

# Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Announces Destination Marketing Organization Grants For Regional Tourism Promotion

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## Fourteen Organizations Receive \$1.3 Million To Attract Visitors And Expand New Jersey's Travel and Tourism Industry

**Trenton, NJ** – Investing in the growth and future of the state's tourism industry, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today announced 14 Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) grants totaling more than \$1.3 million to expand tourism marketing opportunities in New Jersey.

"Tourism is one of New Jersey's largest and most popular industries, generating \$38 billion in economic activity and 312,000 jobs," said Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, who oversees the Division of Travel and Tourism as Secretary of State. "These grants are an important and proven ingredient to successfully promote the unique historical, cultural, and natural attractions that exist in every corner of our state."

DMOs work with entertainment venues, restaurants, retail outlets, and hotels to promote a municipality or region's historical, cultural, and artistic attractions. Each grant application is reviewed by an independent panel with granting, marketing, and tourism experience. Applicants must demonstrate quality work, a clear demonstration of how their project will contribute to New Jersey's tourism industry, and how their project fits within the Division of Travel and Tourism's priorities.

Each destination marketing organization will use their grant in different ways. The Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce will hire an advertising firm to develop a branding campaign, marketing materials, and a public relations and advertising campaign. The Jersey Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau is developing advertising platforms, public relations, web advertising and internet-based promotions, including the Passport to the Jersey Shore mobile application, to build the Jersey Shore brand. Sussex County Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the New Jersey State Park Service, is developing trail markers and multiple wayside exhibits along rail trails in Sussex County.

"The Division of Travel and Tourism awards these grants to Destination Marketing Organizations to provide critical promotional services in their respective geographic areas as premier tourist destinations. This program is a very exciting collaboration and is paramount to growth and the success of travel and tourism in New Jersey," said Grace Hanlon, executive director of the Division of Travel and Tourism. "Destination Marketing Organizations not only maximize every dollar spent, but also present and highlight a town, city or region's unique historical, cultural and artistic diversity. DMOs also partner with entertainment venues, restaurants, retail and a wide variety of accommodations for maximum tourism and visitor exposure."

To reinvigorate the state's tourism promotion activities, Governor Christie has consolidated the structure of all current government tourism promotion activities and operations under a realigned New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority dedicated to advancing New Jersey tourism, entertainment and sports. The move acknowledges the significance of this industry to New Jersey's economy by elevating the promotion of travel and tourism to a similar level of importance as other economic development efforts initiated by the Christie Administration, such as drawing businesses to New Jersey and retaining those that are already here.

Since taking office, the Christie Administration has taken strategic, comprehensive efforts to ensure New Jersey continues to be a leading destination for sports and entertainment events. In addition to hosting Super Bowl XLVIII at MetLife Stadium in 2014, the Garden State is welcoming numerous sporting events, concerts and tournaments including WrestleMania, America's Got Talent, Formula 1 Grand Prix Racing and the 2014 Special Olympics National Games.

Destination Marketing Organization Grants were awarded to the following:

Meadowlands Liberty Convention and Visitors Bureau, Rutherford	\$150,000
Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority, Atlantic City	\$ 74,835
Southern Shore Regional Tourism, Cape May Courthouse	\$141,000
Southern Ocean County Chamber, Ship Bottom	\$141,000
Morris County Tourism Bureau, Morristown	\$141,000
Princeton Regional Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitor Bureau, Princeton	\$123,000

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Jersey City Economic Development Corporation, Jersey City	\$114,000
Shore Region Tourism Council, Neptune	\$111,000
South Jersey Tourism Corp., Sewell	\$36,072
Somerset County Business Partnership, Bridgewater	\$108,000
Sussex County Chamber of Commerce, Newton	\$102,000
Hudson County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, Jersey City	\$3,551
Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, Flemington	\$ 33,000
Central New Jersey Convention & Visitors Bureau Middlesex County Regional Chamber, New Jersey	\$36,000

For more information on these destinations and assistance when planning a New Jersey vacation, day trip, or weekend getaway – including travel deals, additional itinerary ideas, finding accommodations and ordering brochures – go to [www.visitnj.org](http://www.visitnj.org).

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