

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Rockford to Benefit from New Visitors Guide Designed for People with Disabilities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2009

ROCKFORD, IL — Rockford area sites and attractions will soon be featured in a visitors guide specifically designed for people with disabilities. The Open Doors Organization, based in Chicago, is developing the guide, called *Easy Access Rockford*. Staff members from the organization will visit the region's restaurants, sites and attractions over the next several weeks as they begin gathering information. The organization chose to feature Rockford because of the region's strong support network for people with disabilities and the area's many attractions.

"The RACVB is excited the Open Doors Organization chose to feature Rockford in its next visitors guide," said John Groh, RACVB President & CEO. "This visitors guide will increase the region's exposure as a welcoming and accessible place for individuals with disabilities. The guide will serve as a great resource as they plan their travel to the region."

Local organizations providing support services for people with disabilities say the guide will show visitors Rockford is an accessible and welcoming community. "We couldn't be more excited. What better proof of the Rockford community's favorable response to our work than by being chosen to have a guide of this caliber designed for people with disabilities?" said Julie Bosma, Executive Director of RAMP, a local organization that works to promote an accessible society.

The guide will cost \$115,000 to produce and is expected to be released early next summer. The Open Doors Organization will fund the guide with a grant through the Illinois Bureau of Tourism.

The Open Doors Organization works to provide people with disabilities the same consumer opportunities as those without. For more information on the organization, you may visit their website at www.opendoorsnfp.org. To see an example of their work, you can also view the currently published *Easy Access Chicago* guide online at <http://easyaccesschicago.org>.

The RACVB is a private, non-profit organization established in 1984 to champion efforts to promote the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. The RACVB generates positive economic impact for our community through investments in tourism.

###

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Kristina DeCoster, RACVB Director of Stakeholder Relations: 815.489.1664 or kdecoster@gorockford.com