



SUMMER SEASON IS HERE

Now that the Legislative session has ended, you are probably aware that the Statewide Marketing Fund received no additional funding, despite efforts by members of the legislature.

Despite the disappointment, the Tourism Coalition has been in conversations with our partners at the CT Arts Alliance, CT Humanities, the CT Lodging Association and the Sports and Convention Bureau about next steps including discussions with representative Josh Elliott, who is running against Governor Lamont in the Democratic primary and Senator Ryan Fazio the Republican nominee about bringing up the topic of why the Governor refuses to provide additional funding for Arts, Culture, and Tourism.

In addition, we have begun discussions with the Chairs of Commerce, Finance, and Appropriations along with Legislative Leadership. We welcome any ideas and suggestions that you might have and feel free to reach out to me.

Also, many of you are hiring people for the summer season and I wanted to mention our CHAT – CT Hospitality Awareness Training program, which might be helpful to new employees who are undergoing Orientation or Training for their new position. CHAT is a 75-minute online training program that deals with the customer's experience from welcoming them, getting them to where they need to go, to engaging with customers, and how to handle a customer concern or issue.

If any member would like to see a copy of the CHAT program, please let me or Christine Dagata know and we would be happy to set you up.

Lastly, I want to thank all of you that testified, submitted written testimony, or reached out to Legislators last session. It does matter and it has a positive impact, and this is the closest that we have come in years, to obtaining additional funding for Statewide Marketing.

Stay Healthy.

Frank Burns
Executive Director



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:



Makiaris Media is one of the largest independent media agencies between New York and Boston. Founded in 1987 by Irene Makiaris, an icon in the advertising industry. Her passion for developing media strategies and unique campaign ideas lives on.

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CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT:



MAJORITY LEADER OF THE STATE SENATE

Senator Bob Duff represents Connecticut's 25th Senate District, which includes Norwalk and Darien. Re-elected again in 2024, Bob was chosen by his colleagues in 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023 and 2025 to serve as Senate Majority Leader. Prior to his election to the Senate, Bob represented Norwalk's 137th Assembly District in the House of Representatives for three years.

As Senate Majority Leader, Bob is most proud of his role in 2017 leading the rewrite of the state's decades-old education funding formula ("ECS") to better help children in our urban centers and those who live in poverty.

In addition, Bob and the Senate Democratic caucus have achieved numerous other legislative victories, including instituting one of the largest tax cuts in Connecticut history in 2023 and finally beginning to pay down seven decades of built-up pension debt. Bob and the Senate Democrat caucus have passed other major legislation, such as creating Paid Family Medical Leave, expanding sick days, making higher education more affordable, and supporting data privacy, health care access, increased gun safety, LGBTQ rights, equal pay for equal work and children's mental health.

Since joining the legislature, Bob has been a tireless advocate for job creation in Connecticut. He has helped bring businesses to the state and played a leading role in championing landmark jobs legislation. As former Chair of the legislature's Housing Committee, Bob created the state's first Housing Trust Fund to build more affordable housing in Connecticut. As former Chair of the Banking Committee, Bob worked to safeguard Connecticut homeowners from the ravages of predatory lending by creating a package of first-in-the-nation reforms to reduce the number of home foreclosures in the state; included in that legislation was the foreclosure mediation program, Mortgage Crisis Job Training Program to help those unemployed or underemployed avoid foreclosure, and a law that provides tools to municipalities ensuring lenders maintain their vacant properties.

Train Your Team with CHAT

Connecticut Hospitality Awareness Training, or CHAT for short, is an innovative, educational program developed by the Connecticut Tourism Coalition to train frontline personnel who work at attractions, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses that make up the Connecticut tourism industry.

The CHAT program features an **introductory video** and **seven interactive, online modules**. The program takes under 90 minutes to complete, although participants can learn the material at their own pace. Once a participant receives a score of 70% or better, they have successfully completed the CHAT program. A **Certificate of Achievement** will be awarded from the Connecticut Tourism Coalition at a future tourism event.

CHAT's core curriculum features training on guest service and insight on why tourism matters. Module topics are outlined on the back side of this flyer. With greater knowledge, employees will understand how to best serve our valued guests. It is essential that Connecticut personnel are educated in their field to best represent our tourism industry.

Companies can sign up their employees to take the CHAT program for a package price of \$10 per participant. Contact Frank Burns at the Connecticut Tourism Coalition at flburnsjr@yahoo.com. You will then be assigned a promo code to enroll your team in CHAT at chatcertificate.com.

CHAT will **educate frontline service workers** on how to ensure that Connecticut's tourists will enjoy a **positive visitor experience**.

CHAT is Connecticut's first online training program to educate workers on the **fundamentals of hospitality service** and the **significance of tourism** in our economy.



Become a Connecticut Tourism Champion

The Connecticut Tourism Coalition is proud to announce the creation of an award-winning Hospitality Awareness Training program for Connecticut. This educational program benefits everyone who works directly with visitors.

Earn your industry-recognized visitor service excellence and become a Connecticut Tourism Champion. Earn your certification and receive a complimentary Connecticut Hospitality Awareness Training Certificate.

Having a great job is a great experience. It's a great experience to be a part of a team that is dedicated to providing the best possible visitor experience. This is the goal of the Connecticut Hospitality Awareness Training program.

LEARN MORE

[t] CONNECTICUT TOURISM COALITION

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Thank you to our sponsors who underwrote the development cost for CHAT



For more information, contact Frank Burns, Executive Director • flburnsjr@yahoo.com • 518-573-0103

FOR MORE INFO ABOUT THE CT TOURISM COALITION OR TO BECOME A MEMBER, PLEASE VISIT TOURISMCT.COM

The Connecticut Hospitality Awareness Training (CHAT) program will help your staff create positive visitor experiences for your guests. CHAT will help instill your employees with the skills and passion to do their jobs well. Lessons learned will help reinforce important concepts needed to help your team develop and grow their hospitality skillset.

There are seven modules in the CHAT program. Each covers a different aspect of working in the hospitality industry:



Module 1 is a basic framework of tourism and the impact it has on the Connecticut economy. This module also covers why those in the tourism industry make a difference in their interactions with customers and visitors to Connecticut.



Module 2 encompasses what tourists are looking for when they visit CT and approaches all the different ways that a tourism professional could help the visitor have a memorable experience.



Module 3 is all about getting your visitors where they want to go. This section goes over communications with guests and how to provide appropriate resources and directions to visitors.



Earn Your Certification

Sign up for the official Connecticut Hospitality Awareness Training program today! We'll email you the program syllabus, get you set up for online training, and provide you with the resources you need to succeed. Each module contains information, activities and exercises to help you learn the fundamentals of hospitality and your role in helping our visitors. Once you complete the program, you'll receive your CHAT Certificate of Completion and a digital badge to share with your team.

Take pride in fostering Connecticut Tourism!

Name

Email

Company

Office Phone

Cell Phone



Online Training

Welcome to the official Connecticut Hospitality Awareness Training program! CHAT's successful completion of this online and classroom program will earn the student the certification of completion in a future formal awards presentation.

Please take a few minutes to complete the program. The entire program takes approximately 30 minutes to complete, but you can work on this over time. If you wish to stop at any time, please click on the video to pause. To continue, simply click on the video to resume. Please enjoy!



Module 1
Why is this important?



Module 2
What visitors want to know to help them



Module 3
Find Out What Interests Them



Module 4
Get Them Where They Want To Go



Module 5
Get them more than what they expect



Module 6
Engage Them Every Chance You Get



Module 7
We do a Difference To Them



Conclusion
Congratulations & Well Done!



Module 4 is a guide on showing interest in visitors and creating a relationship that shows you care about them enjoying themselves. This includes targeting questions that may help you better understand their goals for their visit to CT and providing recommendations.



Module 5 is about going above and beyond customer service. This includes knowing your area and other things in the area that your customers may be interested in taking part in. It's about staying in the know in your area and community.



Module 6 includes tips on how to diffuse an upset visitor, how to go over and above for optimal customer service and providing empathy.



Module 7 How to create a positive visitor experience. How to respond to inquiries and keep them coming back!

Sign your team up today!
CHATCertificate.com

For more information, contact Frank Burns, Executive Director • flburnsjr@yahoo.com • 518-573-0103