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MISSISSIPPI

TOURISM ASSOCIATION

MISSISSIPPI TOURISM ASSOCIATION HOLDS AWARDS CEREMONY HONORING TOURISM PARTNERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

Jackson, Miss. - The Mississippi Tourism Association (MTA) recognized the impact and accomplishments of the state's tourism industry at the annual tourism awards program held during Governor's Conference on Tourism at the MSU Riley Center in Meridian, Mississippi, October 4-6, 2023. This annual educational and professional development event brought together around 200 tourism industry professionals from across the state as well as tourism partners from the surrounding region.

"Mississippi's tourism industry is thriving," said Governor Tate Reeves. "Every day more and more people are falling in love with our state – and it's easy to see why. There's a beauty to Mississippi that is uniquely inspiring, and it's hard to find nicer people than Mississippians. Thank you to the Mississippi Tourism Association for telling Mississippi's story, and congratulations to all of the award winners!"

These awards give MTA the opportunity to recognize members who excel in various sectors of the industry. Awards were presented in 18 categories, each focusing on a different aspect of the hospitality industry or individual achievement.

"It is such a pleasure to have the opportunity to celebrate these talented members who work tirelessly for their communities and organizations. These awards are very competitive and that is a testament to the caliber of work being produced by our partners and the overall strength of Mississippi tourism. It is our honor to work together with these outstanding professionals to continue to grow and prosper our industry," said MTA Executive Director, Danielle Morgan.

The winners were as follows:

DMO of the Year \$3,000,000 and Over
Visit Jackson

DMO of the Year \$1,000,000 - \$2,999,999
Visit Oxford

DMO of the Year \$500-\$999,000
Greenwood Convention and Visitors Bureau

Best Overall Digital Media
Visit Starkville: Mississippi's College Town

Large Festival/Event of the Year
Double Decker Arts Festival

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Small Festival/Event of the Year

Change Fest

Community Volunteer of the Year

Vicki Taylor

MTA Member of the Year

Paige Hunt

Tourism Investment Award

Linda Fondren

Governmental Tourism Leadership Award

Senator Nicole Boyd

Tourism Partnership of the Year

African American Military History Museum

Travel Attraction of the Year

Mississippi Museum of Art

Venue of the Year

Sheraton Flowood The Refuge Hotel & Conference Center

Lodging of the Year

Hotel Tupelo

Restaurant of the Year

Ethel Mae's

Best PR Strategy/Campaign of the Year

Hotel Tupelo

Best Sales Strategy/Campaign of the Year

Baseburg – Visit Hattiesburg

Best Traditional Media Overall

Mississippi Magazine

“The Mississippi tourism industry thrives with dedicated individuals who share a heartfelt commitment to enhancing their communities and our state as desirable destinations to visit, reside, and thrive. We commend their exceptional contributions to our state’s fourth-largest industry and appreciate their unwavering support for the Mississippi Tourism Association’s mission, which unites the entire tourism sector through advocacy, education, and promotion. We extend our warmest congratulations to all our award recipients for their remarkable achievements and offer our best wishes for their ongoing success,” said Christy Burns, 2023-2024 president of MTA.

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The voice of tourism, the Mississippi Tourism Association is a membership organization whose mission is to unite all sectors of the tourism industry through advocacy, promotion and education. MTA’s vision is to transform Mississippi’s economy through increased visitor spending and overall travel industry growth. For more than 30 years, MTA has led the Mississippi’s tourism education and advocacy efforts. Membership and organization details can be found at www.mstourism.com