



November 22, 2017

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OTD's Marci Ross Named Maryland Tourism Person of the Year

Marci Ross, Assistant Director for Tourism Development, OTD, was named MTC's Tourism Person of the Year during last week's 37th Annual Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit, which brought hundreds of the state's top tourism industry professionals to the Hotel at the University of Maryland. Ross began her career in tourism as a hostess at the former Baltimore Chart House restaurant. In 1997, Ross joined OTD as resources development manager, and in 2005 she was promoted to her current position where she manages the state's Welcome Centers Program, call center and outreach efforts. She has received many other industry awards throughout her career.

"As one of the hardest-working, behind-the-scenes workers, Marci's achievements will long outlive her tenure to the public," said Michael Haynie, Chair, MTC. "From her work on huge endeavors like the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Cambridge to pushing for tourist attraction signage along Maryland's highways in every corner of our state, she has a can-do spirit and always seeks positive resolutions to tourism challenges." For a full list of this year's MTC tourism award winners, [follow this link](#).

Pictured: Marci Ross (third from left) with (left to right) Nora Campbell, Sales Manager, National Aquarium; Lisa Challenger, Director, Worcester County Tourism; and Chris Riehl, Baltimore Rent-a-Tour and Second

TFA NEWS IN BRIEF

Celebrate Small Business Saturday in Maryland

A tradition since 2010, Small Business Saturday encourages people to buy local to show their support for their communities. This year's celebration will be held November 25, and there's no better place to celebrate than in Maryland's Main Street Communities. From Oakland to Ocean City and Taneytown to Takoma Park, Maryland's 23 designated Main Streets are filled with historic architecture, boutique shops, art galleries, and the opportunity for both residents and visitors to experience seasonal events and charm.



"With the holidays upon us, Small Business Saturday is the perfect time to visit a Maryland Main Street, where you'll find local shops and galleries, cafes and signature holiday experiences," said Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, TFA. For more information, [visit the Department of Commerce's Maryland Small Business Saturday page.](#)

Maryland Traditions Heritage Awards Set for December 2

Maryland Traditions, the folklife program of the Maryland State Arts Council, has hosted the Maryland Traditions Heritage Awards since 2007 to honor Maryland's outstanding stewards of traditional arts and culture. Free tickets are available for the 11th annual awards ceremony being held at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, December 2, at the Proscenium Theatre on the campus of UMBC. Awardees are documentary story quilter Joan Gaither (Anne Arundel County); the Baltimore American Indian Center (pictured, Baltimore City); and the Skipjack Races & Festival of Deal Island (Somerset County). The awards ceremony will conclude with a country blues performance by the Phil Wiggins Blues House Party and a reception.



Reserve your tickets at the [UMBC box office](#) or by going to Maryland Tradition's [Facebook event](#).

OTD Joins Talbot County Office of Tourism at the County Waterfowl Festival

OTD Welcome Center Travel Counselors joined Talbot County Office of Tourism staffers and volunteers in promoting Maryland's Fish & Hunt initiative during Talbot County's 47th annual Waterfowl Festival. The event brings 18,000 to 20,000 visitors annually to historic Easton, showcases more than 300 nationally recognized artists, and is home of the World Championship Goose Calling Contest. [For more information about Fish and Hunt Maryland, visit the website.](#)



OTD Presents 2017 Tourism Awards During the Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit

Secretary of Commerce Mike Gill; Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, TFA; and Rick Howarth, President, Six Flags America and Chair, Maryland Tourism Development Board, presented the 2017 Tourism Awards at a luncheon during the Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit (MTTS) held this year at The Hotel at University of Maryland. The awards recognize excellence and major contributions in cultural heritage and culinary tourism, economic impact, partnerships, and elevating Maryland's image as a tourism destination. "I am proud to present this year's Maryland Tourism Awards," said Secretary Gill. "Tourism is an important economic driver for the state and today we recognize the outstanding achievements of our tourism partners who support OTD and the MTDB in fulfilling their mission of increasing visitor expenditures to Maryland." Added Fitzsimmons, "These awards pay tribute to the people, programs and organizations that have ramped up their performance and significantly contributed revenue to the state by getting visitors to stay longer and spend more here."



Pictured: (left to right) Commerce Secretary Mike Gill; Aaryn Chandler, Talent Acquisition Representative, MGM National Harbor Resort & Casino; Nerissa Gonzaga, Talent Acquisition Specialist, MGM National Harbor Resort & Casino; Tomar Smith, Talent Acquisition Specialist, MGM National Harbor Resort & Casino; and Rick Howarth, President, Six Flags America and Chair, Maryland Tourism Development Board.

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Hospitality and tourism jobs have shown a 2.8 percent increase year-over-year to 295,100 fulltime and fulltime-equivalent positions. OTD outreach continues

to show growth with a 24.3 percent rise in social media followers, growth of 15.9 percent in welcome center visitation, and an 18.1 percent increase in digital referrals to industry partners. This reflects an overall increase of 3.7 percent in all tourism taxes, exceeding the state average of 1 percent. [For the full September *Maryland Tourism Monitor*, follow this link.](#)



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IN THE NEWS

[Huffington Post Highlights "18 Under the Radar Places in Mid-Maryland"](#)



[FamiliesGo Has a Fun Family Weekend at National Harbor](#)



[South Jersey Magazine Takes a Winter Retreat to the Gaylord National Resort](#)



[Washingtonian Looks at Baltimore Beyond the Crabcake](#)



[Houston Chronicle Recommends a Baltimore Vacation](#)



[Comptroller Franchot Seeks to Lift Cap on Craft Beer Production, Sales, According to *The Baltimore Sun*](#)



Maryland Minute

Each week, the [Maryland Minute](#) provides highlights and insights on this weekend's events around the state. *Maryland Minute* is featured on CBS radio stations in Baltimore and Washington, D.C. and on Baltimore's WBAL-AM 1090.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

24-25

Bazaar Holiday Art Market, Baltimore

Browse original creations by more than 40 regional artists and craftspeople at the American Visionary Art Museum's annual holiday sale. [For more information go to our website.](#)

NOVEMBER

25

Miracle on Main Street Electric Parade, Westminster

Jingle Bell Run at 4:45pm; Miracle on Main Electric Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony at 5pm. Celebrate the holiday season in Historic Westminster and enjoy the seasonal sounds and more. [Get the details at VisitMaryland.org.](#)

DECEMBER

1-2

An Appalachian Holiday Concert, Frederick

Join the Choral Arts Society of Frederick, under the direction of Lynn Staininger, for music of the season set to the tones of an Appalachian accompaniment. [Get ticket information at our website.](#)

DECEMBER

2

Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination, Sharpsburg

More than 23,000 candles on the battlefield represent casualties from the bloodiest single-day battle in American history. Drive through the battlefields at dusk to experience this stirring commemoration. [Find out more at VisitMaryland.org.](#)

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