue generated
- Top 5 Origin States
  - Kansas
  - Missouri
  - Texas
  - Colorado
  - California

\*Tracking actual arrivals to Lawrence after exposure to digital ads

### LAWRENCE IN THE MEDIA

- Potential Reach: 3.24 Billion
- Ad Value: \$30 Million
- Top Content
  - "50 states: 50 Female Chefs" USA Today
  - "KU Journalism project tells stories of historic buildings" LJWorld, US News & World Report, Associated Press, +6 more\*
  - "These are the 10 Best Places for Singles Now" Time Magazine
  - "The Top 10 Rivalries in College Basketball" Yahoo Sports, Sports Illustrated, MSN.com
  - "The Best College Basketball Arenas" Rankings About Everything, Voted on by Everyone.

\*Explore Lawrence assisted with this article

### ADVERTISING

- Print
  - KANSAS! Magazine
  - Kansas Travel Guide
  - Kansas Men's Basketball
  - Kansas Society of Association Executives Membership Directory
  - Kansas State Parks Guide
  - Midwest Meetings Guidebook
- Digital
  - Digital Display
  - E-Newsletters
  - Mobile Display
  - Mobile Geofencing
  - Native Advertising
  - Search Engine Marketing (Google & Bing)
  - Social Media
  - TripAdvisor
  - IMG/Kansas Athletics

### TRAVEL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF KANSAS MARKETING AWARDS

- 1st Place: Community Awareness Campaign, Large Budget: Weekly Things-To-Do videos
- 1st place: Integrated Marketing Campaign, Large Budget: Lawrence Block-by-Block
- Best in Show: Lawrence Block-by-Block

### 2019 MARKETING INITIATIVES

- Utrip - Personalized Trip Planner
- Football Weekends

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Extranet logins: 1,613 by 110 users
- 2,597 events added to event calendar
- 2019 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES
  - Tourism Ambassador Program

## VISITOR CENTER

### volunteers

- TERRY MANIES
- BETH REIBER
- AUTUMN WHITT
- CON HENDERSON
- JACKIE KENNEDY
- JAMES DUNN
- RICH NOEVER
- NANCY HAUSE
- SUSIE NIGHTENGALE
- CONOR PAWAR
- SUSIE GEIGER
- ALMA VARELA
- DAVE MAAS
- IRIS CARVER
- JONI HUGHES
- KIRK YAGER

13,167 BROCHURES & MAPS DISTRIBUTED

3,825 VISITORS SERVED

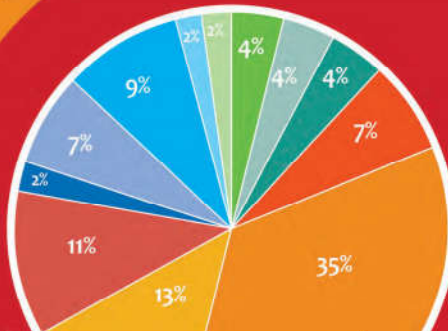
4,288 WELCOME BAGS DISTRIBUTED TO 72 GROUPS

766 VOLUNTEER HOURS

### 2019 VISITOR SERVICES INITIATIVES

- Downtown Visitor Center

## 2018 SALES



### 2018 LEADS RECEIVED

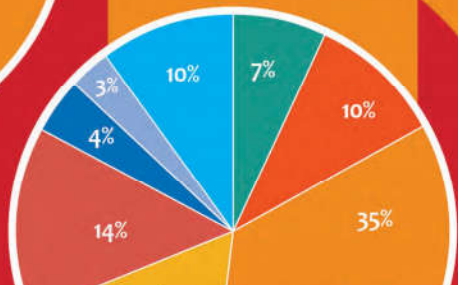
- Athletic & Sports/Recreation (35%)
- Cultural & Fine Arts (13%)
- Educational (11%)
- Environmental (2%)
- Health, Medical & Pharmaceutical (7%)
- Heritage, Patriotic, Veterans (9%)
- Hobby & Vocational (2%)
- Insurance (2%)
- Military/Military Reunions (4%)
- Tourism Industry Events (4%)
- Trade, Commercial, Business (4%)
- Agricultural, Commodities, Food/Food Products (7%)

## LEADS RECEIVED

A total of 46 leads were received from January 1st through December 31st in 2018. Of those 46 leads, 26 were booked definite, 9 are still in 'lead' status (pending decisions), and 11 were lost. 29 total leads were booked definite in 2018 (26 received in the year, and 3 that were already in 'lead' status at the start of the year). Of the 29 leads booked in 2018, 21 also took place in 2018, and 8 will take place in 2019.

### 2019 SALES INITIATIVES

- Knowland - Prospecting Tool
- Cvent - Sales Lead Generation
- MeetingMax - Housing Services



### 2018 LEADS BOOKED

- Athletic & Sports/Recreation (35%)
- Cultural & Fine Arts (17%)
- Educational (14%)
- Environmental (4%)
- Health, Medical & Pharmaceutical (3%)
- Heritage, Patriotic, Veterans (10%)
- Hobby & Vocational (0%)
- Insurance (0%)
- Military/Military Reunions (0%)
- Tourism Industry Events (0%)
- Trade, Commercial, Business (7%)
- Agricultural, Commodities, Food/Food Products (10%)



LEAD STATUS