



MEDIA ALERT

Travel Oregon Announces 2024 Travel & Tourism Industry Achievement Awards at the 2025 Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism in Portland

PDX Next takes home the Governor's Award for their work to provide a remarkable airport experience for both visitors and residents

Portland, Ore. (April 14, 2025)

On Monday, April 14, 2025, the Oregon Tourism Commission (dba Travel Oregon) announced the recipients of the 2024 Oregon Travel & Tourism Industry Achievement Awards at the 2025 Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism in Portland. More than 600 tourism industry professionals gathered at the Oregon Convention Center to share learnings and align to ensure not only remarkable visitor experiences across the state, but also tourism experiences that improve quality of life for residents; advances equity; respects the diversity of ecosystems, cultures and places of Oregon; and strengthens economic resilience for communities around the state. Hosted by Travel Oregon in partnership with [Travel Portland](#), this year's theme, "Then, Now, Forever," celebrates 40 years of a strong, sustainable tourism economy in Oregon while lighting the way for many more.

The Governor's Award: PDX Next

The Governor's Award represents the culmination of our industry's deep appreciation for the long-time service and accomplishments of an individual or individuals who have enhanced the Oregon visitor experience and elevated the travel and tourism industry. Travel Oregon CEO Todd Davidson addressed the crowd, honoring the series of transformative projects at Portland International Airport (PDX) collectively known as PDX Next, with the 2024 Governor's Award. The \$2 billion expansion of Portland International Airport (PDX), is aimed at modernizing the airport, including a new main terminal, a new Concourse B, and a new parking garage with the goal of creating a more sustainable, accessible and traveler-friendly airport experience.

"PDX Next is an extraordinary example of what Oregonians can achieve when we work together," said Davidson. "From innovations such as the sustainable mass timber roof that wasn't thought possible to the energy efficient, sustainable and resilient design and the focus on local vendors, Portland International Airport welcomes visitors the Oregon way. Through these innovations, and by supporting Tribal timber enterprises and revolutionizing production at small Oregon manufacturers, PDX Next sets the gold standard for airports nationwide. I have every confidence it will meet the needs of our growing tourism economy well into the future while reflecting our commitment to the people who live and work here."

Over the course of the evening, the following Tourism Industry Achievement Awards were also announced, honoring standout people and tourism businesses or organizations striving to make Oregon a welcoming destination for all:

Leadership Award: Ana DeVincentis

The Leadership Award recognizes individuals, DMOs or businesses that champion the value of tourism and whose exemplary vision and commitment help improve visitor experiences in our communities, regions and state, and whose leadership contributes significantly to the recognition and impact of Oregon's travel and tourism industry.

Ana DeVincentis was presented with the Oregon Leadership Award for her exceptional leadership and transformative contributions to the John Day Canyon City Parks and Recreation District and the broader community. Through her innovative projects, Ana has significantly enhanced community engagement, sustainable tourism and recreational opportunities; led successful grant-writing and fundraising efforts; secured vital resources and built strong partnerships with local and state organizations. Ana's work in creating inclusive and accessible events and commitment to environmental stewardship has boosted tourism, supported local businesses and strengthened the local economy.

Partnership Award: Wanderlust Tours / AdvenChair

The Partnership Award recognizes that creative partnerships can be an effective way to enhance the visitor experience and promote a region or destination. By leveraging traditional and non-traditional partnerships, organizations and businesses can maximize budget, capacity and skill sets to create an increase in efficiencies and a higher-level aligned outcome.

Wanderlust Tours and AdvenChair won the Oregon Partnership Award for their innovative collaboration to enhance accessibility to Central Oregon's outdoor experiences for individuals with mobility challenges. By combining Wanderlust Tours' expertise in guided outdoor adventures with AdvenChair's all-terrain adaptive wheelchairs, the partnership has created inclusive, immersive tours that allow individuals with mobility issues to explore iconic locations such as Smith Rock State Park and Lava Lands National Monument. This initiative, supported by tourism grants, not only promotes Central Oregon as an accessible, inclusive destination and improves visitor experiences but also fosters community engagement and exemplifies how creative collaborations can drive positive change.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Award: Remy Drabkin

The Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Award is presented to a business or destination that has demonstrated leadership in raising awareness or facilitating change to build a more inclusive and welcoming environment for visitors to Oregon.

Remy Drabkin won the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Award for her groundbreaking efforts to foster inclusivity and support for the LGBTQIA+ community in Oregon's wine industry. As the founder and winemaker of Remy Wines, she has not only created a welcoming winery space but also co-

founded Wine Country Pride in 2020 and launching the world's first Queer Wine Fest in 2021. Through these initiatives, she's created visibility and support for LGBTQIA+ businesses in Oregon's wine industry and earned national recognition, solidifying Oregon as a welcoming destination. Additionally, Remy's tenure as McMinnville's first queer-identified and female mayor allowed her to implement transformative policies on homelessness and climate change, further advancing equity and inclusion in her community.

Hospitality Award: Jason Coleman

The Oregon Hospitality Award recognizes a person, company or organization that has made significant contributions to delivering excellence in hospitality for Oregon's tourism industry.

Jason Coleman, Senior General Manager of The Coho Oceanfront Lodge, won the Hospitality Award for his exceptional leadership, commitment to service and dedication to both the Coho team and the Lincoln City community at large. Jason consistently demonstrates excellence in hospitality and prioritizes guest feedback to improve service, ensuring that The Coho Oceanfront Lodge remains one of the top-rated hotels in the area. Jason also goes above and beyond to promote Lincoln City as a destination and actively supports local initiatives, including partnering with the Lincoln County School District's PACE Program to help young adults with disabilities gain essential life skills. Jason's involvement in the Oregon Tourism Leadership Academy further reflects his passion for continuous learning and community engagement.

Stewardship Award: Alanna Kieffer

The Stewardship Award recognizes an activity, event, project or program that utilizes a stewardship approach to positively impact Oregon's economy, cultures and natural environment.

Alanna Kieffer, the owner and operator of Shifting Tides NW, was awarded the Stewardship Award for her exceptional work educating the public about marine ecology and sustainable marine foraging along the Oregon Coast. Through Shifting Tides, she offers immersive, science-based guided tours and workshops that connect visitors to coastal ecosystems and fosters a deeper understanding of their role in oxygen production and food supply. Alanna's tours, supported through collaborations with non-profits, educational institutions and destination management groups, emphasize sustainable fisheries and the people behind them, inspiring better decision-making around food consumption while showcasing coastal conservation efforts.

The Gene Landsmann Gemütlichkeit Award: Dan Schindler

The Gene Landsmann Gemütlichkeit Award honors an individual of the Oregon Ski Community (Industry/Sport) who embodies the spirit and effect of Gemütlichkeit. A German-language word used to convey the idea of a state or feeling of warmth, friendliness and good cheer. Other qualities encompassed by the term include coziness, quality of life and a sense of belonging and well-being.

Dan Schindler, the winner of The Gene Landsmann Gemütlichkeit Award, embodies the term through his lifelong, enthusiastic support of all aspects of Oregon's ski industry. A competitor on the US freestyle ski team, Dan hosted the "Portland Ski Show" for decades, an event that got the public excited for the start of ski season and was also of financial benefit to Oregon Ski Industries Association (OSIA), also known as Ski Oregon. Dan and his wife, Rebecca, worked diligently for decades to "kick off the ski season" with a multi-day event that eclipsed local media and generated buzz for each coming ski season. Over time,

virtually every Oregon ski area, many ski and snowboard shops and lodging facilities participated in the show, which Dan promoted with a perennial display of indoor skiing and freestyle skiing demonstrations.

Oregon Tourism Rising Star Awards

The Rising Star Awards are presented to individuals who are new to the tourism industry within the last five years in which time they have shown exemplary leadership, commitment and passion for Oregon's tourism industry. Travel Oregon honored seven Rising Stars, one from each region of the state.

Central Oregon | Sasha Bosco

Sasha Bosco defines what it means to be a Rising Star, earning a promotion from Regional Programs Coordinator to Manager in just one short year at Visit Central Oregon. Sasha has been integral in boosting program timelines and implementing initiatives serving the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP) for Central Oregon. She's done an impressive job spearheading inclusion and accessibility programs throughout Central Oregon, working hand-in-hand with rural communities. Due to her efforts, Visit Central Oregon is developing strong relations and collaborations in this emerging niche for regional tourism.

Oregon Coast | Stacey Gunderson

Stacey has worked in the Oregon tourism industry since September 2023, though she has long supported tourism on the Oregon Coast through her work on projects like the Oregon Coast public art trail. In the past year-and-a-half, she's spearheaded a number of innovative projects, such as developing a line of merchandise celebrating historic Black-owned businesses on the Coast in collaboration with Oregon Black Pioneers and leading an innovative campaign to share stewardship messaging with visitors to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service. A passionate advocate for the rural South Coast, Stacey's star is rising as she works to share its beauty with visitors.

Eastern Oregon | Josiah Barron

As a long-term area resident of Eastern Oregon, Josiah Barron stepped into the Executive Director role for the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce in September, 2022 with an innate passion and enthusiasm for this community. Josiah is a true collaborator, from supporting Umatilla Landing Days to providing attendees with a dining guide during Rock the Locks, a 3-day music event. A champion and advocate for the people and businesses of Umatilla, he strives to support and encourage a healthy business community while working to increase tourism and ensure economic growth and stability. Josiah was also an enthusiastic partner with Eastern Oregon Visitors Association and Umatilla & Morrow County's "Expanding Accessible Spaces," a grant-funded project aimed to improve the accessibility of spaces and to improve the access to this information.

Mt. Hood and Columbia River Gorge | Amber Johnson

Amber Johnson joined Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory in 2023, quickly establishing herself as a rising star through her innovative contributions as the Digital Marketing & Social Media Strategist. Amber's creative approach shines through her launch of the new Mt. Hood Territory's Threads account, where she engages audiences with a playful voice by chronicling Bigfoot's adventures. Amber's diverse skills and forward-thinking approach make her an invaluable asset to the Mt. Hood Territory team, to the Mt. Hood and Columbia River Gorge region as a whole and a standout talent in Oregon's tourism industry.

Portland Region | Andrew Moore

Andrew Moore manages the operation of the Portland Visitor Center, stewarding the organization's visitor experience tactics. From creating Travel Portland's visitor information pop-up program and serving visitors at events and festivals in the central city—such as the Portland Marathon, Pride and El Grito—Andrew welcomes all visitors with authentic and warm Oregon hospitality. When he started in 2022, Andrew took over the build-out of the new Portland Visitor Center and has also taken on project management of a new destination training platform that will soon be available to Portland's frontline hospitality and tourism workforce.

Southern Oregon | Carole Skeeters-Stevens

As a long-time member of the Southern Oregon wine industry, Carole's move into the tourism industry at Travel Medford has already resulted in new and promising regional partnerships and the elevation of Travel Medford as a leader in destination marketing for our region. Carole's leadership in the destination marketing realm, and her deep connections to Oregon's wine industry, will be on full display at this June's inaugural *Savor Southern Oregon*, a new premiere destination event celebrating the culinary wonders of the Rogue Valley.

Willamette Valley | Emily Iverson

Rising Star Emily Iverson displays endless passion and creativity in the world of agritourism. A board member and marketing committee member for the North Marion Tourism Collaborative, Emily has served as the farm manager and general CEO of Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm for the past year-and-a-half and has already made a big impact, increasing visitation and awareness of agritourism across the state. She's always on the lookout for new ideas and ways to innovate in order to maintain relevancy in a highly competitive tourism industry.

About Travel Oregon

The Oregon Tourism Commission, dba [Travel Oregon](#), is a semi-independent state agency whose mission is to inspire travel that uplifts Oregon communities. Collaborating with stakeholders to align as stewards of Oregon, we work to optimize economic opportunity, advance equity and respect the ecosystems, cultures and places that make Oregon... Oregon. Travel Oregon aims to improve Oregonians' quality of life by strengthening the economic impacts of the state's \$14.1 billion tourism industry, which employs more than 117,000 Oregonians.