



***Commonwealth of Virginia***  
***Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Office of the Governor**

Contact: Brian Coy

Email: [brian.coy@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:brian.coy@governor.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Tourism Corporation**

Contact: Caroline Logan

Phone: 804-545-5572

Email: [clogan@virginia.org](mailto:clogan@virginia.org)

**Governor McAuliffe Announces Matching Tourism  
Grants**

*~ Grants will impact at least 229 statewide tourism entities, providing \$3 million  
in new marketing initiatives ~*

**RICHMOND** - Governor Terry McAuliffe announced today that more than \$773,000 in matching grant funds will be awarded to 51 local tourism initiatives as part of the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) Marketing Leverage Program. The grants are designed to help local and regional tourism entities attract more visitors by leveraging local marketing dollars, and will ultimately impact at least 229 other statewide tourism entities. The local organizations match the state grant funds by a minimum of 2:1 in order to support marketing projects. This funding cycle, the local partners will match the VTC grant dollars with more than \$2.2 million, providing \$3 million total in new marketing to increase visitation to Virginia.

"The Marketing Leverage Program grants give local tourism businesses the tools they need to succeed in an intensely competitive market," **said Governor McAuliffe**. "The grants facilitate community partnerships, smart business decisions, and dissemination of tourism success stories.

This program is another example of how we can help build a new Virginia economy, providing good jobs for our citizens and revenue for our communities.”

Tourism is an instant revenue generator for Virginia. In 2013, tourism generated \$21.5 billion in revenue, supported 213,000 jobs and provided \$1.42 billion in state and local taxes. Dollars invested in tourism are proven to provide a 5:1 return in tax revenue for Virginia, and the grant awards and matching funds provide a stimulus to localities seeking to increase tourism visitation and revenue.

VTC’s Marketing Leverage Program is designed to increase visitor spending by leveraging limited marketing dollars, stimulating new tourism marketing through partnerships, and extending the “Virginia is for Lovers” brand. A minimum of three Virginia entities must partner financially to apply for a grant. Partners may consist of Virginia cities, towns, counties, convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, other local or regional destination marketing organizations, private businesses, museums, attractions, cultural events, and other not-for-profit entities. In total, VTC awards approximately \$1.7 million annually - matched and leveraged on average 3:1 by partner dollars.

“These grants are powerful and innovative tools for small businesses across the state,” **said Maurice Jones, Secretary of Commerce and Trade.** “Tourism is an important contributor to Virginia’s economy, and these tourism marketing initiatives will help to attract new visitors to the Commonwealth. Continuing to support our diverse economy will help to ensure that Virginia remains one of the best places to live, work, play and raise a family.”

Details on the grant awards are below. The next round of VTC Marketing Leverage Program grants will open in April 2015. Localities interested in applying may visit [www.vatc.org](http://www.vatc.org) for more information.

Program Name	Lead Partner	Award Amount
Wachapreague Little City by the Sea- A playground for your passion	Town of Wachapreague	\$10,000.00
Floyd County Tourism Resource Triad - Marketing Project	Floyd County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.	\$9,966.00
East Coast Surfing Championships	Coastal Edge East Coast Surfing Championships	\$50,000.00
Blacksburg 2015 Marketing Initiative	The Blacksburg Partnership	\$4,085.00
Waterford Homes Tour & Crafts Exhibit	Waterford Foundation, Inc.	\$5,580.50
Shop, Dine & Experience Historic Olde Towne Portsmouth	Portsmouth Department of Economic Development	\$8,500.00
Natural Bridge Park Re-Branding	Natural Bridge Park and Historic Hotel LLC	\$50,000.00

88th Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival ® 'The Land of Pink & Green!'	Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival	\$24,413.00
Virginia Beach Chill Fest	Vista Graphics	\$25,000.00
The Thomas Jefferson Craft Beer Festival	Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest	\$5,000.00
Growing the Pulaski Marketplace	Pulaski County	\$5,000.00
2015 AFA Cycling Classic	Arlington Sports, Inc	\$5,000.00
Damascus Tourism	Town of Damascus	\$3,325.00
Virginia Watermen's Heritage Tour Marketing Program	Chesapeake Environmental Communications	\$15,575.00
Create Your Own Adventure	Virginia Highlands Festival	\$18,000.00
Southwest Virginia: Authentic, Distinctive, Alive Outdoors	Friends of Southwest Virginia	\$50,000.00
Alleghany Highlands Humpback Bridge and Blueway Marketing	Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce & Tourism	\$23,044.00
Valentine Tours	The Valentine	\$5,000.00
Visit Richmond VA Culinary Video	Richmond Region Tourism	\$10,000.00
Mobile Website for Central Valley and Blue Ridge	Tourism Association of Greater Waynesboro	\$1,450.00
Marketing the Authentic Northern Neck	Northern Neck Tourism Commission	\$10,000.00
Virginia's Piedmont, America's Wine Country	Fauquier County	\$3,275.00
County of Bath Ad, Video Campaign and Website Upgrade 2015	County of Bath Tourism	\$25,000.00
Charles City County Tourism Task Force Marketing Program	Charles City County	\$30,250.00
Transport Yourself to Outdoor Adventure	Luray-Page County Chamber of Commerce	\$25,000.00
Mountain Lake Awake!	Mountain Lake Conservancy	\$20,000.00
Virginia Family Thrills 2015	Busch Gardens	\$25,000.00
Virginia Capital Trail Foundation's Mobile Marketing Campaign	Virginia Capital Trail Foundation	\$5,000.00
Virginia is for Arts Lovers - Weekend Getaways in Virginia	Virginia Arts Festival	\$50,000.00
Poquoson, VA - Your Waterway Gateway to Adventure	City of Poquoson	\$4,986.50
Route 5 Tourism Destination Website	Scenic Virginia	\$2,375.00

Natural Chimneys Park Rack Card	Augusta County	\$10,000.00
Lower Appomattox RiverFest	Friends of the Lower Appomattox River	\$2,500.00
A Picture is Worth a 1,000 Miles: Art To Drive For	Taubman Museum of Art	\$25,000.00
Inns of Virginia Wine Country Getaway Collection	Virginia Wine in My Pocket	\$10,000.00
Warbirds Over the Beach	Military Aviation Museum	\$10,000.00
Virginia is for Music Lovers	Staunton Music Festival	\$10,000.00
Virginia's Mountain Playground Marketing Initiative – Phase I	Blue Ridge Travel Association	\$15,000.00
2015 Visit Loudoun Photography	Visit Loudoun	\$10,000.00
Run For The Dream	Flat-Out Events	\$5,000.00
Perfected Over 250 Years	Mecklenburg County Tourism Office	\$10,000.00
Big Stone Gap The Movie Regional Promotion Phase III	Town of Big Stone Gap	\$10,000.00
Museums, Festivals, Arts and More	Fine Arts Center for the New River Valley, Inc.	\$3,737.50
Ten for Ten	The Prizery	\$2,500.00
Virginia Golf Travel Promotion	Virginia Golf Packages	\$10,000.00
Plein Air Art Festival	Warm Springs Gallery	\$4,043.50
"Heart Rate" Marketing Campaign, Phase Two: Fish to Your Heart's Content	Heart of Appalachia	\$28,105.00
Rassawek Spring Jubilee 5th Anniversary	Rassawek Vineyards	\$2,500.00
Birthplace of Country Music – Multimedia Marketing and Branding Campaign	Birthplace of Country Music	\$50,000.00
American Ideal Research & Marketing Project	Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership	\$25,000.00

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