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Applications being accepted for HVAB's 2020-21 Tourism Grant Program

Funding helps local attractions, events with marketing outreach to potential visitors

STATE COLLEGE, PA, Jan. 21, 2020 – The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB), in partnership with the Centre County Board of Commissioners, announced that the grant application process for the 2020-21 Tourism Grant Program is now open.

Implemented in 2002, the Tourism Grant Program has provided more than \$5 million to local nonprofits and private entities to use for visitor marketing and/or resource improvements to enhance the visitor experience, and increase tourism and overnight stays within Centre County.

“The grant program goes a long way toward helping our cultural, educational, historical and recreational assets and attractions reach a wider audience of potential visitors,” said HVAB President and CEO Fritz Smith. “The program was able to provide a record level of funding last year, and we expect to surpass that level this year.”

In 2019, 50 applications representing 46 organizations received a total of \$730,500 in financial assistance. The allocation represented an approximately \$234,500 increase over the prior year, and included nine first-time recipients.

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Smith said the Tourism Grant Program is funded by a set-aside apportionment of the Centre County Lodging Tax.

Awards are granted annually on the basis of merit as determined by the Tourism Grant Review Committee, and are administered by the HVAB and Centre County Commissioners in accordance with Act 18 of 2016. Recipients are required to provide at least a 25 percent match of the grant award, and must complete a post-grant report 90 days after the completion of the project or event for which the grant was applied.

The deadline for applications is 4 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2020.

Recipients will be announced by June 5, 2020.

Questions about the 2020-21 grant program should be directed to Lori Miller, HVAB Director of Visitor and Member Services, at LoriM@visitpennstate.org.

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Testimonial about the impact of the HVAB Tourism Grant Program:

“2019 was our first year utilizing the HVAB Tourism Grant to promote our Punkin' Chunkin' Festival. The results were amazing! In the 9 years of holding our Festival, 2019 was the best attended and the most financially successful! I am certain, much of this success is directly connected to the HVAB Tourism Grant. The Punkin' Chunkin' Festival is the main fundraising event for the Howard Volunteer Fire Company.”

-- George Demchak, HFC VP Fund Development, Festival Founder