

SUCCESS STORY



MACON-BIBB COUNTY, GEORGIA

Rich history, stunning charm, incredible architecture and a soulful music heritage have branded Macon "Where Soul Lives." Visit Macon was looking for a way to celebrate our upcoming 35th anniversary and continue to share the story of the connection between Macon's tourism economic impact and our brand, "Where Soul Lives". We found that while we were making strides to see the effects of our tourism efforts outside of Macon, we wanted to reengage our local community to continue to communicate how everyone has a connection directly or indirectly to tourism.

We created the "35 Faces of Soul" initiative and interviewed everyone from CEOs of organizations to front line employees. We highlighted these tourism ambassadors on a microsite to showcase the local faces of tourism. As a result, we increased our website traffic, social engagement and received requests from other community stakeholders and business leaders wanting to be included in our next round of the project.

Through efforts such as these, Macon's tourism industry will continue to grow and be successful. Projects like this highlight all that Macon has to offer and what makes Macon such an incredible place to live and visit.

IMPACT STATEMENT

Tourism is a powerful jobs and economic development generator in Macon. The direct economic impact of Macon's successful tourism efforts increases ever year. According to the U.S. Travel Association, in 2016, Macon-Bibb County tourism pumped \$364.50 million in direct tourist spending into the local economy, provided 3,633 jobs, produced \$92.17 million in payroll, generated \$9.97 million in local tax revenue and created \$16.34 million in state tax revenue. Bibb County is ranked 10th out of 159 Georgia counties for 2016 tourism expenditures and as a result of tourism efforts, each Bibb County household received \$459 in tax relief. Additionally, according to a Longwoods International report, Macon had 10.1 million person trips in 2016 and had a record year in 2017 with hotel-motel collection growth at 9.3%.

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where soul lives