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NYSTIA Contact: Bob Provost  
Phone: 518-956-1241  
Email: bob@nystia.org

***2022 New York State Tourism Excellence Awards Recipients Announced***

**New York's tourism professionals,  
'recovery and resurgence' recognized.**

TROY, NY – In observance of National Travel and Tourism Week, the New York State Tourism Industry Association (NYSTIA) today announced the recipients of the 2022 NYS Tourism Excellence Awards. The outstanding work of New York State's destination marketing organizations, attractions, and other tourism-related businesses in all forms of marketing, destination management and stewardship are recognized through this annual awards program. Those organizations, businesses, institutions, and individuals who are named today will receive their awards and be honored at a special ceremony at the New Yorker Hotel in New York City on October 27, 2022.

In 2022, the New York State Tourism Excellence Awards in particular acknowledge the work done in contributing to the recovery and resurgence of New York State's tourism industry and the communities that they serve.

"Travel and tourism was the industry most adversely affected economically by COVID-19. Despite the many challenges the pandemic presented to the industry, the new technologies, techniques, and strategies adopted by New York's tourism professionals have contributed to a resurgent industry embracing best practice destination marketing, management, and stewardship," observed Dana Krueger, Board Chair of the New York State Tourism Industry Association.

The New York State Tourism Excellence Awards are juried by an impartial panel of industry experts under the auspices of the New York State Tourism Industry Association. Nominees spanned every corner of New York State, and the judges were challenged by the diversity and quality of the entries.

"Working collaboratively in New York State's tourism community enables you to network with some of the best minds, most experienced individuals, and trendsetting thought leaders in the global tourism industry," states Bob Provost, President of the New York State Tourism Industry Association. "The individuals, campaigns, initiatives, and projects being honored are world-class. I am humbled by their achievements and service to their communities."

**About New York State Tourism:**

Tourism was the third largest industry in New York State in 2019. The tourism industry has paid dividends for years to New York's economy, setting new records for economic benefit in each of the previous five years. In 2019, New York's tourism industry attracted 265 million visitors and generated record-high levels of impact:

- \$72 Billion in spending at New York State businesses large and small,
- \$39 Billion in disposable income and over 961,000 jobs for New York State residents *and*
- \$9+ Billion in state and local taxes, the equivalent of \$1,248 for every New York State household.

During the pandemic year of 2020, tourism was inarguably New York's most negatively impacted industry. In fact, New York State was the third most impacted state in the country. By year-end 2020, the tourism industry was devastated:

- Average annual employment declined 34%, a loss of over 330,000 jobs vs 2019 - nearly three times the employment impact in any other major category.
- An estimated 56% loss in travel spending at New York State businesses and a corresponding 45% drop in state and local tax revenues.

In 2021, New York State travel spending was still down over 40% vs pre-pandemic 2019, but recent months in 2022 have indicated a more robust recovery trend, with February 2022 down 18% and March 2022 down 16%.

**About New York State Tourism Industry Association:**

The New York State Tourism Industry Association advances economic growth, job creation, community revitalization, quality of life and pride of place by realizing the potential of New York State's tourism industry and facilitating the success of its members. We serve New York State's tourism industry through collaborative initiatives, research, legislative awareness, and exceptional marketing. [www.nystia.org](http://www.nystia.org)



## 2022 Award Recipients

Award Recipients in the following format:

**Nominee/Campaign Name** from Organization Name

Award Category: Subcategory

***“Get Outside – Push Forward & Thrive Project”*** from The Wild Center

Excellence in Overall Tourism Marketing: Private Sector

***“Seek for Yourself”*** from Ulster County Tourism

Excellence in Overall Tourism Marketing: TPA/County/DMO Local Level

***“Canalway Challenge”*** from Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

Excellence in Overall Tourism Marketing: Regional or Statewide

***“2021 Public Relations Campaign”*** from National Comedy Center

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Public Relations

***“Oswego County Fishing & Hunting Guide”*** from Oswego County Tourism

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Printed Materials,  
*Budget Over \$500,000*

***“Western NY Wilds – Travel Guide of the Future”*** from Famous Destination Marketing, Inc.

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Printed Materials,  
*Budget Under \$500,000*

***“Upstate Eats Trail”*** from Visit Buffalo Niagara

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Digital Marketing,  
*Budget Over \$500,000*

***“The Oneida County A-to-Z Food Tour”*** from Oneida County Tourism

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Digital Marketing,  
*Budget Under \$500,000*

***“Bordering On...”*** from Visit Rochester

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Niche Marketing,  
*Budget Over \$500,000*

***“Brave Women FLX”*** from Three Needs Creative LLC

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs: Niche Marketing,  
*Budget Under \$500,000*

***“Data Insights Drive 165% Occupancy Increase”*** from Ulster County Tourism

Excellence in Tourism Marketing Campaigns, Projects & Programs:  
Creative Use of Data to Drive Success

***“James McKenna”*** from Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST)

Excellence in Tourism Stewardship, Economic Development & Destination Improvement:  
Individual

***“Transition from DMO to DMMO”*** from Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST)

Excellence in Tourism Stewardship, Economic Development & Destination Improvement:  
Organization

***“Don Jeffries”*** from Visit Rochester

Excellence in Leadership: Career/Lifetime Achievement

***“Diana Keating”*** from Visit Rochester

Excellence in Young Professional Leadership

***“Save Our Locals”*** from Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce

Recovery & Resurgence: To Assist Community & Local Business Recovery & Resurgence,  
*Budget Over \$500,000*

***“The Oneida County A-to-Z Food Tour”*** from Oneida County Tourism

Recovery & Resurgence: To Assist Community & Local Business Recovery & Resurgence,  
*Budget Under \$500,000*

***“Visit Buffalo Niagara’s Book Club”*** from Visit Buffalo Niagara

Recovery & Resurgence: Innovations & Strategies to Address New/Unique/Changing Markets

***“Mark Poloncarz”*** from Erie County

Recovery & Resurgence: Excellence in Leadership