



NEWS RELEASE | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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Visit SoSi receives Virginia Tourism Corporation grant for tourism marketing, “Welcome to SoSi”

The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism (DOEDT) announced that regional tourism program, Visit SoSi, has received a \$30,000 Marketing Leverage Program grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) to support its new campaign, Welcome to SoSi.

The campaign will use the grant to boost cross-border visitation from nearby North Carolina into the Visit SoSi region, which includes the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County. Now in its fourth year, the Visit SoSi initiative will expand its reach by deepening audience engagement through targeted storytelling that showcases the region’s authentic experiences and diverse tourism offerings.

Aligned with the Visit SoSi Five-Year Tourism Master Plan, the campaign will target multi-interest travelers within a four-hour drive who are seeking outdoor recreation, cultural attractions, dining, and distinctive small-city destinations. Through strategic marketing efforts, the initiative aims to elevate regional awareness, increase visitation and overnight stays, and drive new visitor spending in Southern Virginia.

In celebration of National Travel & Tourism Week, Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) awarded more than \$2.2 million in matching grant and sponsorship funds to 143 tourism programs across the Commonwealth. These awards are funded through VTC’s Marketing Leverage and Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) Marketing Programs.

These programs pair local marketing investments with matching state funds to increase visitation, extend overnight stays, and grow traveler spending across the Commonwealth. This funding cycle, local partners will commit more than \$4.3 million to match the VTC grant funds, generating more than \$6.5 million in new marketing and event production initiatives focused on increasing

overnight visitation to Virginia across all nine GO Virginia regions. In total, the awards will support 143 marketing programs and impact 858 tourism partners statewide.

“We appreciate the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s commitment to supporting local tourism programs,” said Lisa Meriwether, DOEDT Tourism Manager. “After being named the fastest-growing tourism destination in the Commonwealth, we are more energized than ever to continue promoting the abundant attractions and unique delights of Southside Virginia.”

“Effective tourism marketing is key to turning interest into visitation and visitation into economic impact,” said Rita McClenny, President and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation. “These programs give our partners the tools to tell more compelling stories about their destinations, connect with travelers in meaningful ways, and inspire deeper exploration across Virginia.”

VTC’s tourism marketing and sponsorship programs are designed to maximize limited marketing dollars through public-private partnerships, stimulate new tourism promotion initiatives, and extend the iconic Virginia is for Lovers brand to drive visitation and increase visitor spending. Using the hub-and-spoke tourism partnership model, Virginia entities partner to apply for funding. Partners may include cities, towns, counties, convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, local or regional destination marketing organizations, museums, attractions, cultural events, and other tourism-related non-profits and private businesses. To learn more about available funding opportunities, visit www.vatc.org/grants.

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About the Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism

Visit SoSi is the fastest-growing tourism destination in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism, which serves as the official Destination Marketing Organization for the region, leads the City of Danville's tourism promotions under the Visit SoSi brand. The office promotes tourism assets and attractions across the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County and leverages advertising, earned media, promotions, trade events, and visitor experience initiatives to stimulate economic growth for the region. Learn more at www.VisitSoSi.com