

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## **RACVB Announces Rockford Region to Host Two World Series Softball Tournaments *Economy to Benefit from Estimated \$500,000 in Spending***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 17, 2011**

**ROCKFORD, IL** — The Rockford Region has scored two United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) World Series tournaments. The community beat out several other cities, including Kissimmee, Fla. near Walt Disney World, to host the events. Seventy-five teams will travel from throughout the country to participate in the tournaments.

The USSSA Girls' 14 and under, class "A" division World Series will take place July 19-24. This is the first time this event will be held in the Rockford Region. The USSSA Women's World Series returns to the Rockford Region for the fourth consecutive year. It will take place July 21-24. The two events will draw more than 2,600 players, fans and coaches to the Rockford Region. These individuals will fill an estimated 2,600 hotel room nights and generate nearly \$500,000 for area businesses.

"This region has wonderful sporting facilities with the Rockford Park District, Forest Hills Diamonds and Harlem Community Center," said tournament organizer Brenda Paulson. "The community is very welcoming, and the hospitality shown to teams by the RACVB, hotels, restaurants and other businesses will help us grow these events."

Kissimmee has served as host city for many of USSSA's high-profile events, with the allure of Walt Disney World helping to drive interest and participation from teams. Desiring to attract additional teams from the Midwest to participate in their tournaments, the organization began searching for a second location to host the youth event; that search led them to Rockford. In making their decision to host tournaments in Rockford, USSSA concluded that the convenience, value and customer service provided by the Rockford Region will allow them to grow attendance at future tournaments.

"The Rockford Region's ability to win the bid is testimony to our reputation within the national amateur sports community," said RACVB President/CEO John Groh. "If we did not have world-class facilities and a strong reputation for customer service we would not be making this announcement. The Rockford Region has chosen to invest in and promote our facilities and ensure outstanding customer service, and as such we are able to attract tournaments that can have a substantial, positive influence on our community."

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Bringing these tournaments to the Rockford region required the collaborative efforts of RACVB and the Rockford Park District. Both organizations spent months working to develop a proposal that met the field and logistical needs of the events, including housing and transportation. In addition, the Rockford Area Hotel/Motel Association made a financial commitment to USSSA to assist in securing the tournament.

In addition to ensuring the tournament needs are met, RACVB is providing assistance planning a talent show for players, coordinating a breakfast for moms, creating a breakfast program and presenting gift bags with items from local businesses.

This announcement shows a growing momentum for the sports market in the Rockford Region. In November, RACVB announced the community won the bid to host the North American Fastpitch Association (NAFA) World Series, a new event which will bring 176 teams and generate \$675,000 for area businesses. Other returning organizations like Bison Sporting Events and Game Day USA continue to add additional tournaments.

*The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is a private, non-profit organization that champions efforts to promote and further develop the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. RACVB generates positive economic impact for the community through investments in tourism marketing, sales, promotion and advocacy. [www.gorockford.com](http://www.gorockford.com)*

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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