



HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



For Immediate Release – May 3, 2022

Contact: Jennifer Bell, Harrisonburg Tourism Manager
Jennifer.Bell@harrisonburgva.gov

Harrisonburg Tourism successful again in bringing grant dollars home

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services team continues to excel at bringing grant funds home to The Friendly City to help attract visitors to support our local economy.

Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced on Monday that Harrisonburg would receive \$30,000 in grants for its Meet in the Friendly City Advertising Campaign and Your Basecamp to Adventure Advertising Campaign. These grants add to a trend of success Harrisonburg has seen in securing additional funds to help its tourism mission, with past awards including \$20,000 in 2021 and \$20,000 in 2020 from the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) Recovery Marketing Leverage Program, and \$10,000 in 2020 from the VTC's DMO WanderLove Recovery Grant Program.



(Above) Visitors can always find fun things to do in The Friendly City and surrounding area by first visiting the Hardesty-Higgins Visitor Center, where Harrisonburg Tourism is located.

In all, Harrisonburg Tourism has recently received \$280,000 in grants and other state and federal funds to support its efforts while being good stewards of local tax dollars.

“Applying for and receiving tourism grants allows us to expand our marketing budget, highlight Harrisonburg to new audiences and attract new visitors,” Harrisonburg Tourism Manager Jennifer Bell explained. “It gives us the opportunity to support our local tourism businesses from lodging to shops to restaurants through advertising and attracting people to the area.”

The Meet in the Friendly City grant will be used to promote meetings and events in Harrisonburg. Business travel has been slow to rebound following the pandemic, and advertising focused on Harrisonburg as a meeting destination will encourage meeting planners to consider Harrisonburg when they are ready to schedule their next meeting or conference.

The Your Basecamp to Adventure grant is focused on highlighting Harrisonburg's active outdoor opportunities and branding Harrisonburg as the Outdoor Adventure Capital of the Shenandoah Valley. Active Outdoors is a strong marketing focus for Harrisonburg Tourism in 2022.

A past grant Harrisonburg Tourism received is supporting the creation of an area trail guide, and the marketing campaign made possible through this week's award will allow Harrisonburg to promote the new trail guide and highlight Harrisonburg's close proximity to excellent cycling and hiking. This will be done through advertising on a podcast, working with an outdoors influencer, and more traditional advertising such as through Trip Advisor, Northern Virginia Magazine on-line, in Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine and at a welcome center on Interstate 81.

“These grant funds provide an important opportunity for communities across the Commonwealth to accelerate recovery efforts and continue with their best-in-class marketing initiatives to attract new travelers,” Rita McClenny, president and CEO of

Virginia Tourism, said. “Increased visitation translates directly into revenue generation, underscoring tourism’s important role in stimulating economic growth and expansion”

More than \$2.7 million in grant funding was awarded to 259 local and regional tourism marketing programs as part of this week’s announcement.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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