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DESTINATION CLEVELAND LAUNCHES “THE BRAG MOVEMENT” TO TURN LOCAL PRIDE INTO POWERFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

Locals encouraged to ditch their humbleness & share what makes Cleveland great

CLEVELAND (May 6, 2026) – Destination Cleveland today announced the launch of The Brag Movement, a community-powered effort that encourages and incentivizes Clevelanders to actively recommend all that they love about Cleveland to family and friends. Introduced at the organization’s annual meeting, the initiative includes new resources to leverage the power of authentic local recommendations – a key information source for those considering a visit to Cleveland.

The Brag Movement is designed to turn Clevelanders’ deep pride into action to help attract visitors and strengthen perceptions of Cleveland. Through in-person and online tools, residents are invited to showcase their favorite places, experiences and characteristics of the community.

“Locals are our most powerful storytellers and recommenders. The activities and experiences they share every day – where to go, what to see and what makes our city unique – shape how people see Cleveland and have a strong influence on potential visitors,” said Marie Scalia, chief marketing officer at Destination Cleveland. “The Brag Movement invites Clevelanders to lean into that role – celebrating what they love about the city and helping more people experience Cleveland through a local lens.”

At the center of the movement is a bold, visible symbol of civic pride: the Brag Button, which shows up both physically and digitally and makes bragging easy. When someone pushes the Brag Button, they are joining a broader movement to amplify Cleveland’s story. The Brag Movement is made up of in-person and digital experiences, designed to make it simple, fun and interactive for Clevelanders to share their Cleveland favorites:

- **Brag Button Experience:** The Brag Button symbol comes to life in a large-scale, interactive experience that invites locals to step up and share what they love about the city. Participants can choose to brag about a topic of their choosing or spin a wheel to receive a Cleveland-themed prompt, then step onto the button where they have 30 seconds to “brag” about The Land – from the food spots they can’t live without to what makes Cleveland stand out from other cities. Locals will find the Brag Button at special events and community activations throughout the year, with the first public appearance scheduled to be at Pride in The CLE on June 6.

Participants who complete the Brag Button in-person experience are rewarded with a Cleveland-branded swag kit with tools that encourage them to continue to show their pride and share it

with others long after the experience ends. Brag Swag includes brag cards designed to help shift perceptions and respond to negative comments about Cleveland and a press-to-play button designed to remind Clevelanders of all there is to brag about in The Land.

A virtual Brag Button also lives across Destination Cleveland's website, newsletters and social channels, making it easy for locals to share content with one click.

- **Brag Coach:** A digital tool that helps locals talk about the city with confidence and clarity, the Brag Coach generates ready-to-use content such as social media photo captions, messages and recommendations. It appears as a bulldog character, reflecting Cleveland's personality – loyal, tough and proud. Users can access the Brag Coach by clicking on the tool at [ThisisCleveland.com/Brag](https://thisiscleveland.com/Brag) (from mobile or desktop) and typing a prompt. The Coach returns content that can be copied or edited and then shared.
- **Brag Hub:** The Brag Hub at [ThisisCleveland.com/brag](https://thisiscleveland.com/brag) is a centralized online destination where locals can access everything related to the Brag Movement. From using the Brag Coach and exploring upcoming Brag Button appearances to browsing local content, media headlines and user-generated content, the hub connects users to the resources that help turn their pride into shareable – and braggable – content.

"Perception changes fastest when people hear recommendations from real people," said Scalia. "The Brag Movement is built with locals, not just for them, and creates a long-term pipeline of advocates. Throughout the year, we'll roll out new storytelling opportunities and content that highlights authentic Cleveland experiences – told by the people who know it best."

Clevelanders are invited to start bragging about The Land right away and share their brags using #TheLandforLife on social media. The Brag Coach and other digital tools are available now, making it easy for residents to share their authentic experiences and recommendations. To learn more and start bragging, visit [ThisisCleveland.com/brag](https://thisiscleveland.com/brag).

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ABOUT DESTINATION CLEVELAND: Destination Cleveland is Cleveland's destination marketing and management organization. The private, non-profit organization's mission is to stimulate economic growth by attracting people and connecting them to experiences that illustrate Cleveland's diversity, creativity and contagious passion. In 2024, visitation increased for the fourth straight year to 18.6 million visits, with visitor spending infusing a record-high \$6.9 billion into the local economy. For more information, visit www.thisiscleveland.com