



PROJECT:TIME OFF

Chickasaw Country teams up with Project: Time Off to encourage everyone to plan a vacation

Oklahoma ranks 5th among states in unused time off

OKLAHOMA CITY (Jan. 2, 2018) – Oklahomans are forgoing a wealth of vacation time, leaving workers tense, exhausted and less productive. To combat the problem, Chickasaw Country is teaming up with Project: Time Off and Miss Oklahoma 2017 to encourage Sooner State workers to observe National Plan for Vacation Day on Jan. 30, 2018.

According to Project: Time Off, a coalition supported by the U.S. Travel Association, 69 percent of Oklahomans have unused vacation days, ranking the state fifth worst in the nation. The national average is 54 percent. In all, Oklahomans let nearly 22 million vacation days go unused in 2016. If Americans were to use that vacation time, it would generate \$128 billion in direct spending, and an overall economic impact of \$236 billion for the U.S. economy. In Oklahoma, unused time off costs the economy nearly \$689 million in economic tourism activity.

“Oklahomans are surrounded by top tourism destinations, like those in Chickasaw Country,” said Paige Williams Shepherd, Chickasaw Nation director of corporate development and tourism. “By not using vacation days for travel and wellbeing, both Oklahomans and the economy suffer.”

Cait DeBaun, Project: Time Off director of communication, said planning vacation days is an effective strategy to ensure paid time off doesn’t go to waste.

“Our research shows that planners are more likely to use all of their time off compared to those who don’t plan,” DeBaun said. “It’s a simple first step that all Oklahomans can take to make sure their vacation days are put to good use to explore their own backyard, state, and beyond.”

Triana Browne, Miss Oklahoma 2017, said planning vacation days is one way to “live with purpose,” her personal motto.

“I strive to live with purpose each day, whether it’s by volunteering, travelling or spending time with friends and family,” Browne said. “My hope is that all Oklahomans participate in Plan for Vacation Day to be purposeful with their time, too.”

Browne recently visited Chickasaw Country and recommends it as a destination for Oklahomans who want to stay closer to home during their vacations. She called her travels through the area “amazing.”

“From fried pies to zip lining, the opportunity to explore events and culture are limitless in Chickasaw Country,” Browne said.

With many destinations to choose from, Oklahomans can tailor their vacations to accommodate their interests, and Shepherd said Oklahomans on a budget can take advantage of affordable attractions close to home.

“A vacation doesn’t have to be a trip to an expensive resort or amusement park, and vacation time doesn’t have to be taken all at once,” Shepherd said. “Chickasaw Country has hundreds of destinations that make for a great day trip, extended weekend or a full week of exploring. Our goal is to encourage families and friends to sit down together on Jan. 30 and make a plan for when and where they’ll use their vacation time. Of course, considering Chickasaw Country.”

To get a head start on planning 2018 vacation days, visit chickasawcountry.com. For more information on Project: Time Off and the amount of vacation time left unused by Americans, visit ProjectTimeOff.com.

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About Chickasaw Country

Nestled in south-central Oklahoma, Chickasaw Country is a regional tourism organization representing 13 of Oklahoma’s 77 counties. As the official destination tourism organization, Chickasaw Country includes 7,648 square miles, 11 percent of Oklahoma’s total 68,597 square miles. Chickasaw Country, a division of the Chickasaw Nation, is a tourism source for visitors and communities within the region and promotes destinations, attractions and festivals. Chickasaw Country is a diverse and culturally-vested destination, with new adventures and experiences around every corner.

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