



**Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services
Receives \$10,000 Grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation
“50 Years of Love” Program Marketing Fund**

~Grant fund established to help celebrate 50th anniversary of the “Virginia is for Lovers” tourism slogan~

Harrisonburg, VA (February 26, 2019) -- Today, Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services announced that it has received a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) “50 Years of Love” grant fund. “50 Years of Love” is part of VTC’s efforts to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the *Virginia is for Lovers* tourism slogan, which was created in 1969 by Richmond-based advertising agency Martin & Woltz.

“*Virginia is for Lovers* is one of the most iconic tourism slogans in the world, and we are thrilled to be celebrating “50 years of Love” with partners from around the Commonwealth in 2019,” **said Rita McClenny, president and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation.** “This grant program provides an engaging opportunity for destinations across the state to showcase what makes a vacation in Virginia so special, and helps to show travelers why *Virginia is for Lovers* still rings true 50 years later.”

“Harrisonburg Tourism partnered with the Friendly Fermenter, Brothers Craft Brewing; Bluestone Vineyard, Crosskeys Vineyard; Rocktown Bites Food Tours, Montpelier Restaurant, Hotel Madison and Shenandoah Valley Conference Center; First Fridays Downtown, Friendly City Pedi Cab, and the Visitor Center at Valley Mall to showcase 50 Years of LOVE in the Friendly City. Our campaign shows how “**Travel ignites love and friendships.**” Our message is designed to bring families closer, unite friends, create lasting memories and lead new travelers to the City, our region and the commonwealth. We want everyone to celebrate finding what they LOVE in Harrisonburg and Virginia, ” **said Brenda Black, Tourism and Visitor Services Manager.**

We are proud to partner with Virginia Tourism Corporation our state agency responsible for marketing Virginia to visitors and promoting the “Virginia is for Lovers” brand, which is celebrating 50 years in 2019. Tourism is an instant revenue generator for Harrisonburg, Virginia. In 2017, Tourism revenues reached \$124,802,809, a 5.2% change over 2016. Local tourism-supported jobs totaled 1,173 while local tourism-related taxes were

\$10,084,047. All data was received by the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) from US Travel Association and is based on domestic visitor spending (travelers from within the United States) from trips taken 50 miles or more away from home.

In total, VTC awarded \$390,000 to 39 tourism marketing programs across the Commonwealth to help increase visitation and revenue. Each grant recipient received a \$10,000 grant for its "50 Years of Love" project, with the requirement of engaging 10 or more tourism partners in order to receive grant funding.

Fifty years after its creation, *Virginia is for Lovers* continues to be one of the most recognizable and iconic tourism slogans of all time. *Virginia is for Lovers* was inducted into the Madison Avenue Advertising Walk of Fame on Sept. 21, 2009. The slogan was included in the Advertising Icon Museum alongside fellow 2009 inductees, the AOL Running Man, the Budweiser Clydesdales and State Farm's slogan, *Like a Good Neighbor, State Farm is There*. This recognition came on the heels of Forbes.com tapping Virginia is for Lovers as one of the top 10 tourism marketing campaigns of all time. Today, a new generation is discovering love for Virginia's mountains, beaches, history, theme parks, vibrant cities, outdoor activities, sports and hospitality.

For more information about iconic Harrisonburg visit [A Half Century of Love in Harrisonburg](#) and [VisitHarrisonburgVA.com](#).

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