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Contact: Lesley Kistner

LesleyK@happyvalley.com

814 769-9490

Nominations now accepted for third annual Happy Valley Hospitality Awards

Awards recognize excellence in tourism and hospitality in seven categories

STATE COLLEGE, PA, Sept. 9, 2024 – The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB) announced that the nomination window is open for the third annual Happy Valley Hospitality Awards.

This year's awards recognize excellence in the local tourism and hospitality community in seven new categories:

- Event/Festival of the Year (Tourism Grant supported)
- Volunteer of the Year (Individual or team)
- Tourist Attraction of the Year
- Excellence in Tourism/Hospitality Leadership (individual)
- Excellence in Tourism/Hospitality Service (individual or team)
- Excellence in Tourism/Hospitality Teamwork (team)
- Rising Star Award

“We look forward to once again honoring our dedicated tourism and hospitality employees and volunteers,” said Fritz Smith, HVAB President and CEO. “Our work to strengthen and grow the visitation economy would not be possible without their contributions. These awards and the upcoming Gala are our way of thanking and applauding those serving on the front lines of the visitor experience.”

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Smith said the expanded award categories allow for a greater cross section of individuals and teams to receive recognition, along with for the first time, events and tourist attractions.

The HVAB will also honor the 2024 recipient of the Peter J. Walker Spirit of Hospitality Award. Named after the late, longtime manager of Penn's Cave & Wildlife Park, the award recognizes an individual who exemplifies the traits that Pete brought to his role: leading by example with an incomparable work ethic; a commitment to serving others; and leaving a positive impact on those around him.

Prior recipients include The We Are Inn Owner Pat Romano, and the State College Downtown Improvement District Clean Team.

Nominations can be submitted online at happyvalley.com/hospitality. The deadline to submit nominations is COB Friday, Oct. 11, 2024.

Finalists and winners will be announced at the Happy Valley Hospitality Awards & Gala. Sponsored by G.M. McCrossin Inc., the Gala will be held from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 12 at Brass 16823 in Bellefonte. The "Lights. Camera. Hospitality!" theme will celebrate Centre County's hospitality and tourism community in grand Hollywood fashion.

Additional sponsors include Barash Media, Blink, 3Twenty9 Design, Hello Social Co., Amplify Video, and the Central PA Tasting Trail.

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