

2025



ANNUAL REPORT



THE
CITY
WITH

MISSISSIPPI
MAKERS
FEST
MUSIC · FOOD · ART

ID CHECK

MISSISSIPPI
MAKERS
FEST
MUSIC · FOOD · ART

BEVERAGES

Burger

Academy

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| MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO & BOARD CHAIR

Dear partners, stakeholders, and friends of Jackson,

As we reflect on 2025, we are proud to share a year marked by growth, collaboration, and meaningful progress for Mississippi's Capital City. The tourism and hospitality industry continues to be a powerful driver of economic development, and Visit Jackson remains committed to elevating our destination, supporting our partners, and creating opportunities that benefit our entire community.

Throughout the year, Jackson welcomed visitors from across the nation and around the world who came to experience our rich cultural heritage, vibrant culinary scene, dynamic arts community, and authentic Southern hospitality. These visitors generated a significant economic impact, supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and contributing to the quality of life enjoyed by our residents.

In fiscal year 2025, Visit Jackson continued to advance its mission of positioning Jackson as a premier destination for leisure travel, meetings, conventions, sports events, and cultural experiences. Through strategic marketing initiatives, targeted sales efforts, and strong partnerships with community stakeholders, we expanded awareness of our destination and strengthened Jackson's competitive position in the tourism marketplace.

Our success is built upon collaboration; we call it collective ambition!

We are grateful for the support and partnership of our hospitality industry professionals, elected officials, business leaders, community organizations, attractions, and residents who serve as ambassadors for our city every day. The Jackson Community is demonstrating what happens when we work collectively toward a shared vision: together, we can achieve remarkable results.

This year also brought new opportunities to showcase Jackson's unique story. From hosting impactful meetings and sporting events to celebrating our city's music, history, and cultural assets, we continued to create experiences that inspire visitors and encourage repeat travel. We remained focused on innovation, data-driven decision-making, and



destination stewardship to ensure sustainable growth for years to come.

As we look toward the future, Visit Jackson remains dedicated to promoting inclusive economic growth, enhancing the visitor experience, and strengthening Jackson's reputation as a destination where culture, creativity, and community thrive. While challenges remain, we are confident in our direction and energized by the opportunities ahead.

During the 2026 Legislative Session, Visit Jackson was honored to have secured the confidence of State Leadership and the Mississippi Legislative Delegation to get legislation passed and signed into law that will allow Visit Jackson an opportunity to increase its annual revenue, replacing funding associated with the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that ended in August of 2026. Jackson residents will have the opportunity to confirm this opportunity at an upcoming election via a referendum vote.

On behalf of the Visit Jackson Board of Directors and its passionate staff, thank you for your continued partnership, trust, and support. The accomplishments highlighted throughout this annual report are a testament to what we can achieve TOGETHER. We look forward to building on this momentum and continuing to showcase the best of Jackson to the world.

We Are the City With Soul!

With gratitude and optimism,

Rickey L. Thigpen

Rickey L. Thigpen, PhD.

President & Chief Executive Officer
Visit Jackson

Carol J. Burger

Carol J. Burger

Chair, Board of Directors
Visit Jackson

| ABOUT VISIT JACKSON:

WHO WE ARE

The Jackson Convention & Visitors Bureau, *dba* Visit Jackson, is the official destination marketing organization for the City of Jackson. It serves the Jackson community by positively impacting the city's economy through recruitment and securing meetings and tourism activities. Visit Jackson is a quasi-independent governmental agency created by the Mississippi State Legislature.



GOAL

The overall goal of Visit Jackson is to cause major economic impact for Jackson through programs designed to identify, attract, and service conventions and meetings, trade shows, group tours, sporting events, and consumer travelers while cultivating relationships with stakeholders, the value of citizenry contributions, and the collective quality of life of the destination.

MISSION

The mission of Visit Jackson is to connect, engage and inspire the Jackson community to be a welcoming destination for conventions, meetings, sporting events, and special events, resulting in rich, cultural, and memorable experiences with a rewarding sense-of-place for visitors and an economically beneficial and enhanced quality of life for residents.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Visit Jackson is fiercely committed to reflecting and upholding the value of diversity of thought, culture, and lifestyles that is inherent in the Jackson community. We are dedicated to practicing radical inclusion and believe that a plurality of ideas and experiences shaped around civil dialogue and equitable outreach is the driving and consistent force that makes Jackson a great destination and a great city.

VALUES

- Integrity**

We are fair, honest and transparent, inspiring trust in others.
- Collaboration**

We respect, nurture, support and empower one another.
- Passion**

We uphold the spirit of our community and the goal of our organization, and we are committed to making our jobs and the jobs of our co-workers fun on a consistent basis.
- Respect**

We respect and understand the importance of our bureau’s mission, take pride in being an integral part of its success and are committed to aggressively upholding the principles of diversity, inclusion, and hospitality.



| AT A GLANCE

FY2025

VISIT JACKSON TRAVEL INDUSTRY IMPACT

IN 2025, VISIT JACKSON'S SUPPORT OF EVENTS & MEETINGS

\$80M

Prompted
\$80 million in
Direct Traveler
Spend

\$137M

Generated
a total of
\$137 million
in Economic
Output

47,000+

Supported over
47,000 jobs &
\$40 million in
Tourism Payroll

\$23M

Produced **\$23**
million in Total
Tax Revenue for
federal, state, &
local taxes

Tourism offset local property tax by **\$3.2 million**

Sales & Visitation

213

Events Booked

25,838

Room Nights Booked

1.09M

Event Attendees

Destination Demand

72.2%

Repeat Visitation

57.3%

Visitors from 250+
Miles Away

13.0%

Website Exposure-to-
Visit Ratio

Marketing Impact

134

Earned Media Placements

1.09M

Website Impressions
Influencing Travel Decisions

\$3.93M

Estimated Influenced
Visitor Spending



DESTINATION MASTER PLAN - LAUNCHED

A bold roadmap guiding
Jackson's tourism future



STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT - INITIATED

Building the blueprint for
sustainable growth and
long-term impact



2ND ANNUAL JXN FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

A signature event that
celebrates our culture,
cuisine, and community



LEGISLATIVE WELCOME RECEPTION HOSTED

Strengthening partnerships
and sharing the power of
tourism and with our leaders

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In FY2025, Visit Jackson continued to demonstrate sound financial stewardship while advancing destination marketing, tourism development, and long-term strategic planning initiatives. Despite ongoing challenges related to infrastructure, public perception, and a competitive tourism environment, the organization remained focused on generating economic impact and strengthening Jackson's position as a cultural and visitor destination.

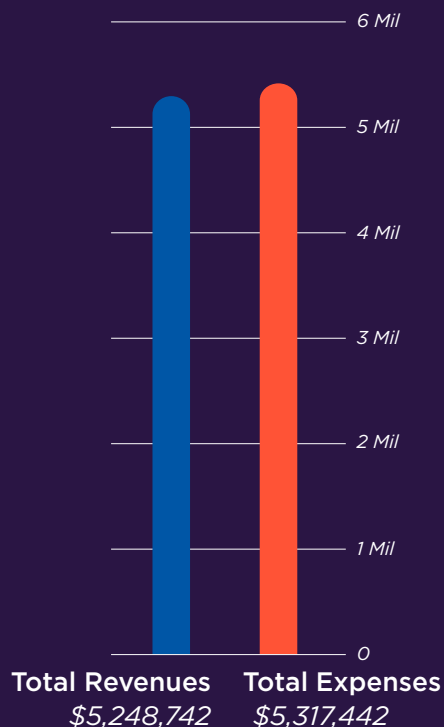
Local tourism-related tax collections remained stable during the fiscal year, generating approximately \$3.6 million and reflecting the continued resilience of Jackson's tourism economy. Restaurant tax collections continued to represent the majority of Visit Jackson's funding base, while lodging tax revenues remained constrained by ongoing hotel inventory challenges.

Visit Jackson continued to strategically deploy American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) resources to support destination marketing, brand awareness, tourism programming, and community engagement initiatives. During FY2025, all ARPA Round 1 funds were fully expended, while ARPA Round 2 resources continued to support key promotional and destination development activities. As of September 30, 2025, approximately \$1.7 million remained available under ARPA Round 2 for future implementation efforts.

Total revenues for FY2025 were \$5.2 million, with local tourism tax collections and grant funding accounting for the vast majority of organizational revenue. Total expenditures were \$5.3 million, reflecting continued investment in destination promotion, tourism development, personnel, and strategic initiatives designed to strengthen Jackson's visitor economy.

Throughout the year, Visit Jackson maintained a disciplined approach to financial management. Actual expenditures were below budget, driven by operational efficiencies and strategic prioritization of resources. This prudent fiscal management positioned the organization to continue advancing its mission while preparing for the eventual conclusion of ARPA funding in 2026.

Looking ahead, Visit Jackson remains focused on long-term sustainability through strategic destination investment, implementation of the Jackson Destination Master Plan, development of a new organizational strategic plan, and continued collaboration with public and private sector partners. These efforts are intended to strengthen the visitor economy, enhance destination competitiveness, and create lasting economic impact for the Jackson community.



Supplied financial data reported is from the Fiscal 2025 Audit Report's Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balance. Readers are encouraged to review the Fiscal 2025 Audit Report for further financial insights

Tax Return on Total DMO Public Funding 342%

(270% in FY 2024)

Return metrics for FY2025 reflect the impact of multi-year ARPA grant funding, which began in FY2023 and will be recognized through FY2026.

Return on Operating Cost 1,400%

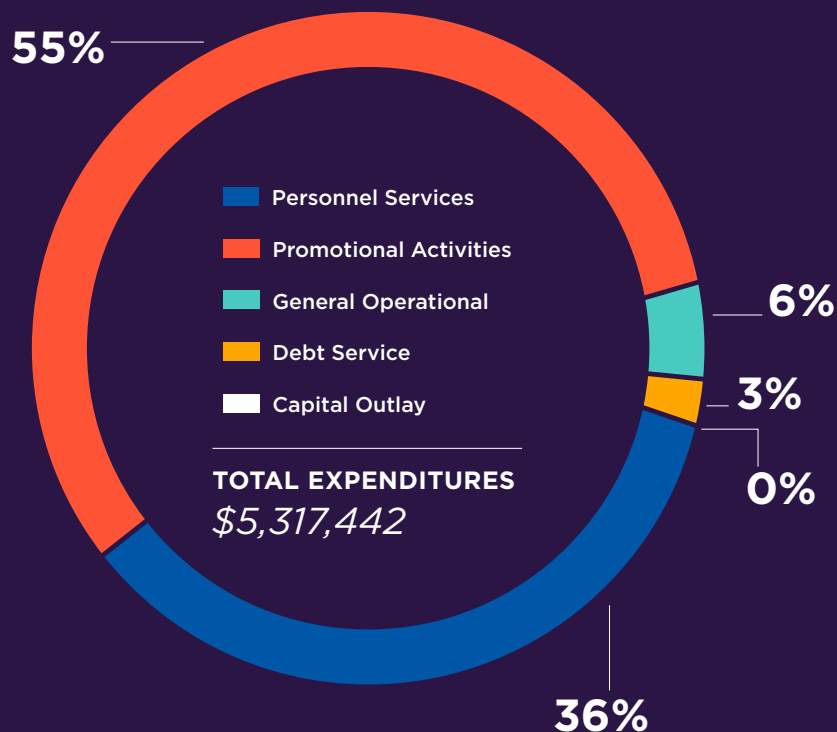
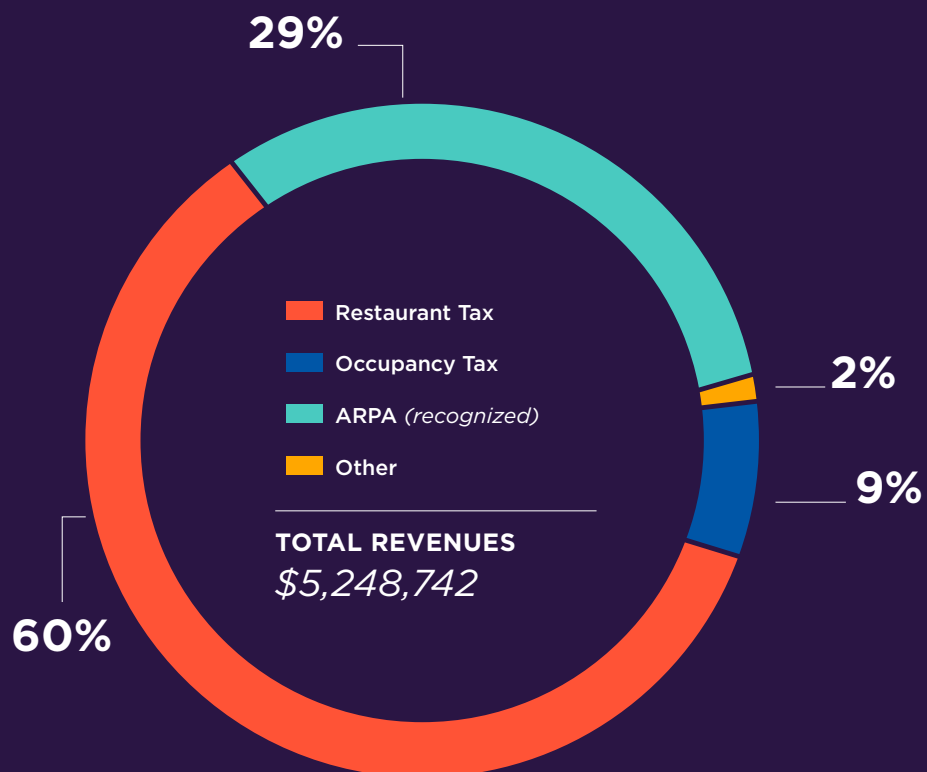
(1,227% in FY 2024)

Return metrics for FY2025 reflect the impact of multi-year ARPA grant funding, which began in FY2023 and will be recognized through FY2026.

Other Revenue Partners



MWB





STRATEGIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PILLAR ALIGNMENT & STRATEGIC DIRECTION



Education

Educate Stakeholders regarding the purpose of a Destination Leadership Organization



Advocacy/Community Awareness & Involvement

Build proponents of the Visit Jackson Community



Tourism Partnerships

Execute programming to strengthen Tourism Partnerships



Tourism Development

Create additional strategies to increase/develop/encourage tourism for the destination



Destination Demand

Heighten Demand for the Destination

EDUCATION

Tourism education remains a core component of Visit Jackson's destination leadership efforts. Throughout FY2025, the organization worked to strengthen stakeholder understanding of tourism's economic impact while fostering collaboration among elected officials, industry partners, community leaders, and residents.



FY2025 HIGHLIGHTS

01

Conducted orientation sessions for newly elected city officials and Visit Jackson Board members, including individual meetings with Jackson City Council representatives.

02

Provided ongoing updates to local and state leadership regarding tourism funding, organizational priorities, and the economic impact of tourism.

03

Distributed quarterly stakeholder communications highlighting tourism trends, organizational initiatives, and industry impact.

04

Celebrated National Travel and Tourism Week through educational outreach and stakeholder engagement activities.

05

Participated in community presentations, industry meetings, and speaking engagements to promote tourism's role in economic development and quality of life.

06

Continued outreach efforts with local restaurants to strengthen awareness of tourism funding mechanisms and Visit Jackson's mission.

Through these efforts, Visit Jackson strengthened stakeholder awareness of tourism's economic value while fostering collaboration among the partners who help shape Jackson's visitor experience.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Advocacy remains an essential component of Visit Jackson's destination leadership efforts. Throughout FY2025, the organization worked alongside elected officials, industry partners, community organizations, and tourism stakeholders to advance policies, initiatives, and investments that support Jackson's visitor economy, destination development and long-term economic growth.



FY2025 HIGHLIGHTS

01

Hosted the annual Legislative Welcome Reception, bringing together state legislators, local officials, tourism stakeholders, and community leaders to highlight tourism's economic impact on Jackson.

02

Maintained ongoing engagement with local and state elected officials regarding tourism funding, destination priorities, and issues impacting the hospitality and tourism industry.

03

Continued partnership with The Clay Group to support legislative monitoring, advocacy efforts, and communication with policymakers.

04

Collaborated with the Mississippi Tourism Association, Mississippi Destination Marketing Organization Association, U.S. Travel Association, Southeast Tourism Society, and other industry partners to advance tourism priorities at the local, state, and national levels.

05

Participated in Destination Capitol Hill, the Destinations International Advocacy Summit, the Global Leadership Forum, and other industry leadership events.

06

Advocated for policies, funding opportunities, and strategic investments that support the long-term growth and sustainability of Jackson's visitor economy.

07

Maintained active participation in Mississippi Economic Council programs and other business and community engagement opportunities throughout the year.

08

Supported legislative efforts related to tourism funding and destination development initiatives impacting Jackson's visitor economy.

09

Partnered with organizations including the Jackson Redevelopment Authority, Greater Jackson Chamber Partnership, Great City Mississippi Foundation, Downtown Jackson Partners, Hinds County Economic Development Authority, Jackson Municipal Airport Authority, and the City of Jackson to advance initiatives that support tourism, economic development, and destination competitiveness.

Through these efforts, Visit Jackson strengthened relationships with key stakeholders, elevated tourism's role in economic development discussions, and advanced initiatives that support the long-term success of Jackson as a destination.



MS DMO Association



DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

GREAT CITY MISSISSIPPI

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

JRA JACKSON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



COMMUNITY AWARENESS & INVOLVEMENT

Visit Jackson continued to strengthen connections between tourism, residents, businesses, and community organizations through initiatives designed to build community pride, support local events, and foster a welcoming destination experience.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Expanded MY CITY initiatives and community engagement programming.
- Participated in South Jackson Proud Parade and Festival, Capital City Pride Festival, Mississippi Makers Fest, Mississippi Book Festival, Mississippi Pickle Fest, Juneteenth celebrations, Lynch Street Festival, Georgetown Festival, and Farish Street Forward Festival.
- Supported destination visibility through participation in Hal's St. Paddy's Parade & Festival, Capital City Lights, Mississippi Blues Marathon, and 601 JXN Day.
- Recognized community leadership through the Hometown Hero Awards program and participation in local recognition events.
- Maintained community outreach through speaker's bureau engagements, local radio appearances, and ongoing media relations efforts.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

- Orchestrated the Jackson Destination Master Plan rollout, bringing together tourism stakeholders, community leaders, elected officials, and residents to discuss the future of destination development in Jackson.
- Quarterly hotel meetings with General Managers & Directors of Sales.
- Maintained regular engagement with hotels, restaurants, attractions, and tourism stakeholders.
- Convened industry stakeholders through meetings, presentations, and collaborative discussions focused on destination priorities and opportunities.
- Continued outreach efforts with local restaurants regarding tourism funding, destination initiatives, and industry issues.





SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Continued the MY CITY Young Ambassador Program in partnership with Jackson Public Schools, providing students with opportunities to learn about tourism, hospitality, and community leadership.
- Supported hospitality workforce development initiatives through partnerships with Jackson Public Schools and Hinds Community College Culinary Arts programs, introducing students to career opportunities within the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Supported Miss Jackson Hospitality and Mississippi Miss Hospitality programs, helping develop future tourism ambassadors and industry leaders.
- Strengthened relationships with local colleges and universities through campus engagement, student outreach, destination awareness initiatives, and orientation tours for incoming students attending Jackson State University, Belhaven University, Tougaloo College, and the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Medicine.
- Supported JXN Collegiate Football Media Day, showcasing Jackson as a destination for collegiate athletics, media engagement, and visitor experiences.
- Continued implementation of Tourism-Oriented Policing Strategies (TOPS), including monthly coordination meetings with the Jackson Police Department, Hinds County Sheriff's Department, Capitol Police, Jackson State University Police, UMMC Police, and Downtown Jackson Partners to support visitor safety, event readiness, and destination awareness.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Visit Jackson team members actively served on numerous civic, educational, cultural, and professional organizations throughout the community.

- Alpha Foundation of Jackson, Inc.
- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc (National Office, Regional Office & Local Chapters)
- Capital City Pride
- Downtown Jackson Partners
- Dress for Success
- Greater Jackson Chamber Partnership
- Junior League of Jackson
- Keep Jackson Beautiful
- Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities
- Mississippi Families for Kids
- Mississippi Society of Certified Public Accountants
- New Stage Theatre
- Public Relations Association of Mississippi
- Hinds Community College/Tourism & Culinary Arts Departments



TOURISM PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships remain essential to Visit Jackson's efforts to enhance the visitor experience, expand destination awareness, and strengthen the tourism economy.

Throughout FY2025, Visit Jackson collaborated with tourism, hospitality, transportation, educational, cultural, and community partners to advance initiatives that support destination growth and regional competitiveness.



FY2025 HIGHLIGHTS

01

Continued collaboration with the Capital Area Tourism Association (CATA), including Visit Ridgeland, Canton Tourism, Visit Vicksburg, and Visit Flowood, to promote regional tourism, expand visitor awareness, and support cooperative marketing initiatives.

02

Maintained strong partnerships with the Jackson Convention Complex, Mississippi Trade Mart, and Kirk Fordice Equine Center to support convention, meeting, and event recruitment efforts.

03

Continued collaboration with the Jackson Municipal Airport Authority (JMAA) to enhance visitor services and destination awareness among travelers arriving in Jackson.

04

Continued providing co-op advertising opportunities supporting Jackson attractions and tourism partners.

05

Partnered with Hank Aaron Stadium and Veterans Memorial Stadium to manage parking compression during sporting events.

06

Collaborated with the Central Mississippi Blues Society to support Jackson's rich music heritage and promote cultural tourism experiences.

07

Continued providing Familiarization Tours (FAMs) for hospitality professionals, meeting planners, and tourism stakeholders to strengthen destination knowledge and awareness.

08

Collaborated with educational institutions and community organizations to support hospitality workforce development initiatives.

09

Maintained statewide and local visitor information distribution partnerships through Mississippi Welcome Centers, hotels, attractions, businesses, and transportation partners.



Through these partnerships, Visit Jackson continued strengthening Jackson's position as Mississippi's Capital City and gateway to the Capital Region.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Visit Jackson continued advancing initiatives designed to strengthen Jackson's competitiveness as a destination while enhancing the quality of life for residents and supporting long-term economic growth. Throughout FY2025, the organization focused on strategic planning, destination development, and tourism experiences that position Jackson for future success.

JACKSON DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

- Officially launched the Jackson Destination Master Plan during National Travel and Tourism Week 2025.
- Established a long-term framework to guide destination development, tourism investment, visitor experiences, and community engagement.
- Engaged residents, industry partners, elected officials, and community stakeholders in a shared vision for Jackson's future as a destination.
- Began implementation and stakeholder engagement efforts supporting the plan's recommendations.



STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Initiated development of Visit Jackson's new strategic plan in collaboration with Nichols Tourism Group and DCG Consultancy.
- Conducted stakeholder engagement, research, and planning activities designed to align organizational priorities with destination needs and long-term sustainability goals.
- Continued development of strategies supporting organizational effectiveness, destination competitiveness, and tourism growth.



JXN FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

- Successfully hosted the second annual JXN Food & Wine Festival in partnership with The Local Palate.
- Showcased Jackson's culinary talent, local businesses, and hospitality industry while generating visitation and community engagement.
- Continued building the festival as a signature tourism event and destination asset.



Through these efforts, Visit Jackson continued investing in the long-term development of the destination while creating opportunities that enhance Jackson's visitor experience, economic vitality, and community pride.



DESTINATION DEMAND

MEASURING IMPACT

Visit Jackson's FY2025 strategic goals focused on expanding destination awareness, attracting visitors from key markets, increasing visitor loyalty, and strengthening Jackson's overall tourism performance. Throughout the year, the organization achieved strong results across several key performance indicators, reflecting the effectiveness of its integrated marketing, sales, and destination development efforts.

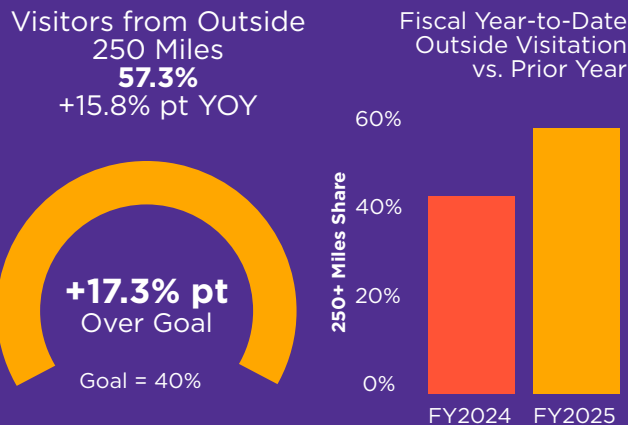
Progress Toward FY2025 Strategic Goals

Hotel Demand

Hotel room demand within the City of Jackson reached approximately 800,000 room nights during FY2025. During the year, Visit Jackson transitioned to a more refined STR reporting methodology focused exclusively on hotels located within the city of Jackson, resulting in a more accurate measure of destination performance.

Despite ongoing inventory constraints, Jackson's hospitality industry remained resilient. Strategic marketing initiatives supported through ARPA funding, combined with strong visitor retention and repeat business, helped sustain demand and position the destination for future growth.

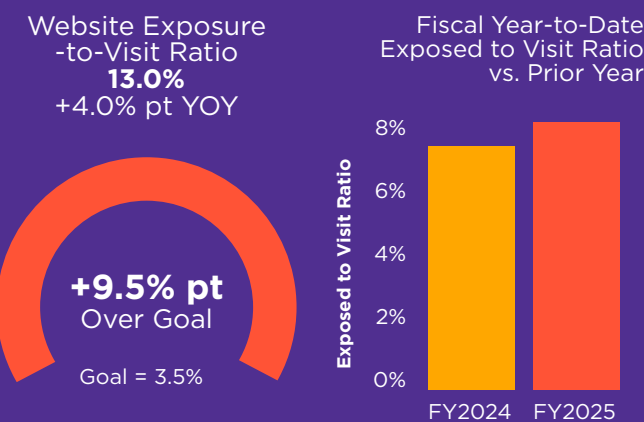
Expanding Jackson's Reach



Visit Jackson successfully attracted visitors from well beyond the local market, with 57.3% of visitors traveling from more than 250 miles away, significantly exceeding the goal of 40%.

This growth demonstrates Jackson's increasing appeal as a regional and national destination and reflects the effectiveness of efforts to expand awareness in key target markets.

Turning Awareness into Action

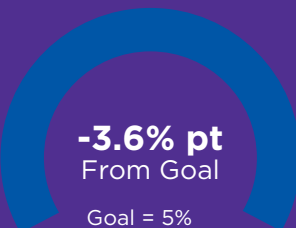


Visit Jackson's website exposure-to-visit ratio reached 13%, exceeding the goal of 3.5% by nearly ten percentage points.

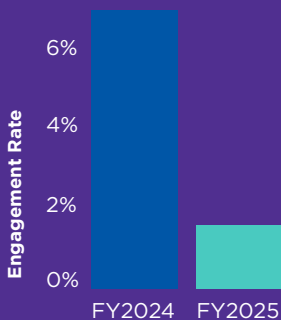
This result indicates strong campaign performance, effective audience targeting, and the organization's ability to convert destination awareness into actual visitation.

Looking Ahead

Social Media Engagement Rate
1.4%
- 5% pt YOY



Fiscal Year-to-Date Engagement Rate vs. Prior Year



While social media engagement averaged 1.4%, below the organization's 5% target, Visit Jackson continues to refine platform strategies and content approaches to better connect with target audiences and maximize engagement opportunities.

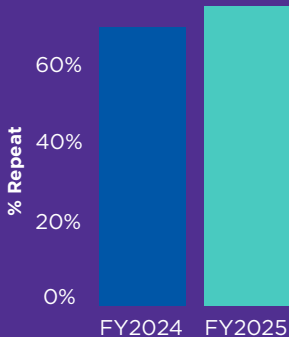
Overall, FY2025 results demonstrate meaningful progress toward Visit Jackson's strategic objectives and reinforce the organization's commitment to growing visitation, strengthening destination awareness, and enhancing Jackson's competitiveness as a visitor destination.

Building Visitor Loyalty

Repeat Visitation
72.2%
+4.7% pt YOY



Fiscal Year-to-Date Repeat Visitation vs. Prior Year



Repeat visitation reached 72.2%, far surpassing the goal of 44%.

The exceptionally high return rate reflects the strength of Jackson's visitor experience, cultural assets, events, attractions, and hospitality partners. It also highlights the success of initiatives designed to foster long-term relationships with visitors and encourage repeat travel to the destination.

SALES

Visit Jackson's Sales Department continued to focus on attracting meetings, conventions, sporting events, and group business that generate overnight stays and economic impact for the destination. Through strategic account development, relationship management, and collaboration with hospitality partners, the team remained focused on securing high-value opportunities that support Jackson's visitor economy.



FY2025 SALES HIGHLIGHTS

213

EVENTS BOOKED

Meetings, conventions, sporting events, and group business opportunities booked in FY2025.

25,838

ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED

An increase of nearly 9% over FY2024, generating overnight stays and visitor spending throughout the destination.

1.09M

ATTENDEES

Supported events that attracted more than 1.09 million attendees to Jackson.

52.7%

HOTEL OCCUPANCY

Occupancy continued to strengthen in FY2025 despite ongoing inventory constraints and limited availability for larger group business.

ROOM NIGHTS
INCREASED
8.9%
Year-Over-Year



Despite a decline in the total number of events booked, Visit Jackson experienced growth in two of the most important destination performance indicators: attendance and hotel room night production.

This suggests that Jackson attracted larger, higher-yield events and improved its ability to convert visitation into overnight stays.

Through targeted sales efforts, strong client relationships, and continued collaboration with industry partners, Visit Jackson remains focused on attracting quality business that generates overnight stays, visitor spending, and long-term economic impact for the destination.



FY2025 SALES HIGHLIGHTS

Destination Demand	2023	2024	2025
Number of Events Booked	259	262	213
Room Nights Booked	22,980	23,730	25,838
Estimated Attendance	1,087,263	1,079,275	1,090,409

Figure 3 *Data supplied via Tempest/iDSS CRM

Occupancy & ADR	2023	2024	2025
Occupancy	41.4%	49.3%	52.7%
Average Daily Rate (ADR)	\$82.93	\$83.88	\$83.35

Figure 4* Data supplied by STR (Smith Travel Research). Beginning in FY2025, reporting reflects hotels located within the City of Jackson only; prior periods were based on the Jackson MSA market. Year-over-year comparisons may not be directly comparable.

The 2025 results indicate a healthy shift toward **higher-value visitation**. Although total event volume declined by nearly 19%, the increases in attendance and room nights suggest Jackson is attracting events with greater economic impact and stronger visitor conversion.

Data suggests that Jackson's tourism sales strategy is becoming more efficient, generating greater visitor demand and hotel occupancy from fewer events—a positive indicator for long-term destination growth and sustainability.



2025

ROOM NIGHTS BY MARKET SEGMENT

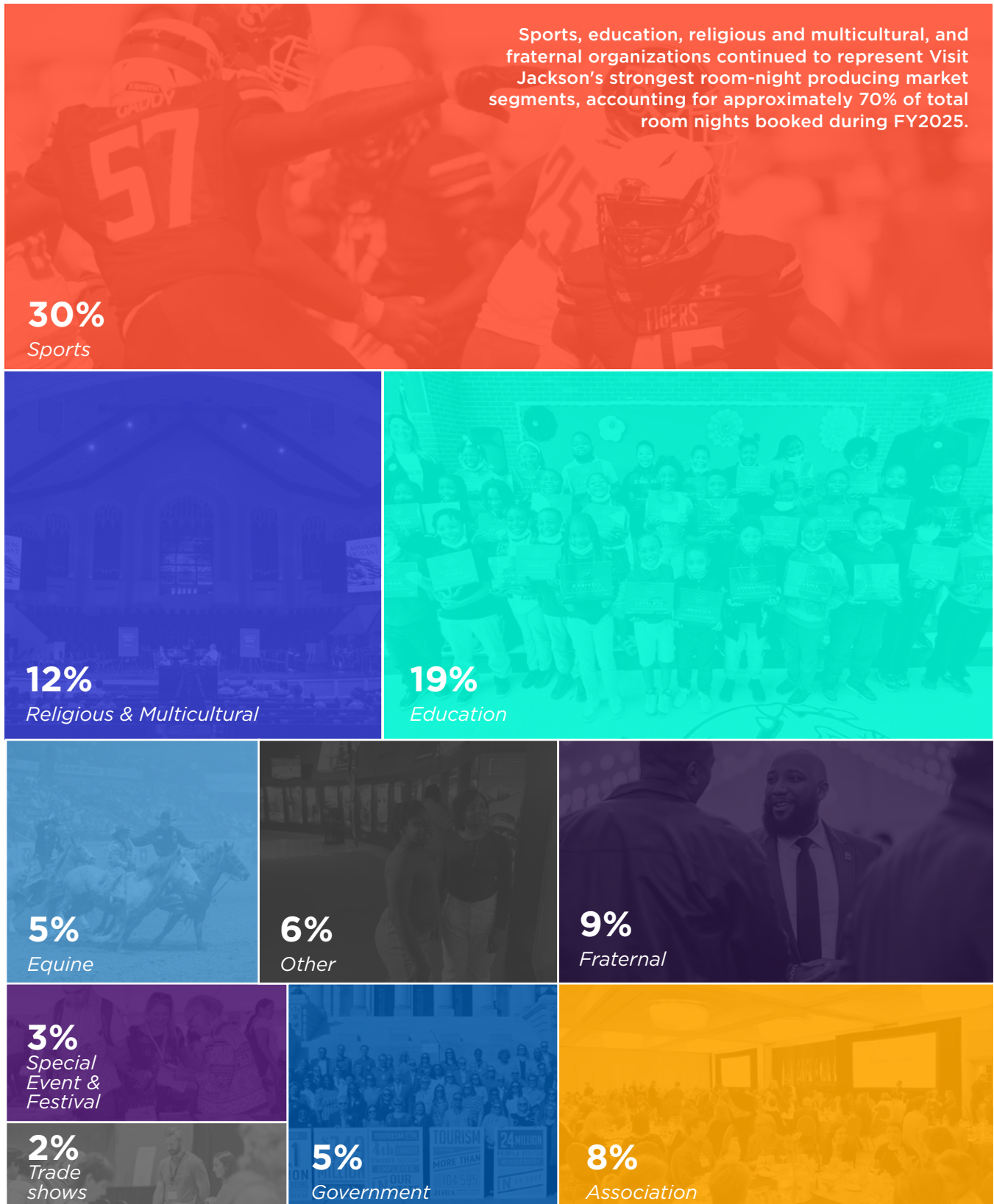


Figure 5 *Data supplied via Tempest/iDSS CRM

|SERVICES

Visit Jackson's Services Department provides complimentary planning assistance, registration support, visitor services, and on-site event support designed to enhance the experience of meeting planners, event organizers, and visitors.

FY2025 SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

253

REGISTRATION SUPPORT SESSIONS

Registration and planning support was provided for 253 meetings, conferences, and events hosted in Jackson.

217

EVENTS SUPPORTED

A centralized resource hub dedicated to maximizing the value of hosted events by providing comprehensive resources and hands-on support.

110

REPEAT CONFERENCES

A total of 110 repeat events returned to Jackson, reflecting strong client satisfaction and retention.

236

VISITORS WELCOMED

The JXN Welcome Center recorded 236 guests, including 54 international visitors and 182 domestic travelers.

3,585

On-Site Registration and Event Support Services

Registration staff provided 3,585 hours of on-site service at conferences and meetings.



HOW WE HELP



SITE SELECTION ASSISTANCE

Helping planners find the right venue for a successful event.



HOTEL COORDINATION

Connecting planners with the best accommodations.



REGISTRATION SERVICES

Providing professional registration support before, during, and after events.



ON-SITE EVENT SUPPORT

Ensuring a seamless experience for attendees and organizers.



VISITOR SERVICES

Offering information recommendations and friendly local guidance.



WELCOME MATERIALS

Providing custom materials to help promote your event and our city.

Exceptional service remains a key component of Jackson's meetings and conventions experience, helping create positive visitor experiences that generate repeat business and long-term client relationships.

| AT A GLANCE

MARKETING PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY

During FY2025, Visit Jackson elevated Jackson's national profile through the award-winning *This Little Light* campaign, a purpose-driven marketing initiative rooted in the city's Civil Rights legacy, cultural pride, and creative spirit. Built around themes of resilience, hope, and connection, the campaign invited travelers—especially those seeking authentic heritage experiences and ties to Mississippi through the Great Migration—to rediscover Jackson as a place where history, culture, cuisine, music, art, and community continue to shine.

The campaign was executed through a multi-channel strategy that included streaming and broadcast video, social media, digital advertising, print placements, artist collaborations, promotional activations, and immersive storytelling through LetItShineJXN.com, a dedicated microsite designed to inspire travel and deepen engagement with Jackson's story. By pairing emotionally compelling storytelling with measurable digital strategy, Visit Jackson strengthened destination awareness, increased visitor engagement, and positioned the city as a destination where meaningful experiences meet modern energy.

CAMPAIGN RESULTS



+142%

Website Sessions



+149%

New Users



+35%

Engagement Rates



+47%

Campaign Visit Rate



79%

Overnight Visitation



INCREASED FROM 1.8 TO 2.1 DAYS

Average Length of Stay



+28%

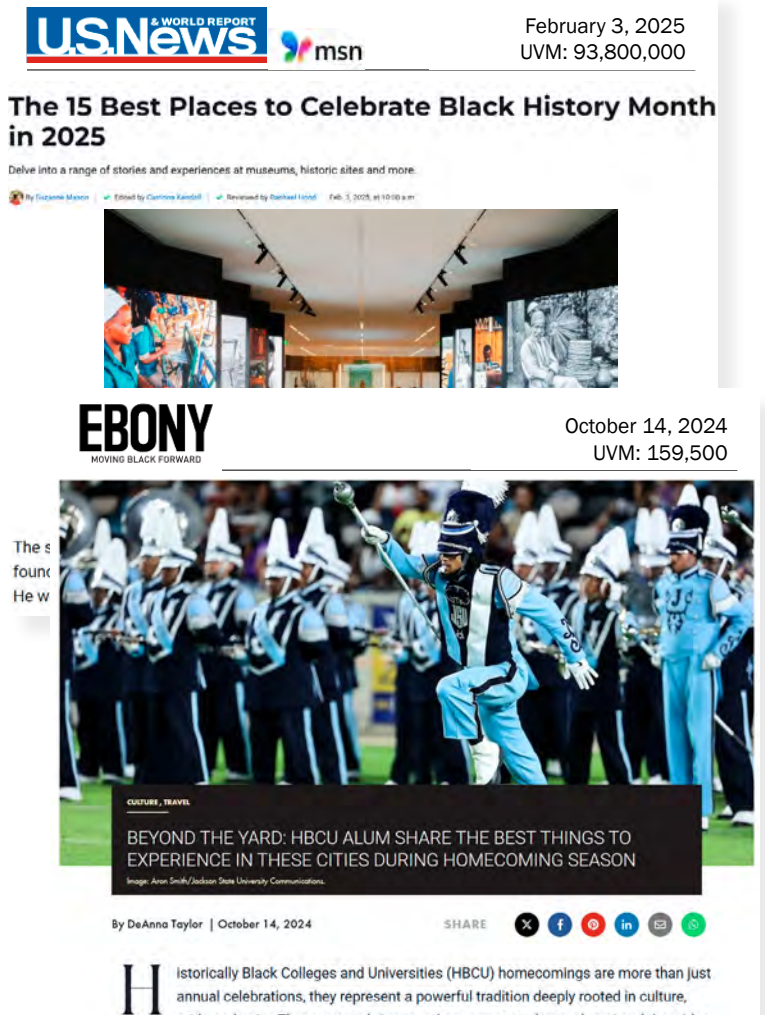
Visitation from
500+ Mile Markets

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Visit Jackson's strategic public relations efforts further elevated destination awareness through targeted media outreach, journalist engagement, and hosted experiences focused on Jackson's Civil Rights heritage and cultural assets.

These efforts generated 134 earned media placements in influential publications including *USA Today*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *The Black Wall Street Times*, helping introduce Jackson's story to new audiences and reinforcing the destination's unique position within the cultural tourism marketplace.

Through these integrated marketing and communications efforts, Visit Jackson continued strengthening destination awareness, increasing visitation, and elevating Jackson's profile among regional, national, and international audiences.



DIGITAL IMPACT

Visit Jackson continues to measure the effectiveness of its digital marketing efforts through the Destinations International Website Impact Calculator, which estimates visitation and economic activity influenced by website engagement.



1.09M

Website Impressions



11.97K

Influenced Visits



\$2.28M

Direct Influenced
Visitor Spending



\$3.93M

Total Influenced
Economic Impact

During FY2025, Visit Jackson's website influenced nearly 12,000 visits and generated an estimated \$3.93 million in total economic impact, demonstrating the website's role as both a destination marketing tool and a driver of visitor spending.

BRANDING & PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

- Jackson State University stadium
- Jackson Convention Center marketing and sales strategy support
- Mistletoe Marketplace
- Museum Trail
- Thalia Hall marketing strategy
- Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport

OTHER PROMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- Chicago Blues Festival
- Sanderson Farms PGA Chalet
co-sponsorship and hosting
- The Tournament of Roses Parade
- Mississippi Book Festival

PARTNERSHIP & STAKEHOLDER MILESTONES



DATA & RESEARCH PARTNERS



TOURISM
ECONOMICS
AN OXFORD ECONOMICS COMPANY



TRAVEL AND TOURISM
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Longwoods
INTERNATIONAL
40 YEARS TOGETHER

U.S. TRAVEL
ASSOCIATION



ZARTICO

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP

Capital Area Tourism Association

- **Kim Lewis**
Programming Committee
- **Rickey Thigpen, PhD**
Executive Board/Secretary & Treasurer
- **Jennifer Chance, CPA, CDME**
Financial Support
- **Jonathan Pettus**
Marketing Committee

Destinations International

- **Rickey Thigpen, PhD**
 - Executive Committee Officer:
Association Secretary
 - Co-Chair of the CEO Engagement
Sub-Committee/Social Inclusion
Committee
- **Jennifer Chance, CPA, CDME**
 - Professional Development
Committee
 - Business Operations Committee
Co-Chair
 - Business Operations Summit
Planning Committee Co-Chair
- **Shun Hatten**
 - Social Inclusion Committee
- **Christine Blackmon**
 - Visitor Services Summit Committee

Hinds Community College

- **Christine Blackmon**
 - Advisory Committee

Natchez Trace Compact

- **Paul Wolf**
Advisory Board Vice President

Mississippi Tourism Association

- **Jonathan Pettus**
Board of Directors, Education
Committee Co-Chair
- **Rickey Thigpen, PhD**
Executive Board/President
- **Shun Hatten**
Silent Auction Co-Chair

National Folk Festival

- **Jonathan Pettus,**
Marketing Committee
- **Dr. Rickey Thigpen**
Marketing Committee Chair
- **Paul Wolf**
Marketing Committee

Tempest/iDSS – Customer Advisory Board

- **Jennifer Chance, CPA, CDME**
- **Shun Hatten**
- **Paul Wolf**

Southeast Tourism Association

- **Shun Hatten**
STS Advocacy

U.S. Travel Association

- **Jonathan Pettus,** Destinations Council
Board of Advisors



SPEAKER'S BUREAU

- **Christine Blackmon**
Event Service Professionals Association
- **Christine Blackmon**
Destinations International – Visitor Service Summit
- **Jennifer Chance**
Destinations International – BizOps Summit
- **Shun Hatten**
Destinations International – Social Inclusion Summit
- **Jonathan Pettus**
U.S. Travel Association
- **Rickey Thigpen, PhD**
Destinations International
- **Rickey Thigpen, PhD**
Southeast Tourism Society
- **Rickey Thigpen, PhD**
Travel Unity
- **Paul Wolf**
Tempest – Tourism Academy
- **Paul Wolf**
Destinations International – Marketing Forum



Awards & Recognitions

MISSISSIPPI TOURISM ASSOCIATION

- **Destinations Marketing Organization of the Year** (budget \$3M+)
- **Best Digital Media** – “This Little Light” campaign
- **Best Sales Strategy** – 2025 Meeting Planner Campaign
- **Tourism Partnership of the Year for the Mississippi Culinary Activation in New York City**

SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY

- **2025 Shining Example Award winner** – Best Marketing in Category 4:
Budget of \$1 million+

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

- **ESTO Finalist in 2 categories:** 1) Digital Brilliance and 2) Marketing Momentum:
Overall DMO Marketing Budget Less Than or Equal to \$5 Million



OUR PEOPLE

Our team is Visit Jackson's greatest strength.

The depth of experience, dedication, and institutional knowledge of our employees drives our mission forward and ensures Jackson remains a vibrant, welcoming destination for visitors and residents alike.



23

**TEAM
MEMBERS**



273

**COMBINED
YEARS OF
SERVICE**



11.9

**AVERAGE YEARS
OF SERVICE**



7

**EMPLOYEES WITH
15+ YEARS OF
SERVICE**



5

**EMPLOYEES WITH
25+ YEARS OF
SERVICE**

STAFF RECOGNITION & INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE

15+ YEARS OF SERVICE

Rickey Thigpen, PhD
President & CEO

37
YEARS

Floyd Williams, Jr, CMP
Director of Sports Marketing & Administration

36
YEARS

Christine Blackmon
Chief Experience Officer

31
YEARS

Sherri Ratliff, CMP
Senior Business Development Specialist

25
YEARS

Shun Hatten
Chief Sales Officer

22
YEARS

Jennifer Chance, CPA, CDME
Chief Operating Officer

20
YEARS

Amy Dillard
Administrative Manager

17
YEARS

ONE TEAM. ONE MISSION

Thank you to our dedicated team for the passion, leadership, and excellence you bring to Visit Jackson every day. You make our success possible.



BOARD

FY 2024-25
Board of Directors



Carol J. Burger
Business Community, Chair



Glenda Barner
Restaurant Community



Monique Davis, CPA
Education



Susan Garrard
Attractions Community



Patrick House
Hotel Community



Pamela D.C. Junior
Arts Community



Mende Malouf
Hotel Community



Cherre Miller
Convention Complex



John Miller
At-Large



Enrika Williams
Restaurant Community

Second Restaurant Community Vacant

|STAFF

Rickey L. Thigpen, PhD

President and CEO

Laura Vogelsang, PDM

Executive Assistant

Jennifer Chance, CPA, CDME

Chief Operating Officer

Amy Dillard

Administrative Manager

Tiffany Lawson, PDM

*Manager of Technology &
Business Intelligence*

Jonathan Pettus, CDME

*Vice President and Chief
Marketing Officer*

Yolanda Clay-Moore, E.B.M.S.

*Director of External Affairs,
Partnerships & Alliances*

Paul Wolf

*Director of Destination
Storytelling*

Kim Lewis

Destination Development Manager

Allyson Durr

Creative Design Manager

Shun Hatten

Chief Sales Officer

Floyd Williams, Jr., CMP

*Director of Sports Marketing &
Administration*

Sherri Ratliff, CMP, CGMP

*Senior Business Development
Manager*

Shana Smith

Business Development Manager

Shanda Brown

Business Development Specialist

Christine Blackmon

Chief Experience Officer

Amber Campbell

Services Specialist





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