



U.S. Travel Honors Destination Marketers, Tourism Leaders at ESTO

U.S. Travel Association - August 21, 2019

The U.S. Travel Association announced the recipients of the 2019 [Destiny and Mercury Awards](#) and the State Tourism Director of the Year at its 36th annual [ESTO](#) conference (the Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations), held August 17-20 in Austin, Texas.

Twenty-three U.S. Travel member organizations were honored for excellence and creative achievements in destination marketing and inspiring the continued development of imaginative promotional programs.

Destiny and Mercury Awards

The Destiny Awards recognize excellence in destination marketing on the local and regional level, while the Mercury Awards recognize this achievement on the state level. A [judging panel](#) of marketing experts from organizations including JPMorgan Chase & Co., Hylink North America, Rich Media Exchange, Ogilvy and the University of South Carolina selected honorees in these two award categories.

[Travel Costa Mesa](#)'s branding and integrated marketing campaign submission was the winner of the Destiny Awards' People's Choice, and [Arkansas Tourism](#)'s website submission took home the Mercury Awards' People's Choice. Voting for this category was open to U.S. Travel destination marketing members as well as all ESTO delegates. U.S. Travel created the People's Choice award to add greater delegate engagement to the ESTO awards program and allow for sharing of best practices and inspiration.

A full list of the Destiny and Mercury Award recipients [is available online](#).

Brand USA Video Storytelling Award

New this year at ESTO was the presentation of the [Brand USA Video Storytelling Award](#). The award is a showcase of the best in video storytelling by destinations, attractions and points of interest across the U.S. Brand USA President and CEO Christopher L. Thompson presented the awards to representatives from [Destination DC](#) and [New Mexico Tourism Department](#) in recognition of their compelling and inspiring video content.

State Tourism Director of the Year

The National Council of State Tourism Directors selected Duane Parrish of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism as 2019's [State Tourism Director of the Year](#). This annual award recognizes a state tourism director who has successfully raised the profile of his or her state as a travel and tourism destination. Each year's honoree is selected by a panel of their peers; prior to ESTO, state tourism directors from all U.S. states and territories vote for the individual exhibiting the most impressive achievements in state-level destination marketing.

Please [click here](#) to learn more about Duane Parrish's selection as State Tourism Director of the Year.

U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry that generates \$2.5 trillion in economic output and supports 15.7 million jobs. U.S. Travel's mission is to increase travel to and within the United States. Visit [ustravel.org](#).

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About Brand USA

Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent \$38.1 billion in the United States, leading to \$82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly \$11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.