

## 2016 ISHAE AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE APPLICATION

For Public Relations - A program or project that positively highlights the activities of the association to external audiences.

### **Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association (OHLA) – Collaborative industry PR effort with TourismOhio and American Hotel & Lodging Association aimed at Republican National Convention audience and others.**

#### 1. Goals & Objectives of Program

The convening of the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio in July 2016 provided a rare opportunity to present a message to visitors from around the world about our industry, our state, and how the professionals in hotel & lodging make experiences great.

Combining content and messaging from our travel & tourism marketing partners and our national association partners, OHLA created an approach which gave our industry high-impact, “face-up” visibility via the publication’s cover, with a captive audience in more than 25,000 hotel rooms throughout Cleveland, Akron, Canton & Amish Country. The messaging was created to highlight Ohio and its hotel properties as destinations; to illustrate the economic impact of our industry on the overall economy; to demonstrate how hotel professionals help create great experiences; and to provide examples of real people in our industry.

#### 2. Target Audience

The audience included candidates, elected officials, delegations, visitors, media, corporate sponsors and others involved in the RNC; visitors to Ohio Department of Transportation Welcome Centers/Tourist Information Centers; visitors to area CVBs including Destination Cleveland; guests at the Pro Football Hall of Fame; travelers at the Akron-Canton Airport; and other visitors throughout the region.

#### 3. Results of Program

Messaging seen by tens of thousands of visitors and officials. Numerous media inquires to OHLA to create relationship for follow-up stories in months to come. Some national media follow-up directly to OHLA. Content even produced favorable calls from general public to OHLA. Many hotels, attractions and even some brands purchased advertisements in the issue to complement the industry message. Project has produced requests for similar efforts throughout the state.

#### 4. Evaluation Measures

Publisher provided audit trails for publication placement, OHLA made direct calls to hotels to verify usage.

5. How was the program presented to the Target audience?

Publication was delivered directly to locations just prior to RNC for placement. Minimum of 200,000 copies printed. Full magazine placed in nearly 25,000 hotel rooms throughout 12 counties. Many of these properties don't permit distribution of other publications. Distribution period spanned two national events: RNC period of July 18-21, 2016 and Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival Week of Aug. 5-8. Also distributed by CVBs, and at locations such as airport, Pro Football Hall of Fame, and others.

6. Additional information

This project demonstrated the great results that can be realized by collaboration among very different partners in the travel economy. The theme and messaging we set forth for the industry – “Dreams Happen Here” – carried over into our programming for the remainder of the year, and will continue next year. Substantial overruns of the full publications and a version with only the industry content allowed us to continue to distribute and use this message in an even wider area.

THE PREMIER DESTINATION RESOURCE™

JULY/AUGUST 2016

# TRAVELHOST

.COM®

CLEVELAND~AKRON~CANTON~AMISH COUNTRY



# DREAMS

Happen Here

Travel & Tourism:  
Big Fun and Big Business



Dining | Shopping | Attractions | Maps

THE PREMIER DESTINATION RESOURCE™

JULY/AUGUST 2016

# TRAVELHOST®

*memorable  
experiences.*



Heritage Vineyard Winery in Warsaw



find it here.  
[ohio.org](http://ohio.org)



**Ohio Tourism: Big Fun & Big Business.**

arresting  
conversation.



**What will you find in Ohio?**

Whether exploring eclectic new hot spots or longtime hangouts, you'll discover endless opportunities to step out of your comfort zone and make memories you won't soon forget.

**Download or order the FREE 2016 Ohio Travel Guide at [ohio.org](http://ohio.org) to find out more.**

*Mita's restaurant / bar in Cincinnati*



find it here.  
[ohio.org](http://ohio.org)

**Try Ohio's 360° Virtual Reality Experience at the RNC.  
Learn more at [ohio.org/RNC](http://ohio.org/RNC)**

GETAWAYS



*Marblehead Lighthouse in Lakeside Marblehead*

**LAKE ERIE SHORES & ISLANDS**

**coastal retreat.**

An idyllic island getaway requires nothing more than a short ferry ride on Lake Erie. There are more than 30 islands throughout Lake Erie. While many of them are private or uninhabited, world-class recreational activities, historical attractions and unique local culture can be found in the Bass Island archipelago, located just off Ohio's north coast. You can make your way to Kelleys, Middle Bass and South Bass islands to soak up their distinctive small-town charm and laid-back vibe. Each island has its own personality, but together, they are truly Ohio's playground for the young, the young at heart and everyone in between.

**NATURE & ADVENTURE**

**HOCKING HILLS**

**reconnect.**

The 2,356-acre Hocking Hills State Park, located in Hocking County, has gained an international reputation for its impressive waterfalls, gorges, vistas, bountiful wildlife and recreational opportunities. Six non-contiguous natural areas make up the diversified park: Old Man's Cave, named for its early 1800s inhabitant; Cedar Falls, Ash Cave, the largest recess cave east of the Mississippi River; Rock House, the only true cave in the park; Cantwell Cliffs, Lake Logan, a 400-acre lake; and Conkle's Hollow. Nine hiking trails crisscross the park and two mountain bike trails are also popular. The trails will lead you almost anywhere, including to the park's phenomenal recreation options. Depending upon the season, think swimming, fishing, ice fishing, archery, hunting, picnicking, hiking, camping and nature study.



*Hocking Hills State Park in Hocking County*





Cedar Point in Sandusky

## CEDAR POINT high-flying fun!

Sean Flaharty and Jeff Brashares are members of a not-so-exclusive club called the Ride Warriors. Simply put, these are people who can't get enough of the thrill of being shot straight up a hill, then down and up and round and round at mind-numbing speeds – and Ohio has plenty of thrills to offer them. Brashares finds himself on Cedar Point's Millennium Force nearly every summer weekend. His reasoning: "It's the sun and wind in your face as you leave all your cares and worries on the platform."

There's no other place on earth like Cedar Point, where riders can experience the most diverse lineup of roller coasters, including the world's first giga-coaster, Millennium Force, the world's first strata-coaster, Top Thrill Dragster, and now, Valravn – the tallest, fastest and longest dive coaster in the world. Valravn is the regal king of birds, swooping in to conquer all other dive coasters on the planet with its powerful maneuvers, massive structure and immense ride vehicles. Valravn will become the 18th coaster to claim its place among other record-breaking coasters at The Roller Coaster Capital of the World®, Cedar Point.

Cedar Point in Sandusky



## COLUMBUS ZOO AND AQUARIUM animal attraction.

One of the biggest fans of Ohio's zoos is Jack Hanna, director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium.

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is home to 10,000 animals and more than 575 species –including Colo, who, in 1956, became the first gorilla born into human care –and a 22.7-acre water park called Zoombezi Bay. The USA Travel Guide named it the No. 1 zoo in America.

In 2014, the zoo opened Heart of Africa, where visitors can see cheetahs roam the grounds and feed giraffes.

With a membership to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, animal lovers can receive free or reduced admission to other accredited zoos across the country, including

Ohio's other zoos and the Wilds in Cumberland. "Ohio is so lucky to have five accredited zoos," Hanna said.

You may also spot Hanna at the Wilds, a 10,000-acre conservation center that's home to free-ranging camels, zebras, rhinos and more. It is the largest animal conservation center for endangered species in North America. It's home to more than 750 mammals representing 48 species, the majority of which are endangered or extinct in the wild.

"I absolutely love the Wilds," Hanna said. "Going on a tour at the Wilds is the closest I've ever come to Africa without needing my passport!"



Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in Powell



**EAST 4TH STREET & OVER-THE-RHINE**  
*foodie excitement.*

Great food is a way of life in Cleveland, and one of the best places to find it is on string light-adorned East 4th Street. The area is home to nearly a dozen restaurants that are bound to excite your inner foodie. Options include renowned chef Michael Symon's Lola and Mabel's BBQ.

Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, fondly referred to as OTR by locals, has become a food and beer lover's paradise. Visit Bakersfield OTR for authentic Mexican fare or head to Senate Pub for a gourmet hot dog. For the local craft beer scene, grab a brew at Rhinegeist and HalfCut. The neighborhood also features the oldest continuously operated public market, Findlay Market.

East 4th Street in Cleveland

CULTURE BUFFS

**SHORT NORTH ARTS DISTRICT**  
*art and soul.*

Located just north of downtown Columbus, the stylish Short North is considered the "art and soul" of Ohio's capital city. The neighborhood boasts a vibrant cultural scene and is lined with local boutiques ranging from funky to refined. On the first Saturday of each month, the Short North hosts an art gallery hop with new gallery exhibitions, street performers, special events, food and drinks.

Two area hotels have teamed with artists to combine comfort with culture. Le Méridien Columbus, The Joseph is known for its art collection, with an even larger display across the street at Pizutti Collection, where you'll see one of the world's best private collections of contemporary art.

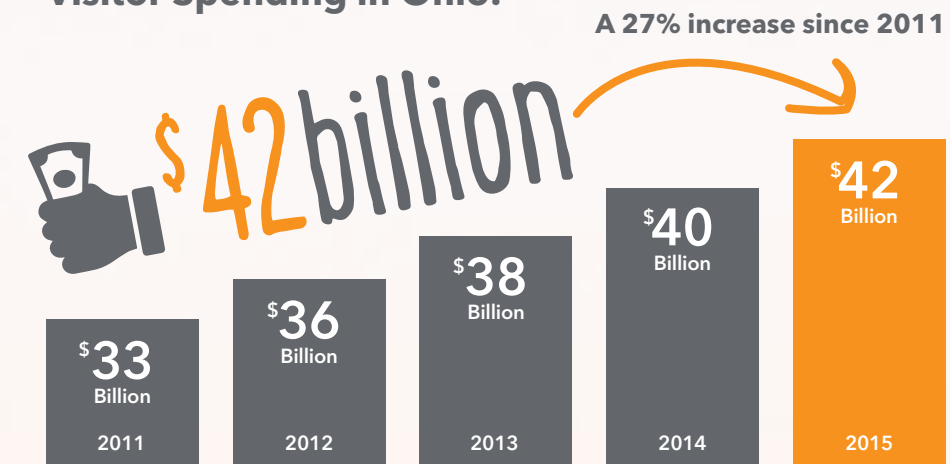
The Hilton Columbus Downtown is a local gallery in its own right with more than 200 pieces of art by 130 local artists. Art adorns the guest rooms – from canvas prints on the ceiling to the public spaces.



HighBall in the Short North Arts District

**Travel & Tourism. Big Fun & Big Business.**

**Visitor Spending in Ohio:**



Estimated direct visitor spending of \$33 Billion generated approximately \$42 Billion in sales.

**Tourism Supported Jobs in America:**

1 in 9

American jobs depend on travel and tourism.

**Tourism Supported Jobs in Ohio:**

420,000



Up from 412,000 in 2014

**Employment:**

Hotel and lodging properties employ

35,000

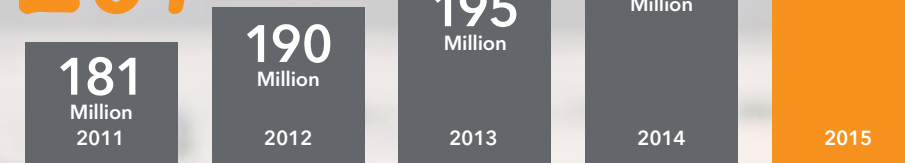
Ohioans and

3.8 million

Americans.

**Tourism Visits in Ohio:**

207 million



Data sourced from: Longwoods International and Tourism Economics  
 TourismOhio reports tourism industry values using direct and indirect impacts.

Data sourced from American Hotel & Lodging Association.

# dreams happen here!

The professionals in our industry and the guests we serve are the heart of hospitality. Every day we strive to meet our guests' needs and expectations. From mobile bookings, chatbots and new apps, to mobile check-in, keyless entry, to digital and on-demand concierge services, we aim to please from the beginning of the booking process to long after our guests leave the property.

As a guest-centric industry, there's no doubt that we could not be successful without the **6 million people in jobs supported by travel, and who deliver memorable experiences and make destinations great each and every day.** Hotel and lodging professionals help our travel economy continue to grow and thrive in communities across the Buckeye State and the whole of America.

Dreams happen in our industry. The bellman who moves up to general manager, the housekeeper who gets promoted to supervisor, or the dishwasher who one day becomes CEO.

These are realities in our business. **We strive to provide our employees a path toward upward mobility through training and resources.** We pride ourselves in being a leader in offering competitive wages and benefits. We offer the flexibility employees need to balance their lives and their jobs. We take great measures to ensure our employees have the educational opportunities and skills they need to succeed.

Our own data tells that success story. Nearly half of our general managers, senior executives and even many CEOs began their careers in hourly, entry-level hotel jobs. With enriching experiences every day and intensive on-the-job training, **there are vast opportunities to rise through the ranks – and quickly.** The majority of entry-level hotel employees are eligible for promotion after only one year of employment, creating a gateway for new workers who can then continue long-term careers in the industry.

The travel and tourism industry is critical to the local and national economy. In fact, the tourism industry remains one of America's largest employers, generating one in nine American jobs. **As one of the top 10 largest industries in every state across the U.S.,** travel and tourism generates \$1.4 billion in revenue throughout the economic chain. **Hospitality is the fourth-largest employment sector in Ohio.** But the impact reaches far beyond hotels. Increasing the flow of domestic and foreign visitors directly correlates to more jobs, economic growth and prosperity in every business sector.

Hospitality is centered on people taking care of people, and that is one of our guiding principles as an industry. **We believe that taking care of our own – and striving to provide our employees with competitive wages, benefits and opportunities for growth, translates to superior guest satisfaction.** This is what makes us unique. This is what defines us. This is the hotel industry.

*Katherine G. Lugar*

*Katherine Lugar, president and CEO  
of the American Hotel & Lodging Association*

*Joe Savarise*

*Joe Savarise, Executive Director  
of the Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association*



# HOTELS

ENDLESS CAREER POSSIBILITIES

**Today a front-desk clerk. Tomorrow a GM, Owner or CEO.**

Over 50% of hotel department managers and many general managers started their hotel careers in hourly entry-level positions. The hotel industry is one of many within the tourism industry that is creating careers and strengthening communities. Learn more at [www.ahla.com](http://www.ahla.com).



delivering memories.

Ohio's hotel and lodging industry employs 35,000 people who work each and every day to make destinations great and deliver memorable experiences.

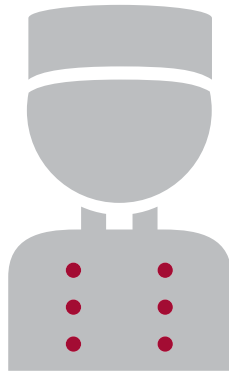


Ohio find it here.  
[ohiolodging.com](http://ohiolodging.com)

## The hotel industry supports economic and employee success.

### Pays Above Minimum Wage

90%



The majority of hotels pay a starting rate above minimum wage for at least 90% of their entry level employees.

### Provides A Solid Career Path

50%+



More than half of the department managers in hotels and many general managers started their hotel careers in hourly entry-level positions.

### Invests In Its Employees

98%



The vast majority of hotels, averaging 98% or higher, offer benefits to full-time employees, including medical dental and vision insurance.

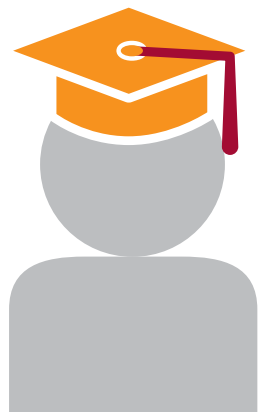
### Generates Job Satisfaction

79%



An overwhelming majority, 79% of respondents, rate their overall job satisfaction higher than average.

70%



70% of hotels offer tuition reimbursements in addition to several other insurance and human resource options.



### KENNY DIDIER, GENERAL MANAGER, METROPOLITAN AT THE 9

Kenny was recognized as the industry's *General Manager of the Year* in Ohio in 2015. At the Marriott Cleveland East, Kenny achieved excellence in every aspect of operations including customer satisfaction, associate growth and engagement, profitability and performance. To ensure that every guest is completely satisfied, he created the *Guest at Risk* program, which aims to deliver absolute resolution regardless of any problem's severity. This has led to higher guest satisfaction scores and strong financial performance for the hotel.

Kenny is now General Manager at the new Metropolitan at the 9 hotel in Cleveland. The nearly 300 employees for this upscale 156-room property rated it as one of the *Top Workplaces 2015* just six months after opening. The hotel has received national and international news coverage and was selected for *Condé Nast Traveler's Top 100 Best New Hotels*. Didier credits his employees for that success. The main requirement: employees must have a "spirit to serve."

### SHIRLEY HAMILTON-PIERCE, SERVER, RENAISSANCE CLEVELAND DOWNTOWN

Shirley Hamilton-Pierce has served as a hospitality professional for more than 48 years. Her dedication and hard work has been a shining example of an employee in the hotel and lodging industry creating memorable experiences and making destinations great.

Shirley is known for both wowing guests and impressing her peers in her role as a server at the historic Renaissance Cleveland Downtown Hotel, a historic property that is an important part of the city's story. A fixture in the hotel's current operation, she demonstrates how people make their hotels come alive for guests.

Putting smiles on guests' faces regularly motivates Shirley to excel. She's been called "a treasure" by customers and colleagues equally. It is no surprise that she received local and statewide awards for being Industry Server of the Year in Ohio in 2015.

