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**BARRY GLASSMAN**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Glassman Administration Awards \$1.5M in Grants to Grow Tourism in Harford County**

**BEL AIR, Md.**, (June 8, 2016) - County Executive Barry Glassman is pleased to announce that 31 local nonprofits will be receiving grants from his administration totaling nearly \$1.5 million to promote tourism and related activities in Harford County. Now in its second year, the county's tourism grant program makes awards based on a competitive application process with funding from revenue generated by a hotel lodging fee implemented in March 2015. The one-year grants are used to plan and execute a variety of tourism-related activities including historical, cultural, agricultural, heritage, ecological and sports tourism. By strengthening activities that draw visitors into the county, the program initiated by the Glassman administration seeks to grow tourism and enhance local business activity overall.

The competitive grant application period, extended this year to 13 weeks, ran from January 19 to April 15 through the Harford County Office of Economic Development, offering 501c3 and 501c6 organizations the opportunity to apply for funding.

With oversight from the Harford County Economic Development Advisory Board, applications were reviewed by the Tourism Activity Review Committee (TARC), which makes the program's funding recommendations to County Executive Glassman. Award recipients are then required to submit quarterly reports to ensure accountability throughout the funding year. Grant funds for the fiscal year 2017 will become available on July 1, 2016.

Funding for the grants is generated by a 6% hotel lodging fee initiated by the Glassman administration and approved by the Harford County Council in 2015. Application of the fee

began on March 25, 2015. Harford County was the last jurisdiction in the state to implement such a fee; funds are used explicitly for tourism-related operations and events.

“I would like to thank my Director of Economic Development Karen Holt, EDAB Chairman Eric McLaughlin, and the members of the TARC committee for their work again this year on our tourism program,” said County Executive Glassman. “Our tourism grant program supports accountability and directs revenues to support tourism attractions that benefit residents and visitors alike. At the same time, drawing people to these activities generates economic opportunities for restaurants, shops, and other local businesses.”

Grant awards for fiscal year 2017 focused on operational support for the human capital and expertise necessary to sustain the applicant organizations. As was the case last year, the largest grant was \$500,000 awarded to Visit Harford, which promotes local attractions and markets Harford County as a premier tourism destination. Other awards will enhance new activities and traditional favorites ranging from apple festivals to farm fairs to Aberdeen Proving Ground’s Centennial Celebration.

The 31 organizations receiving competitive grant funding totaling \$1,495,500 are listed below:

- APG Centennial Celebration Association, Inc., \$40,000, operations and program support for planning the community centennial celebration of Aberdeen Proving Ground;
- Ballet Chesapeake, \$3,000, operating expenses;
- Bel Air Downtown Alliance, Inc., \$31,750, operational support for BBQ Bash, branded marketing for Bel Air Armory and strategic business recruitment program;
- Bel Air Independence Day Committee, \$5,000, operational support of parade activities;
- Boys & Girls Club Harford County, \$37,500, seasonal haunted attraction;
- Center for the Arts, \$50,000, operational support toward staff and integrated marketing;
- Chesapeake Heritage Conservancy, \$15,000, Skipjack Martha Lewis program;
- Concord Point Lighthouse, \$18,000, salary support and data tracking;
- Darlington Apple Festival; \$25,000, operational and logistic support of Apple Festival;
- Edgewood-Joppatowne Parade Committee, \$5,000, operational support for parade activities;
- Friends of Jerusalem Mill, \$15,000, program support for year round living history events;
- Harford Artist’s Association, \$5,000, operational support of new downtown gallery location and outreach;

- Harford Historical Society, \$37,000 toward general operating costs and analysis of Society's collections;
- Harford County Farm Fair, Inc.; \$37,000, contracted services for shuttle buses and to lease two-way radios for Farm Fair;
- Harford Community College Foundation, \$35,000 to promote extended stay market for APGFCU Arena;
- Harford County Izaak Walton League of America, \$5,000 to support operating expenses of Bel Air gun show;
- Havre de Grace Alliance, Inc., \$40,000, salary support for executive director;
- Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, \$80,000, operational support for decoy museum;
- Havre de Grace Maritime Museum, \$40,000, museum's general operating funds;
- Highland Community, Inc., \$50,000, operating funds to expand outreach in Mason Dixon region;
- Hosanna Community House, \$43,000, sesquicentennial celebration of Hosanna School, McComas Institute and historical bus tours;
- Ladew Topiary Gardens, \$50,000, operating funds and visitor services study;
- Liriodendron, \$67,000, operational funds and outreach;
- Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc., \$50,000, operation funds to support Lower Susquehanna Segment Implementation Plan and Heritage Area marketing;
- Rockfield Manor, \$41,250, operating funds to support Harford County Wine Festival and market outreach;
- Soroptimist International of Havre de Grace, \$5,000 to support Havre de Grace Art Show;
- Steppingstone Museum, \$50,000, operating funds to focus on "living museum" through the ongoing preservation of the historic trades and folk arts;
- Susquehannock Wildlife Society, \$55,000 to support staffing and eco-tourism efforts;
- Susquehanna Lockhouse Museum, \$40,000 to support staffing and operations;
- Susquehanna Symphony Orchestra, \$20,000 for operating funds;
- Visit Harford, \$500,000, general operating costs and marketing outreach.

In addition to the above competitive grants, \$250,000 dedicated for marketing agriculture and ag-tourism is funded in fiscal year 2017 by revenue from the hotel lodging fee. Prior to FY16, this line item had been funded by General Fund revenue.

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