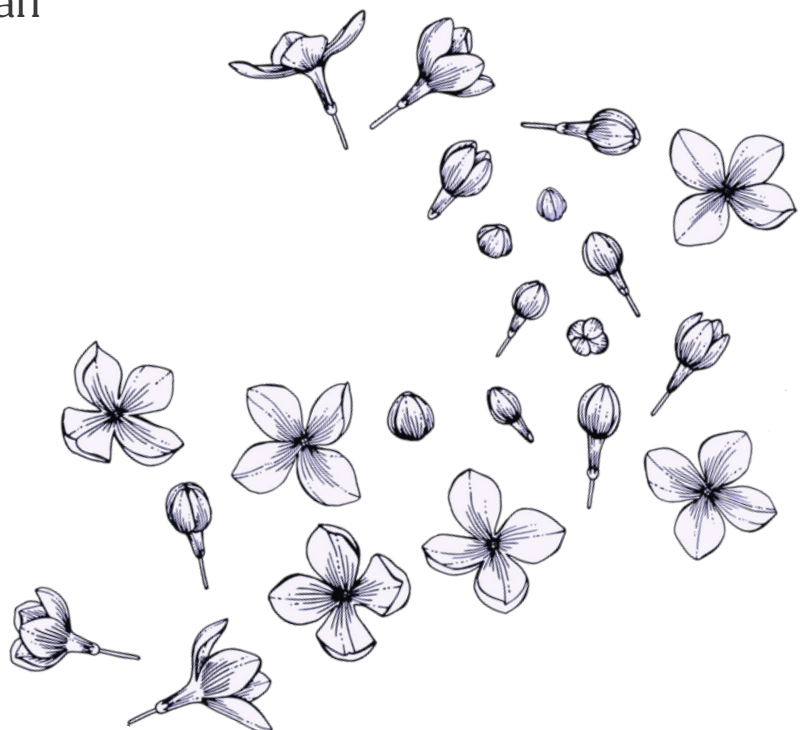


Visit Rochester



Table of Contents

3	Leadership Message and Visit Rochester Board of Directors
4	About Visit Rochester
5	2024: Results At A Glance
7	Visitor Profile
8	Visitor Spending and Economic Impact
10	When the Sky Went Dark, Rochester Shined
11	Driving Meetings & Conventions to Rochester
12	Scoring Big Wins for Sports Tourism
13	Delivering Seamless, Standout Events
14	Building Connections & Strengthening Membership
15	Welcoming Visitors and Elevating Service
16	Amplifying Rochester's Voice
17	Inspiring Travel
18	Behind the Scenes: Film Production & Promotion
19	Visit Rochester Staff



Leadership Message

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on another exciting year for Rochester and Monroe County tourism, we are pleased to share our 2024 Annual Report. Although printed in 2025, the figures and stories presented here represent the most recent full year of data, capturing the results and momentum of 2024.

Once again, the economic impact of tourism in Monroe County reached nearly \$1.5 billion, affirming the strength and vitality of our destination. This remarkable performance underscores the enduring value of tourism to our community and its significant contribution to the local economy.

Our success continues to be fueled by partnership and collaboration. We extend heartfelt thanks to our members, partners, and community stakeholders for your ongoing support and investment in Visit Rochester. We are equally grateful to our board members, who volunteer their time and expertise in board meetings and committees, truly some of our community's finest business leaders. We also value the growing OneROC partnership with our economic development peers, which amplifies our shared mission to strengthen and promote the Greater Rochester region.

We are deeply grateful to the Visit Rochester staff for their passion and commitment. Their dedication ensures that the Rochester story is shared with energy and creativity, inspiring travelers and strengthening our local tourism economy.

Thank you for being an essential part of this journey. Together, we look forward to another year of growth, innovation, and shared success.

With appreciation,



K. William Gunther
K. William Gunther
Chairman



Don Jeffries
Don Jeffries
President & CEO

2024 Board of Directors

Bill Gunther, Chair
Gunther & Associates

Hon. Adam Bello
Monroe County Executive

Hon. Malik Evans
Mayor, City of Rochester

Hon. Yversha Roman
Monroe County Legislature

Francis Antonelli (Vice-Chair)
Antonelli Development LLC

Craig F. Curran
DePrez Travel Bureau

Corey Dooley
Woodcliff Hotel & Spa

Steve Dubnik
The Strong National Museum of Play

Bob Duffy
Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce

Steve Hausmann
Rochester NY Sports Commission (Chair)

Jett Mehta
Indus Hospitality Group

Rob Norris
Seabreeze Amusement Park

Hillary Olson
Rochester Museum & Science Center

Joe Rulison
three + one Advisors

Gregory Smith
Jay Advertising

Bill Strassburg
Wegmans Food Markets (retired)

John Urlaub (Treasurer)
Rohrbach Brewing Company

About Visit Rochester

Statement of Purpose



Organizational Mission: Visit Rochester aggressively sells and markets the Greater Rochester area as a preferred destination to grow, maximize visitor spending, and enhance the local economy. To this end, Visit Rochester also advocates for appropriate destination development, investment and increased community awareness, appreciation and support for the visitor industry.



Organizational Vision: Visit Rochester will be the respected leader in successfully positioning the Greater Rochester Area as a preferred travel destination, thereby contributing to a vibrant, diversified economy and an enhanced quality of life for all residents.

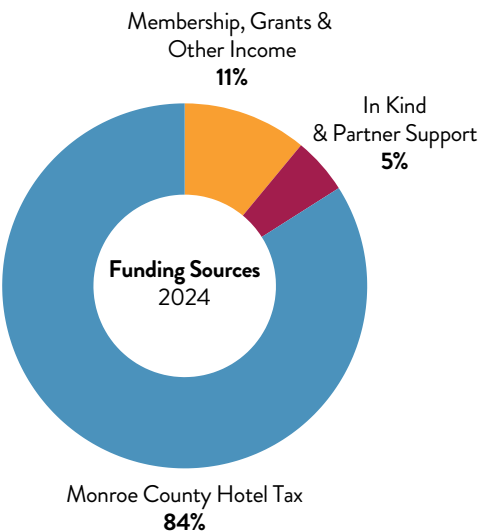
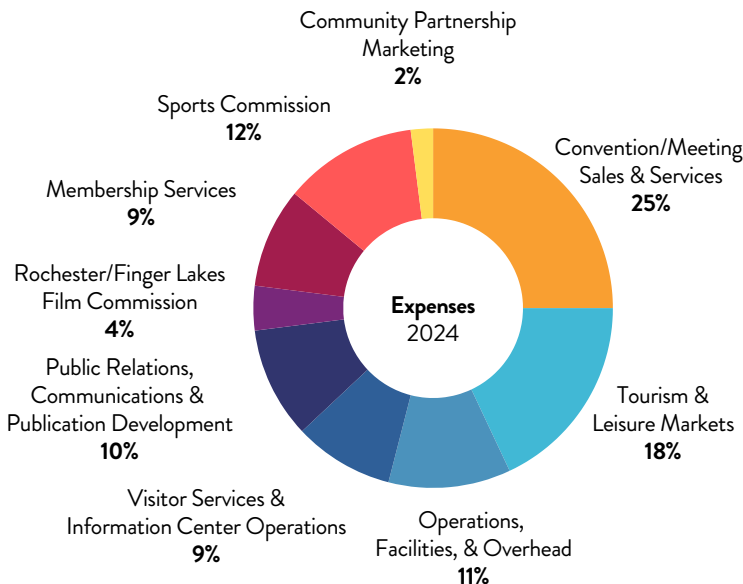


Destination Vision: The Greater Rochester Area will be widely respected as a fascinating destination, offering a mix of unique arts, culture, recreation, sports, entertainment and first class visitor amenities.

Core Values

Community
Passion
Collaboration
Stewardship

Resource Allocations



2024: Results At A Glance

\$1.5 BILLION

\$1,458,500,000 IN VISITOR SPENDING
IN MONROE COUNTY

18,191

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM EMPLOYEES
IN MONROE COUNTY

\$81 MILLION

CONTRIBUTED \$81 MILLION IN
STATE TAXES

\$99.1 MILLION

CONTRIBUTED \$99.1 MILLION IN
LOCAL TAXES

500

LOCAL BUSINESS AND SERVICE
PROVIDER MEMBERS

235

MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS AND
SPORTING EVENTS

78,559

ROOM NIGHTS FOR MEETINGS,
CONVENTIONS AND SPORTING EVENTS

213,919

DELEGATES FOR MEETINGS,
CONVENTIONS AND SPORTING EVENTS

120,600

FOLLOWERS ON VISIT ROCHESTER
SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

1.1 MILLION

1,100,000 USERS ON
VISITROCHESTER.COM



Visitor Profile

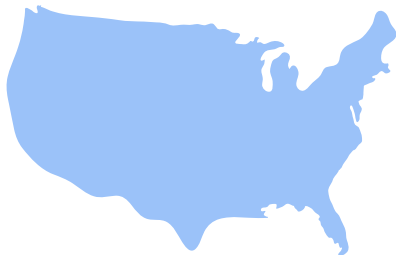
In-State Visitors



Within New York, visitors to Monroe County come from relatively close urban or suburban regions. Many are likely drawn by cultural, educational or family ties or short-break vacations. These in-state visitors often stay 1 to 3 nights, with a concentration around weekend visits.

- Buffalo/Erie County 18%
- Westchester/Hudson Valley 14%
- Albany/Capital Region 10%
- Syracuse/Onondaga County 9%
- New York City 6%

Out-of-State Visitors



Out-of-state visitors to Monroe County tend to come from neighboring states or major metropolitan areas within a few hours' travel (by car or plane). They may be part of multi-destination Northeast / Great Lakes circuits, or visiting relatives/attending events, or combining nature, cultural, or water-based attractions (near Lake Ontario). These visitors likely stay longer on average (3–5 nights or more), given the greater travel investment.

- Pennsylvania 12%
- Ohio 10%
- Massachusetts 8%
- Illinois 6%
- New Jersey 2%

Average Distance Traveled & Length of Stay

Length of Stay	Share of Visitors	Average Travel Distance
Day Visitors	35%	50-150 miles, mostly in-state
Overnight Short Stays (1-2 nights)	40%	100-300 miles
Longer Stays (3+ nights)	25%	200-800 miles or more



Visitor Spending & Economic Impact

\$1,458,500,000

\$1,458,500,000 IN VISITOR SPENDING
IN MONROE COUNTY



Monroe County stands as a significant engine of tourism-driven economic vitality in the Finger Lakes region. Within this county alone, tourism supports thousands of jobs and injects hundreds of millions of dollars in personal income into its workforce. The ripple effects extend beyond direct employment; tourism also stimulates indirect and induced growth in sectors like retail, lodging, food & beverage, and transportation.

In terms of scale, Monroe consistently ranks among the top contributors in the region, capturing the largest share of visitor spending and funneling significant benefits into local households and businesses. For many residents, the tourism sector is not just a seasonal supplement but a core source of earnings, career opportunities, and community stability in Monroe County.

Spending by Category



\$515.2 M

\$515,200,000
FOOD & BEVERAGE



\$467.5 M

\$467,500,000
LODGING



\$249.9 M

\$249,900,000
RETAIL AND SERVICE



\$152.2 M

\$152,200,000
TRANSPORTATION



\$64.7 M

\$64,700,000
RECREATION



\$9 M

\$9,000,000
SECOND HOMES

Economic Impact



\$758 M

LABOR INCOME



\$81 M

STATE TAXES



\$99.1 M

LOCAL TAXES



18,191

WORK FORCE

Finger Lakes Region

In 2024, travelers spent **\$4.6 billion** in the 14-county Finger Lakes region, across a diverse range of sectors. Overall, regional visitor spending was up **2.1%**

Monroe County represents **32% (\$1.5 billion)** of the region's tourism sales. Without tourism-generated state and local taxes, the average household in the region would have to pay an additional **\$659** to maintain the same level of government revenue.



When the Sky Went Dark, Rochester Shined

Celebrating the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse

Rochester and Monroe County experienced a truly once-in-a-lifetime moment as the region stood squarely in the path of totality for the April 8th total solar eclipse. Years of preparation paid off spectacularly, as more than 500 community partners collaborated through the Rochester Eclipse Task Force, led by the *Rochester Museum & Science Center*, *Visit Rochester*, and the *Genesee Regional Transportation Council*, to ensure a seamless, welcoming experience for residents and visitors alike.

Visit Rochester positioned the area as the ultimate eclipse-viewing destination, launching a “Path of Totality Awesome” marketing campaign with support from Empire State Development and COMIDA. This multi-channel effort, spanning print, digital, social, YouTube, and out-of-home placements, reached major

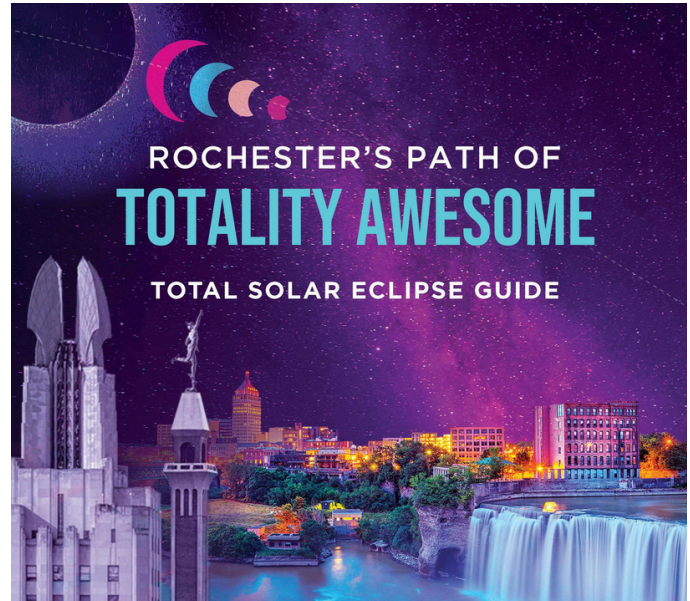
East Coast markets from Boston to Washington, D.C., generated **9.9 million impressions**, **134,000 click-throughs**, and **2.1 million completed video views**. Additional highlights included a 16-page community guide, **15,000 eclipse event cards**, and high-visibility welcome signage and airport displays, including a months-long countdown clock.

The impact was extraordinary. Hotel occupancy peaked at **87.3%**, while short-term rentals reached a **96% occupancy rate**, resulting in an estimated **total economic impact** of **\$10.3 million** and **\$770,000** in incremental rental income. More than **150 media outlets** featured Rochester in eclipse coverage, with over **4,000 mentions** throughout the year and a combined audience of **3 billion**—unprecedented exposure for Monroe County.

From scientific workshops and themed events to record-breaking weekends at restaurants, museums, and attractions, the eclipse sparked community pride and cultural vibrancy. The 2024 Total Solar Eclipse illuminated Rochester as a premier destination for unforgettable experiences.



Gayle King wearing ROC eclipse glasses on CBS Morning.



Campaign Creative

Media coverage included placements in Travel + Leisure, National Geographic, Forbes, Fodor's Travel, Lonely Planet, CNN Travel, Thrillist and more.

Driving Meetings and Conventions to Rochester

Visit Rochester's **Convention Sales Department** built strong momentum in attracting meetings and events, while deepening relationships with clients and partners.

The team showcased Rochester to a high-value audience during an **MPI (Meeting Planners International) Familiarization Tour**, welcoming **58 attendees**, including **20 key clients**, as well as hospitality partners and staff. Signature experiences at Prive, The Strong National Museum of Play, Center City Terrace at the Hyatt, and the Jackrabbit Club highlighted the city's diverse venues.

Locally, Convention Sales strengthened connections through client and partner engagement with the **Recommend Rochester** initiative, which taps the influence of local leaders to bring meetings and events to the region. The **second annual Recommend Rochester Awards**, hosted at the George Eastman Museum with catering by Farmhouse Table, honored Kathy Hoyt of Section V Athletics and Stephen Jacobs of RIT's School of Interactive Games, drawing **61 local decision makers** to celebrate their contributions. A Summer Social hosted on the Riverie, along with hotel partners, and the annual Red Wings client event, **which drew 59 attendees**, further strengthened relationships.

The department also celebrated notable new business, including **Feeding America**, **Disabled Veterans-DAV**, **Solution Tree**, and the **Classical Mandolin Society of America**, while continuing to grow established relationships, such as **Vital Signs**.

On the road, the team maintained a strong **regional and national presence** at key industry trade shows, placing special emphasis on the **Albany market**. This effort included conducting targeted sales calls and events to generate future bookings.



Through these achievements, the Convention Sales team reinforced Rochester's standing as a premier meetings destination and created a robust pipeline of business for years to come.



Scoring Big Wins for Sports Tourism

The **Rochester Sports Commission** powered the region's reputation as a premier sports destination, attracting new events and deepening relationships with national organizers.

A standout highlight was securing Rochester as the host city for the **first-ever HBCU Football Classic**. This achievement reflects the teamwork of many local partners, with special thanks to the *City of Rochester, Rochester Police Department, and Rochester Transit Service* for their crucial roles in planning and support. The inaugural event drew **7,000 attendees**, resulting in significant economic impact and national visibility.

The Sports Commission also collaborated with **eight New York State destinations** to present the **NYSDMO Sports Familiarization (FAM) tour** in Saratoga. This educational program offered **20 national event rights holders** from a wide range of sports an insider experience at the Belmont Stakes and included valuable **one-on-one appointments**, positioning Rochester for future bids.

With strategic partnerships and proactive outreach, the Sports Commission continues to score major wins for the community, ensuring Rochester remains a top choice for high-profile sports competitions and tournaments.

Delivering Seamless, Standout Events

Visit Rochester's Event Services Department ensured that meetings, conventions, and sports events across Monroe County were executed with excellence and ease. Acting as a trusted partner from planning to wrap-up, the team worked side-by-side with clients to anticipate needs and elevate every detail of the visitor experience.

Throughout the year, Event Services provided **comprehensive logistical support**, from coordinating transportation and signage to assisting with vendor connections and on-site registration. The team championed **local sourcing and community partnerships**, helping planners integrate authentic Rochester flavors and experiences into their events.

Professional development and collaboration were also priorities. Event Services engaged closely with the **Visitor Industry Council** and its **IDEA Committee**, sharing best practices and advancing inclusive hospitality standards across the region.



Combining hands-on expertise, local knowledge, and exceptional customer care, the Event Services Department turned complex plans into smooth, memorable events, strengthening Rochester's reputation as a welcoming and reliable host city for gatherings of every size.

2024 Events

- Meetings & Conventions
 - NE Dairy Symposium
 - Feeding America
 - Disabled Veterans - NY DAV
 - Solution Tree (PLC Institute)
 - NYSHTA Hospitality Summit
 - Vital Signs
 - Constellation Brands Legal Summit
 - Drum Corps International
 - NYSSMA
- Hockey
 - ROC City Girls Fest
 - SuperSeries Rochester Border Battle
 - United States Hockey League American Cup
 - Elite Prospects Cup Series
 - Evolve Hockey - Just Get Good Tournament
 - PlayHockey Invitational
 - Rochester IceCats Tournament
 - MyHockey Empire State Cup
 - Guardian's Cup
- Volleyball
 - Can-AM Volleyball
 - VolleyFX
- Soccer
 - Lakefront Classic Showcase
 - Cobras FC Summer Classic and College Showcase
- Swimming & Diving
 - Eastern Zone Age Group Swimming Championships
 - NYS Public High School Athletic Association Girls' Swimming & Diving Championships
 - NCAA DIII Diving Regional - Northeast/South Region
- Bowling
 - NCAA National Collegiate Women's Bowling Championships - Regional
 - East Coast Conference - Women's Bowling Championships
 - Storm Youth Bowling Championships
- Running
 - McQuaid Invitational
- Gymnastics
 - Rochester Classic
 - Level 6-10 NY State Championships
- Additional Notable Events
 - Raymond Kayser Memorial Bonspiel (curling)
 - NCAA DIII Wrestling Regional
 - Revolution Powerlifting Syndicate Nationals

Welcoming Visitors and Elevating Service

Visit Rochester's **Visitor Services Department** advanced its mission to create an exceptional first impression and lasting memories for every guest. The team strengthened outreach through the **college collaboration committee**, connecting with students and families to showcase Rochester's diverse attractions and encourage exploration beyond the classroom.

Visitor Services played a prominent role in **major community events**, engaging with thousands of attendees at the **Lilac Festival** and **Rochester International Jazz Festival**, where staff and volunteers shared insider tips and resources to enhance the visitor experience.

The department also supported renovations at the Frederick Douglass Greater Rochester International Airport, with work beginning on a new **visitor information area** set to debut in 2025. To ensure world-class hospitality, the team expanded **frontline staff training and resources**, collaborating with the Visitor Industry Council IDEA Committee on a new **ASL (American Sign Language) training module** that will launch in 2025, furthering accessibility and inclusivity.



View the front-line training offerings.



Through these initiatives, Visitor Services strengthened Rochester's reputation as a welcoming, accessible, and well-prepared destination for travelers from around the world.



Building Connections and Strengthening Membership

A record-year for Visit Rochester membership

Visit Rochester's **Membership Department** strengthened engagement and retention while building new bridges and connections across the community. The team continued to welcome and educate partners through **ROC Refresher**, a new-member orientation program designed to help businesses maximize their benefits and stay connected to the latest tourism opportunities.

Community impact remained a priority through the **ROC for a Reason Committee**, which engaged members in meaningful service projects. The department also advanced **neighborhood partnership development**, such as the **BASE initiative (Business Association for the South East Quadrant)**, cultivating deeper ties between Visit Rochester and the community.

To support professional growth and best practices, the membership team actively participated in the grassroots industry-led **PACE Forum (Partnership and Community Engagement)** with *DMOs from across North America*, ensuring that members benefit from innovative ideas and industry insights.

These efforts together underscore Visit Rochester's commitment to a vibrant, well-connected membership that brings together 500+ members that strengthen the region's tourism economy.

Amplifying Rochester's Voice

Public Relations and Social Media Success

In 2024, Visit Rochester's public relations efforts generated a record of exposure for the destination, solidifying Rochester's position as a must-visit city in New York State. A major highlight was being recognized with **three prestigious PRism Awards** from the PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) Rochester Chapter. These included the Not-for-Profit PRism for the Sunset Photography Cruise, and Awards of Excellence for PGA.com's *Things to Do in Rochester* and the *Insider's Guide to the PGA Championship*.

The Visit Rochester team actively cultivated relationships with travel media throughout the year. More than **50 travel writers** visited Rochester in 2024, generating over **\$12 million** in earned media coverage, quadrupling the impact from just a few years prior. Representation at leading industry events, such as the International Food, Wine & Travel Writers Association (IFWTWA) and the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), further expanded Rochester's reach.

Regular media appointments, hosted site visits, and targeted press trips ensured national and international audiences learned about Rochester's dynamic tourism offerings.

Complementing PR outreach, Visit Rochester invested strategically in paid social media to amplify messaging and engage target audiences. Paid Meta campaigns for both remarketing and prospecting produced nearly **38,000 clicks** and over **3.2 million impressions**, with click-through rates consistently above industry averages.

Visit Rochester's owned media channels also flourished. The organization published **63 new blog pieces**, produced short-form video content that regularly achieved tens of thousands of engagements, and grew its social media community to more than **120,600 followers**, alongside **1.1 million visitors to VisitRochester.com**.



Through an integrated approach of earned media, paid campaigns, and owned content, Visit Rochester successfully showcased the city and region to a wide range of audiences, resulting in measurable growth in visibility, awareness, and intent to travel.

Inspiring Travel: Leisure Marketing in 2024

Visit Rochester's 2024 leisure marketing initiatives reached millions of potential travelers, successfully positioning Rochester as a must-visit destination for families, regional drive markets, group tours and new nonstop flight markets.

Through a multi-channel approach, campaigns generated more than **15 million impressions** across digital, print, and streaming platforms. The *"Come Play in Our Backyard"* campaign delivered over **2.3 million impressions, 23,663 clicks**, and half a million completed video views, resulting in an **832% increase in landing page traffic** and a **1,253% growth in new website users**. Seasonal content, particularly fall creative, delivered exceptional engagement, proving the value of aligning messaging with the region's most distinctive experiences.

Search engine marketing (SEM) efforts capitalized on strong traveler intent. Campaigns produced more than **94,000 clicks** at an impressive 13% click-through rate, with top-performing search queries tied to "things to do in Rochester," "Rochester events," and family-focused activities. These results underscore Rochester's growing appeal for both spontaneous day trips and planned overnight stays.

Strategic market development campaigns supported the launch of new nonstop air service to Greenville/Spartanburg, Raleigh, Fort Lauderdale, and Las Vegas, ensuring that leisure travelers in these markets discovered Rochester's diverse offerings. Meanwhile, national placements in *Good Housekeeping* and *Woman's Day*, as well as high-profile partnerships such as Brand USA's Canada Connect tour, the American Bus Association, the Ontario Motorcoach Association, Travel Alliance Partners, and the National Tour Association, expanded Rochester's visibility across the U.S. and Canada.

On the international stage, Visit Rochester continued to lead through *Wine, Water & Wonders of New York State*, building trade partnerships in the UK and Germany, and securing editorial placements such as *Essentially America*, the UK's top U.S. travel magazine.

All of this was accomplished in addition to major marketing efforts surrounding the once-in-a-lifetime **2024 Total Solar Eclipse**. Visit Rochester's creative campaigns and strategic outreach tied to this extraordinary event not only captured the attention of visitors and media alike but also earned national recognition. The organization was honored with its first-ever **Adrian Award**, presented by HSMAI, receiving a Bronze distinction for excellence in travel marketing. Out of more than 800 entries worldwide, Visit Rochester's eclipse campaign stood out as an exceptional example of how destination marketing can inspire awe, drive visitation, and leave a lasting impression



By combining targeted digital strategies, robust content creation, and strong trade and media partnerships, Visit Rochester's leisure marketing efforts in 2024 elevated awareness, expanded reach, and drove measurable results in both domestic and international markets.



Behind the Scenes: Film Production & Promotion

The **Rochester Film Office** serves 14 counties in the Finger Lakes and central regions of New York State. It is dedicated to generating a variety of film production dollars and jobs in the region by drawing film and video productions to the area that otherwise shoot “on location” throughout the country and worldwide. In 2024, the Film Office assisted with more than **90 projects** that included **support of filmmakers, commercial and civic productions, NYS promotions and member programs**. These projects included **several feature-length film productions, documentary productions, reality and scripted television shows and series, commercial video productions, music video productions** and more.

The Film Office promoted the region to filmmakers through ongoing communication with producers from major studios and streaming platforms, attendance at major film festivals, engagement with NYC-based industry representatives and the Association of Independent Commercial Producers. The office also hosted filmmakers and producers for in-market site visits and more than **80 virtual familiarization tours** in the past year.

The Film Office has initiated a regional outreach initiative that includes monthly site visits to key stakeholders and support service providers to share industry trends, updates, and changes to the commercial, television, and film tax credits.

The Film Office continues the Sustainable Production program, training Eco Managers and providing connections to local suppliers and vendors to reduce the environmental impact of production.

Visit Rochester Staff

2024 Staff



DON JEFFRIES
PRESIDENT & CEO



JEANINE BATTERMANN
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
AND VICE PRESIDENT OF
HUMAN RESOURCES



AMBER BREWER
EVENT SERVICE
MANAGER



LIBBY CRAIG
SPORTS SALES
MANAGER



KATIE DEE
COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALIST



ELISA EVERETT
VISITOR SERVICES
SPECIALIST



MARK FARRELL
DISTRIBUTION
SPECIALIST



AMANDA FOX, CMP, CDME
VICE PRESIDENT
OPERATIONS & EVENTS



TIM JAMES
SENIOR SALES
MANAGER



DIANA KEATING
VICE PRESIDENT
MARKETING



ERIN KIVEL
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT/SALES &
SPORTS COORDINATOR



RACHEL LABER PULVINO
VICE PRESIDENT
COMMUNICATIONS



GREG LADUCA
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
INDUSTRY RELATIONS &
VISITOR EXPERIENCE



RICH MACKEY
SPORTS SALES
MANAGER



WENDY O'DUFFY
VICE PRESIDENT
SALES



ELENA OYER
DIRECTOR OF
PARTNERSHIPS



DAVE SAMENTELLO
CONVENTION SALES
MANAGER

Rochester Film Office

NORA BROWN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TIM BANACH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Not Pictured

GABBY GARCY, DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
ALICIA GAZDA, CONVENTION SALES MANAGER
EMMA QUINN, TOURISM & EVENTS SPECIALIST

Visitor Information Specialists

2024 Part-Time Staff

JEAN ANDERSON
WENDY BRAUN
RICHARD COBB
ANGELA FARINA-EDGERTON
PATRICIA FONT
BONNIE FOSTER

MARIA IACOVANGELO
EILEEN LECHASE
CHRISTIE MUSTICO
GINNY SPIELMAN
CAROL ZIEGLER
WENDY ZIMMER

V I S I T
ROC
ROCHESTER, NY