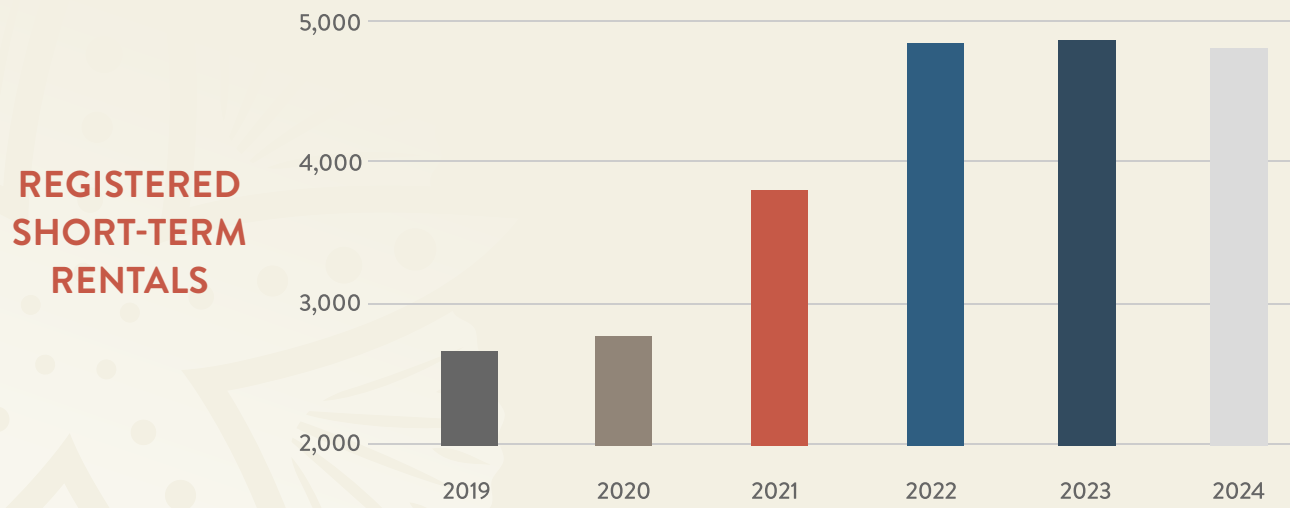


# HOT COLLECTIONS

The Park Board of Trustees collects Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) from hotels, motels, and short-term or vacation rentals for the City of Galveston.

- In FY2024, Galveston Island’s hotel and lodging sector produced **\$27 million**, showing a slight decline compared to \$30.2 million in FY2023, due to impacts from Hurricane Beryl.
- Galveston’s HOT collections **outpaced the state’s collection by 1.9%.**
- Roughly 46%, or \$12.4 million, of the total HOT collected came from approximately 4,900 registered vacation rentals.

The Park Board is also responsible for maintaining the vacation rental registration process for the City of Galveston. In FY2024, the Park Board achieved an STR registration compliance rate of 94% of all active rentals holding valid registration.



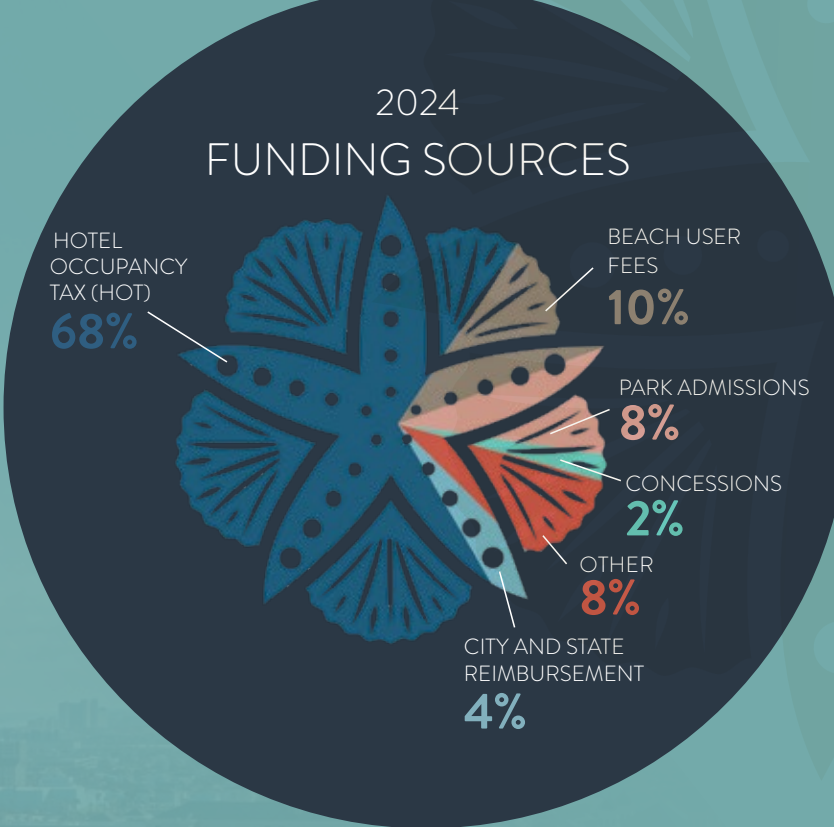
## QUALITY OF LIFE IS BETTER BECAUSE OF TOURISM

- 🔧 **Supports** world-class attractions, restaurants, and boutiques
- 🎉 **Generates** a variety of special events every weekend
- 💰 **Bolsters** the city’s operating budget and saves residents thousands of dollars in taxes
- 👥 **Creates** 1 in 3 jobs
- 🌱 **Fosters** an environment for small businesses to thrive



# PARK BOARD

In 1963, the citizens of Galveston voted to create a specialized unit of government called the Park Board of Trustees of the City of Galveston. The organization is responsible for overseeing Galveston’s tourism efforts. Galveston Island Beach Patrol (GIBP), and Coastal Zone Management (CZM). The Park Board is funded primarily through Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) and beach user fees for the seven parks that they manage. Tourism pays for tourism as no sales or property tax is collected by the Park Board.



## Current Trustees

- Jason Hardcastle, Chair**  
Financial Advisor, 6 Degrees Wealth
- Gerald Wilson, Vice Chair**  
Behavioral Specialist, Clear Creek ISD
- Michelle Beckwith, Secretary**  
Director of Catering, The San Luis Resort
- Bob Brown, Ex-Officio**  
City of Galveston Councilmember
- Bob Bullwinkel**  
Retired, Citizen at Large
- Bill Clement**  
Retired, Citizen at Large
- Carlos Guerra**  
Sr Director of Investments, Oppenheimer & Co. Inc.
- Robert Quintero**  
Director of Operations, City of Jamaica Beach
- Barry Willey**  
Retired, Citizen at Large

## October 2023 - July 2024 Trustees

- Jason Hardcastle, Chair**  
Financial Advisor, 6 Degrees Wealth
- Kimberly Gaido, Vice Chair**  
Real Estate Agent, Sand 'N Sea Properties
- Jason Worthen, Secretary**  
Business Owner/Concessionaire
- Michael Bouvier, Ex-Officio**  
City of Galveston Councilmember
- Bob Bullwinkel**  
Retired, Citizen at Large
- Bill Clement**  
Retired, Citizen at Large
- Sara Godwin**  
Director of Retail and Spa Operations, The San Luis Resort
- Barry Willey**  
Retired, Citizen at Large
- Gerald Wilson**  
Behavioral Specialist, Clear Creek ISD



**GALVESTON**  
PARK BOARD OF TRUSTEES

# COMMITTEES

The Park Board is supported by several citizen-led committees that work with trustees and staff to develop and enhance our quality of service. Each committee is comprised of respective industry professionals and citizen advocates who make recommendations to the board.

- 🔧 **Beach Maintenance Advisory Committee**
- 🎉 **Tourism Development Advisory Committee**
- 💰 **Finance & Operations Committee**
- 👥 **Workforce Development Committee**
- 🌱 **Parks & Amenities Committee**
- 🎵 **Galveston Music Development Advisory Committee**
- 🚔 **Beach Patrol Advisory Committee (New!)**

601 TREMONT ST. GALVESTON, TX 77550  
409.797.5000  
INFO@GALVESTONPARKBOARD.ORG  
GALVESTONPARKBOARD.ORG



**GALVESTON**  
PARK BOARD OF TRUSTEES

# FY2024 ANNUAL REPORT



# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR & CEO

As we reflect on the 2024 fiscal year, we are reminded of the extraordinary resilience and strength of the Galveston community. This year presented both challenges and milestones that have shaped our path forward. Through it all, the strong spirit of our residents, businesses, and partners has positioned Galveston as a model of recovery, innovation, and collaboration.

This year, the Galveston Park Board focused on City Council’s key goals: strengthening partnerships, diversifying tourism, and enhancing the visitor experience while benefiting the local community. Notable successes included building relationships with the Port of Galveston and cruise lines, fostering medical and sports tourism, and preserving Galveston’s rich historical assets. Our parks team drove impressive visitation growth by recruiting family-friendly events to beach parks, creating memorable experiences that solidify Galveston as a top destination for families and adventurers alike.

## Collaboration is our Strength

The resilience of Galveston was put to the test in July when Hurricane Beryl struck during the peak of the summer season. The storm caused significant disruption to businesses and strained resources. However, strategic marketing investments by the Park Board, coupled with the determination of our community, helped the community to rebound stronger than ever. Tourism’s economic impact surpassed \$1.3 billion in 2024, an achievement that underscores Galveston’s enduring appeal and the collaborative efforts of all who call this island home. Collaboration has been the foundation of our achievements.

We extend our gratitude to federal and state legislators, the Texas General Land Office, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for their invaluable support. Their guidance and resources were instrumental in advancing key initiatives, from infrastructure projects to coastal preservation efforts. At the local level, partnerships with businesses, community organizations, and government agencies amplified our collective impact. By supporting events, improving infrastructure, and prioritizing safety and environmental stewardship, we created an ecosystem that benefits both residents and visitors.

## Committed to Sustainability

Sustainability remains at the heart of our mission. Coastal preservation programs, accessibility improvements, and enhanced visitor education campaigns reflect our commitment to protecting Galveston’s natural beauty and cultural heritage. These initiatives ensure that tourism remains a force for good, benefiting Galvestonians, the environment, and the local economy.

As we approach 2025, we look forward to celebrating Galveston’s historic anniversaries and building on this year’s accomplishments. Our focus will remain on fostering a community-first approach to tourism that prioritizes inclusivity, accessibility, and sustainable growth. By continuing to highlight Galveston’s unique identity and leveraging its many strengths, we aim to ensure that it remains a cherished destination for generations to come.

None of this year’s successes would have been possible without the dedication of the Park Board trustees, staff, and countless volunteers. From Coastal Zone Management and Beach Patrol to Parks, Administration, and Tourism Development, every team member has played a critical role in making 2024 a year of resilience and achievement. Thank you for being part of our journey.

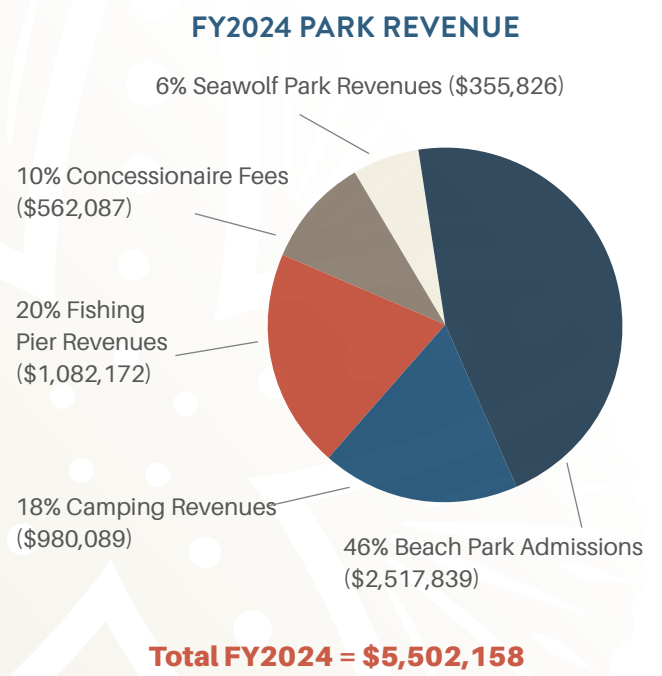
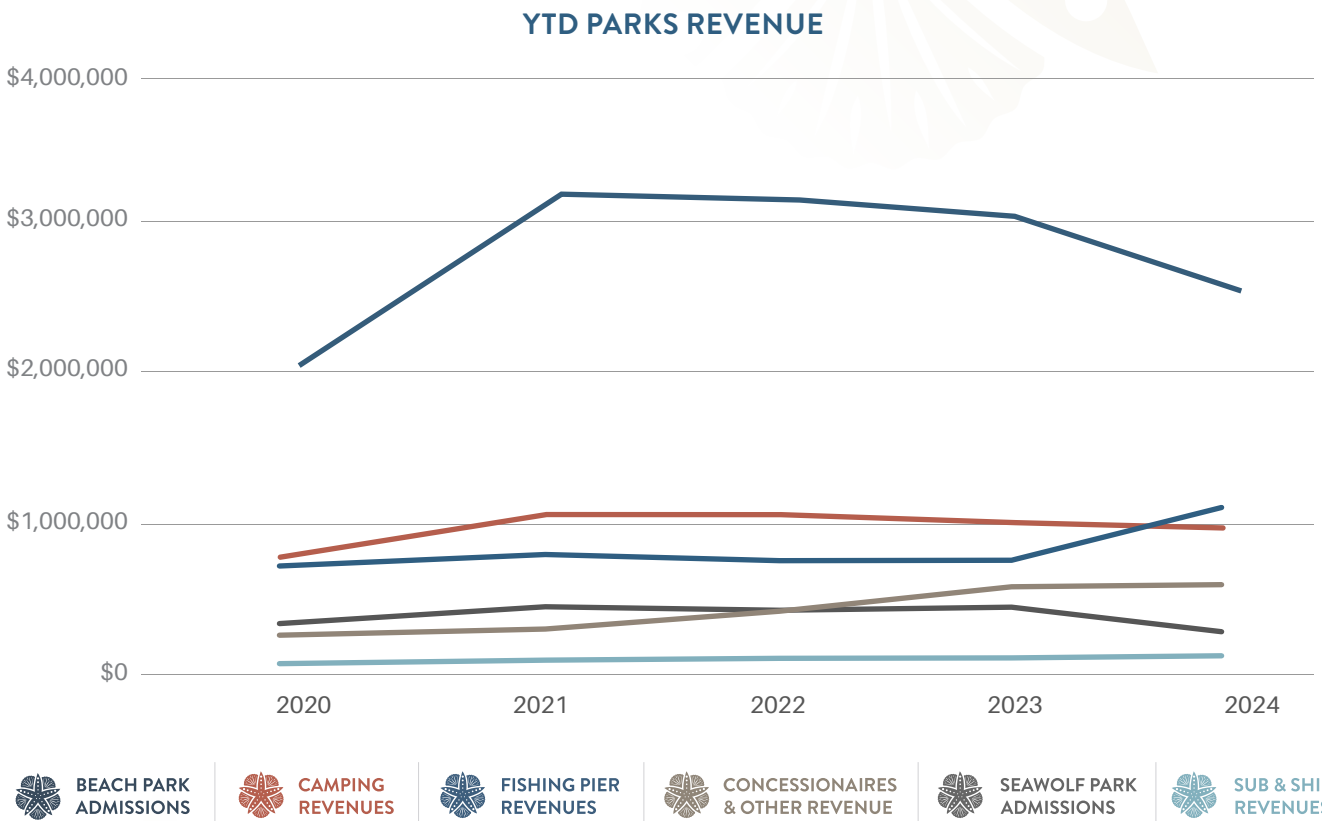


Jason Hardcastle, Chair    Kimberly Danesi, CEO



# PARKS

The Park Board manages several beach parks, an RV park, and a recreational park for the City of Galveston, including R.A. Apffel Beach Park (East Beach), Stewart Beach, beaches along the seawall known as Seawall Urban Park, Dellanera RV Park, and Seawolf Park on Pelican Island. These parks are funded by user-generated fees, not local taxes.



## R.A. APFFEL BEACH PARK (EAST BEACH)

- 27,671 Parking Transactions
- Hosted the inaugural Galveston Sandcastle Festival and many other events.
- 4,000 more cars than 2023

## STEWART BEACH PARK

- 36,141 Parking Transactions
- Hosted the Galveston Marathon, Wounded Warriors Soldier Ride, and the Walk to End Alzheimer's

## SEAWALL URBAN PARK

- 256,665 Parking Transactions
- Hosted 4th of July festivities, Dog Surfing Competition, and more.
- Installed new restroom wraps. Landscape enrichment continued.

## EAST END LAGOON NATURE PRESERVE

- Hosted monthly nature walks
- Progress focused on securing additional funding, finalizing architectural plans, and obtaining the building permit for the pavilion.

## DELLANERA RV PARK

- Camping Revenue: \$980,089
- Hosted multiple engagement activities
- Updates: Built a new outdoor entertaining space to include a fire pit, horseshoe pit, cornhole boards, artificial grass, and gulf-facing swinging bench. Renovated the old pavilion Clubhouse.

## SEAWOLF PARK

- Admission and Fishing Revenue: \$1,327,881
- Hosted its first Conference Welcoming Reception, multiple field trips, CCA KidFish Tournament, a community Easter egg hunt, Memorial Day celebration, Red Drum Fishing Tournament
- Updates: Added a new concession golf cart to guest amenities, added a live bait sales trailer, and snow cone/food truck.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- A new **Pre-approved Vendor Program** was launched, giving local businesses the chance to collaborate with visitors and clients to deliver premium, turnkey event experiences.
- A comprehensive **Venue Packet** was developed, showcasing the unique offerings to potential clients. The intent is to solicit private and special events to use the waterfront venues managed by the Park Board.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS & BEACH NOURISHMENT

The Galveston Park Board is tasked with the care and maintenance of Galveston's coastline, which spans nearly 32 miles. This work includes the nourishment of the beachfront through erosion prevention efforts like sand placement and vegetation plantings. Due to the inclusion in this masterplan, this project is 100% funded by the Texas General Land Office and requires no local match.

## MAJOR PROJECTS IN FY2024

### SEAWOLF PARK

At Seawolf Park, two major initiatives advanced the site's functionality and visitor experience. The USS Stewart Mooring Project, one of the final Hurricane Ike recovery efforts, was successfully completed in September 2024 despite challenges like the Pelican Island bridge collision. Additionally, funding was allocated for the engineering and regulatory permitting of a Fishing Pier Extension, laying the groundwork for future construction that will enhance recreational opportunities at the park.

### OFFSHORE BREAKWATER PROJECT AT THE WEST END OF THE SEAWALL

Progress continued on the Offshore Breakwater Project at the West End of the Seawall, addressing critical erosion near FM 3005, the primary evacuation route for Galveston's west end. In FY2024, the project achieved a 65% design package, moving closer to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permitting and funding approval. To improve access and operations, the Park Board initiated planning, engineering, and permitting for Emergency Ramps West of 61st Street, enabling lifeguards and maintenance crews to service the newly nourished areas of Babe's Beach. Construction of earthen ramps is planned with future funding.

### WEST GALVESTON ISLAND NOURISHMENT PROJECT

A \$23.5 million grant was secured for the West Galveston Island Nourishment Project, extending from Dellanera RV Park to 13 Mile Road. Engineering and design work continued throughout FY2024, aligning with the Texas General Land Office's Coastal Resiliency Master Plan.

# BEACH PATROL

The Galveston Island Beach Patrol (GIBP) team safeguards millions of beachgoers each year. All year, the team monitors over 32 miles of beachfront, up to 3 miles offshore, and works closely with the Coast Guard and Galveston Police Department to keep water recreation fun and safe. Through Hotel Occupancy Tax funding, guards patrol the beaches by truck or foot and even by tower during the summer months.



**3,000**  
ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

**219,519**  
PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS

**2,323**  
MEDICAL CALLS

**85,129**  
TOTAL HOURS WORKED BY BEACH PATROL

**6**  
RESCUES

**89**  
LOST CHILDREN REUNITED

# COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

Stewards of Galveston's coastal environment, the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) team works on the beachfront around the clock, 365 days a year, to keep the island's shores clean, green, and pristine. From handpicking litter and heavy lifting marine debris to decorating the city for major holidays and assisting wildlife, the CZM team's work is boundless. This work is made possible through funding from Hotel Occupancy Tax and contributions from the Texas General Land Office and the City of Galveston.

**2.2M lbs**  
OF LITTER AND DEBRIS COLLECTED THAT'S MORE THAN THE WEIGHT OF 115 GARBAGE TRUCKS.

**PLACED AND REMOVED**  
33 LIFEGUARD TOWERS

**20**  
WASHED ASHORE ART SCULPTURES PLACED AND REMOVED

**14** CONTACTS WITH MARINE WILDLIFE

**SERVICED 12**  
CITY FESTIVALS

**NEW WILDLIFE**  
SIGNAGE FOR STRANDED OR INJURED ANIMALS

## ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

**10** BEACH CLEAN-UPS WITH 233 PARTICIPANTS

**3** BEACH TOY BORROW BOXES

**UP2U** PROGRAM EXPANDED TO 4 STATIONS

**7** SPEAKERS HOSTED FOR WOMEN IN COASTAL SCIENCE SPEAKER SERIES

IN SUPPORT OF THE LEAVE NO TRACE ORDINANCE, OVER **2,200** ITEMS COLLECTED, INCLUDING CANOPIES, COOLERS, BEACH TOYS, AND MORE. THIS REPRESENTS A **40% DECREASE** IN COLLECTED ITEMS COMPARED TO LAST YEAR, DEMONSTRATING THE ORDINANCE'S POSITIVE IMPACT.

## GLOBAL ASSISTANCE

- Placed 8th overall in the **United States Lifesaving Association National Lifeguard Championships** held in South Padre Island, Texas.
- **Second summer** since 2019 that GIBP met 100% staffing goals due to the Park Board's emphasis on meeting market competitive wages and the success of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa program.

# TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

As the official destination marketing organization for Galveston Island, Visit Galveston had a year of impactful initiatives aimed at positioning the island as a leading destination for year-round travel. Through diverse marketing strategies, including integrated campaigns highlighting history, culture, and eco-tourism, we have enhanced Galveston's brand recognition. Collaborations with the Port of Galveston and major cruise lines strengthened our focus on pre- and post-cruise tourism, while efforts with the travel trade expanded industry reach. Guided by community-centric stewardship and stakeholder transparency, our team remains committed to sustainable growth and organizational excellence.

## TOP ORIGIN MARKETS:

**TEXAS:** Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio  
**OUTSIDE OF TEXAS:** Arkansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, Missouri, Louisiana

# SALES

SALES TEAM SECURED 81,595 DEFINITE ROOM NIGHTS, A 13% INCREASE OVER FY2023

FUTURE GROUP BUSINESS BOOKED IN FY2024 IS EXPECTED TO GENERATE OVER \$62M IN DIRECT SPENDING FOR GALVESTON ISLAND, UP 11% FROM FY2023 BOOKINGS

CONDUCTED OVER 2,700 MEETING PLANNER ENGAGEMENTS, UP 12% FROM FY2023

MOBILE VIC ENGAGED WITH **3,700** VISITORS ACROSS 20 ACTIVATIONS

# DESTINATION SERVICES

WELCOMED OVER **17,000** TRAVELERS TO THE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

CERTIFIED **206** NEW TOURISM AMBASSADORS

HOSTED **4** CERTIFIED TOURISM AMBASSADOR (CTA) LOCAL EVENTS

HOSTED **417** ISLAND ADVOCATES AT TOURISM TALKS IN MAY

# MARKETING

## OWNED MEDIA

In FY2024, there were over 2.9M visitors to VisitGalveston.com, and the average time spent by a user on the site was 1 minute, 21 seconds, (industry average is 1 minute).

With a total audience of over 894k, the marketing team had over 5M engagements on social media in FY2024.

## PAID MEDIA

Utilizing a layered approach to integrated marketing, the team generated over **125M impressions** from various digital media placements, like streaming advertisements on services like Hulu, digital banners, social media ad buys, and paid search on Google.

# PUBLIC RELATIONS

## EARNED MEDIA

The public relations team generated **4,967 media hits** in FY2024 generating over **\$20M** in positive media coverage.

## AWARD-WINNING TEAM

Visit Galveston's marketing team proudly earned an American Marketing Association Crystal Award for the Galveston Unscripted podcast, recognized for its innovative storytelling and creative excellence. The podcast highlights Galveston's rich history and culture, engaging audiences in an authentic and inspiring way while elevating the island as a premier destination.



Visit Galveston achieved two significant state certifications this year: the **Brew City Texas** and **Texas Music Friendly** certifications. These designations celebrate the island's thriving craft beer scene and vibrant music culture, further positioning Galveston as a premier destination for craft beer enthusiasts and live music lovers.



**120,000 copies of Island Soul** distributed to visitors through website requests, which increased by 60% in FY2024, at the Visitor Information Center, delivered to all Texas Department of Transportation entry stations and at various lodging locations around the island.