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## Alaska Travel Industry Recognizes Industry Award Winners

**JUNEAU, AK-** The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), the state's leading nonprofit trade organization for Alaska's tourism industry, announced its 2024 Visitor Industry Awards recipients at its annual convention in Juneau. Award winners are selected by visitor industry peers based on professional excellence and service to Alaska's tourism industry.

**Alyeska Award: Vanessa Juszczak, Denali Chamber of Commerce**

**Aurora Award: Christina Kirkwood, Kennicott Glacier Lodge**

**Chuck West Award: Matt Worden, Go Hike Alaska**

**Cultural Tourism Award: Allen Marine Tours / Alaskan Dream Cruises**

**Denali Award: David Kasser, Visit Anchorage**

**Lifetime Achievement Award: Jan Wrentmore, Red Onion Saloon**

**Special Recognition Award: Mat Su Convention & Visitors Bureau**

"On behalf of the entire tourism community, I am thrilled to recognize this year's outstanding award recipients. These individuals and organizations have not only enriched the visitor experience but have also significantly contributed to the growth and success of our visitor industry," said Jillian Simpson, ATIA President and CEO. "We are proud to celebrate their achievements and look forward to seeing the continued positive impact they will make in the years to come."

### **Alyeska Award**

This award will be presented to a business or organization, including a chamber of commerce or destination marketing organization, for its outstanding leadership, professional excellence, and group contribution to the Alaska travel industry.

### **Aurora Award**

This award recognizes an emerging leader who demonstrates excellence, creativity, and initiative in his/her profession. Nominees must work in Alaska tourism year-round and be younger than 35 years old before the end of the calendar

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*Alaska's leading statewide nonprofit membership organization for the Alaska travel industry.*

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year in which he/she is nominated. Nominees must have worked in the tourism industry for at least five years (minimum three years full-time) and be a role model for others, personally and professionally.

#### **Chuck West Award**

It was Marguerite West's intention to carry on the tradition and to honor her husband with this award which will be given to a new pioneer in the industry who has exhibited entrepreneurial creativity, innovation and courage in the introduction of a successful new product for the benefit and enjoyment of Alaska's visitors.

#### **Cultural Tourism Award**

This award will be presented to a person or an entity who has contributed to the development of cultural tourism in Alaska. The award honors those who have created meaningful visitor experiences that contribute to the sharing of Alaska's Indigenous cultural heritage.

#### **Denali Award**

This award will be presented to a living individual for his or her outstanding leadership, professional excellence, and personal contribution to the Alaska travel industry.

#### **Lifetime Achievement Award**

While not a standing annual award, this recognition will be conferred upon an individual who has demonstrated lifelong support of and leadership in Alaska tourism, promoted industry standards of excellence, and contributed to the industry's growth as a whole.

#### **Special Recognition Award**

The special recognition award is granted periodically to an individual or organization which has made substantial contributions to the tourism industry in Alaska. The recognition may be due to the individual's or organization's efforts on behalf of the industry or through their efforts with tourism related businesses that have positively enhanced Alaska tourism and travel.

#### **About the Alaska Travel Industry Association**

The Alaska Travel Industry Association is the state's leading industry organization for travel-related businesses and supporters. Made up of about 600 members representing businesses both large and small across the state, ATIA works to increase the economic impact of tourism in Alaska and is the respected voice of the industry, advocating on behalf of our members on issues impacting businesses and communities. ATIA has long managed Alaska's destination marketing program: Travel Alaska. For more information, visit [www.alaskatia.org](http://www.alaskatia.org).

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