**Project Name:** Blogger Bash

**Project Managers:**  Leslie Troy and Matthew Scales

**Purpose:** Blogger Bash is an opportunity for the Maryland Office of Tourism (OTD) staff to bring together regionally-based bloggers and OTD’s tourism partners for networking, pitching and showcasing culinary delights, which will be featured in the attendees’ blog positivity.

**How does this project encourage someone from outside of Maryland to visit? How does this differentiate Maryland in the marketplace?**

Research has shown that third-party endorsement of a destination has a positive impact on travel decisions. DMO partners will be encouraged to pitch and highlight the upcoming summer and fall travel season to the attending bloggers. The blog coverage will also serve to encourage locals to venture out and explore other areas around the state.

**Background:**

OTD has previously facilitated 3 successful Blogger Bash events (2015-2016). The Blogger Bash is designed to bring Maryland DMOs, along with local and regionally-based bloggers together for the opportunity to cover tourism topics, events, and attractions. The event will be held at McClintock Distilling in Frederick, Maryland on May 2, 2019.

**Situational Analysis:**

In the evolving media landscape, bloggers have played a more crucial role in producing positive third-party editorial coverage. The Maryland Office of Tourism recognizes this growing trend and has developed this event to help establish relationships with our DMO partners and the bloggers. The event is invitation only and sent to bloggers who cover regional travel, culinary and lifestyle topics that have been vetted and deemed appropriate. Locally-based national and international bloggers are also encouraged and invited to attend.

**Goals of the project:**

To foster an environment for meaningful relationships between bloggers, OTD and tourism partners in an effort to generate positive blog posts and potentially third-party editorial coverage about Maryland tourism initiatives, which will entice their readers to visit and stay in Maryland.

**Partners on the project:**

Visit Frederick as host destination and all other DMOs, potentially craft spirits industry partners

**Success measurement(s):**

Establish a relationship with the attending bloggers.

Secure positive editorial coverage with at least 15 blog posts/articles within the next two years.

**Delivery Date:**  May 2, 2019