

## VOICE COLUMN DECEMBER 2016

**Headline:** Join Us in Rockford, Illinois & Be In Good Company

BY John Groh, RACVB President/CEO

Talent attraction. Brain gain. Brain drain. These are among the worries that keep business owners, economic development officials and human resources executives up at night.

American cities and states compete with each other (and indeed, the world) for talent. The competition is fierce and the elbows are flying because these days, skilled workers are becoming increasingly scarce in many fields.

Given that global competition, regional economic development leaders and human resources professionals face an especially tough challenge; helping job candidates understand what a wonderful place the Rockford Region is in which to live, work, learn and play.

At the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, we love inviting the world to visit us - and as a community we've been very successful doing just that. Total spending by visitors to Winnebago County last year topped \$350 million last year and our sites, attractions and events welcomed 7.6 million residents and visitors - up about 50,000 over 2014. We've proven Rockford is a great place to visit and believe it's also an amazing place to live that is on an ascendant trajectory.

So, RACVB couldn't be happier to partner with the **Rockford Area Economic Development Council** to invite people to work and live here, too. Earlier this year, RAEDC's Leadership Council provided RACVB with a \$75,000 grant that we'll use to help our regional economic and community development partners better manage and shape the region's reputation.

To that end, and as a part of this effort, we are excited to launch a new video that can be used by local HR professionals, Realtors®, and other entities as they promote this region. Additional materials are on their way, too. The powerful video inspired by the *In Good Company* campaign theme RACVB first introduced in 2014. To maximize use and views across different platforms, the video is available in three versions – 2 minutes, 30 seconds and 15 seconds.

Visit [GoRockford.Com/ingoodcompany](http://GoRockford.Com/ingoodcompany) to view the longer piece for a glimpse into the daily lives of those of us lucky enough - yes, I said "lucky enough" - to live in Real. Original. Rockford and be reminded of our accessible little city with a welcoming heart.

Here, right here, you're always in the good company of good people with a fondness for sharing their passions.

*This is a place with gravity - and gravitas - all its own, where everything that's remarkable (and there is a lot that's remarkable here) was created through the ingenuity and hard work of the cherished forefathers and mothers who showed us the way - and, the Real Original creators who live here now and enhance our daily lives.*

*A river runs through us like a proud, pulsing heart of powerful Midwestern values: enduring, nourishing and true. Rockford is an amazing home, especially for those who want to participate in the shared life of a community that is transforming itself as we speak and has been for years.*

*Crafted from dreams by dreamers, this is a hand-made haven of amazing things to do, fascinating things to see, incredible things to taste and inspiring things to hear.*

*All these things all woven together to make experiences that make memories that last a lifetime.*

*All people are welcome here. Join us - and bring your friends! Be In Good Company - in Rockford, Illinois.*

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