

Selected 3% Occupancy Tax Grant Tourism Project Summaries



1. Chautauqua Striders events

\$23,028 received in two grants—2009 & 2011

The Striders organization purchased technical equipment necessary for hosting major track events and long distance running events. As a result of equipment procured using a 2009 and a 2011 grant, Striders has been successful in attracting regional athletic competitions to the Chautauqua County area. In addition to track events for school aged competitors, they have recently branched by partnering with other local organizations to host a half marathon and are in the planning stages for a triathlon in 2014. All of these events attract out of area visitors to the region.

~~~~~



### **2. Concord Grape Belt Heritage Association/Grape Discovery Center**

\$70,426 received in six grants—2007-2012

The CGBHA and Grape Discovery Center have received a series of occupancy tax grant awards which they have used to create a plan and implement key phases. The initial focus, from 2007 to 2009 was on developing a Heritage Area Management

Plan for the Concord grape growing region along the Lake Erie shoreline area. This was a requirement of the “Heritage Area” designation received from the State of New York. The plan provides a toolkit of recommendations for the communities in the “grape belt” district to employ as they grow the tourism market segment.

The signature project for the Heritage Association has been the development and opening of the Grape Discovery Center near Westfield. The group has successfully procured space, designed, and outfitted a center dedicated to the history and current environment associated with the Concord grape. This center capitalizes on a characteristic and experience that is unique to our area, and that has been a topic of interest for visitors for decades. The center anticipates attendance in excess of 25,000 per year initially, and growing from that point as additional exhibits are added.

~~~~~



3. Chautauqua Institution Program on PBS

\$13,888 received in one grant—2010

The Institution utilized an occupancy tax grant as part of an overall funding package to provide PBS with the funds necessary to produce a one hour documentary on the Chautauqua experience. Entitled “Chautauqua, An American Narrative”, the one hour program debuted nationally on PBS stations in February of 2011. Since that time, the program has run dozens more times on PBS affiliates throughout North America. The publicity impact of the program was huge during 2011 and continues to create awareness of, and interest in, the Chautauqua County region.

~~~~~



**4. Gymnastics/Figure Skating Events at JSB Arena**

\$12,544 received in one grant—2012

The ice arena in Jamestown utilized the occupancy tax funding award to attract a televised gymnastics and figure skating extravaganza to the area. The event filled the 2,200 seat arena in December 2012 and was then aired on NBC in late February of 2013. The program included a number of 2012 U.S. Olympic gymnastic team members, including medalists. The program producer has approached the arena about returning to Jamestown for a future event and television coverage.

~~~~~



5. Chautauqua-Lake Erie Art Trail

\$14,954 received in three grants—2009-2011

The North Shore Arts Alliance, based in Fredonia, organized approximately two dozen area artists into an art trail. The group then established a series of arts events, including the Open Studios Weekend in which visitors come and watch artists create an original work. This program has led to five successful years for a series of art event weekends, establishing Chautauqua County as a significant arts destination.

~~~~~

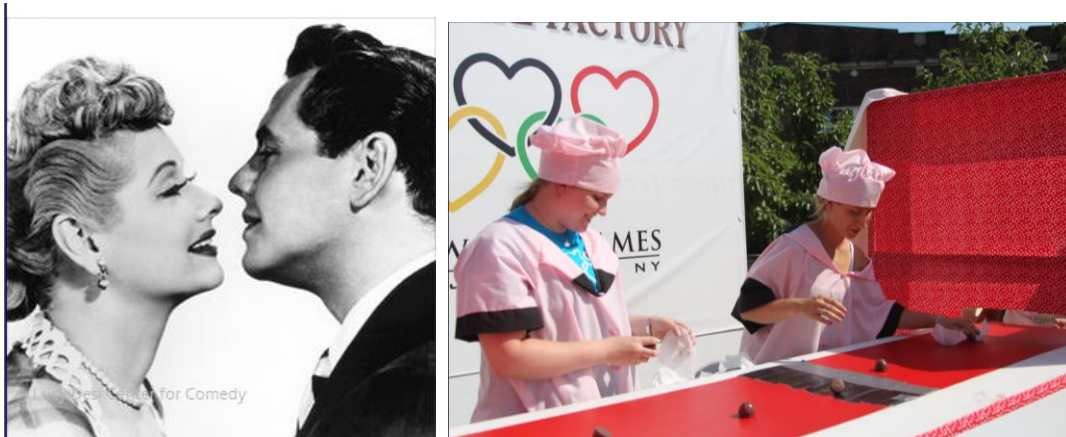


**6. Chautauqua Snowmobile Federation**

\$45,465 received in seven grants—2008-2011

The Federation is a loose affiliation of the five snowmobile clubs in Chautauqua County. They gathered project information from clubs about trail infrastructure needs necessary to maintain the snowmobiling experience in the area. This included signage, reflective and other safety markers, bridge repair, and grooming of new areas. In addition to organizing project applications for clubs, the Federation conducted marketing of the snowmobile experience, working in conjunction with Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau.

~~~~~



7. Lucy-Desi Festival of Comedy

\$43,160 received in three grants—2011-2013

Under a new board and management, the Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Center for Comedy developed a four pillar plan, featuring a revamped Festival of Comedy. The comedy festival takes place in early August and includes headliner comedian performances, street performances, re-enactments, musical entertainment, and in 2011 a successful Guinness Book of World Records attempt for the “most people collectively dressed as Lucille Ball”. The 2011 event attracted more than 13,000 visitors as well as media from throughout the U.S. and a handful of international sources. The expanded comedy festival has become the cornerstone for the organizations effort to create a comedy learning center and a comedy hall of fame center. These initiatives bring significant visitor market awareness to the Chautauqua County area.