

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## **Fred VanVleet Announced as RACVB's First Sports Tourism Ambassador**

**New sports marketing campaign launched:  
Bring Your Game 2 Rockford (BYG2RKFD)**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 2, 2016**

**ROCKFORD, IL** – Rockford has been a pioneering sports town since the mid-1980s. Decade after decade, the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau has set the Midwestern standard for sports tournament hosting with excellence, convenience and success.

Now RACVB is taking sports tourism to new heights with the addition of local legend and NBA rookie Fred VanVleet as the organization's first-ever Sports Tourism Ambassador. VanVleet will be the face of the RACVB's new Bring Your Game 2 Rockford marketing campaign.

"Bringing Fred VanVleet on board as an ambassador for Rockford and the region was a no brainer," said John Groh, RACVB president/CEO. "Fred's work ethic and drive for success is mirrored by the work ethic and drive for success that our entire community possesses."

VanVleet's story of drive, determination and success is at the center of the newly launched Bring Your Game 2 Rockford (BYG2RKFD) marketing push, which launched this fall with a series of ads in sports tourism industry magazine and eblast messages that directly target tournament and event promoters.

"I'm super excited to be the brand ambassador for the RACVB," VanVleet said. "Something that I take a lot of pride in is carrying the flag for our city and trying to bring positive light to the area."

VanVleet will continue to be featured in the BYG2RKFD campaign over the next year. In addition to a variety of advertisements and promotions featuring VanVleet, RACVB is working with him on creating events for the community including a possible basketball camp and tournament next summer.

Already scheduled is a celebration when VanVleet is back in town during the NBA's All-Star break. RACVB and VanVleet will host an All-Star game watch party at the District Bar & Grill in downtown Rockford on Sunday, Feb. 19. The event will be a fundraising party for local youth basketball club teams and to help bring additional sports tournaments to Rockford. Details and ticket information will be announced soon.

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“With recent additions to the sports tourism landscape, including the new UW Health Sports Factory and additions to Mercyhealth Sportscore Two and with top-notch sports event bookings like the return of Tough Mudder, we knew we wanted to raise our game in the branding and marketing of our region,” said Groh. “We wanted our sports brand to echo the In Good Company message we launched two years ago which highlights the people of our region. Now, we plan to highlight many of the great athletes and individuals that have helped to make Rockford known as a sports destination.”

Another hallmark of the campaign is a new sports video showcasing the facilities, athletes and diverse sporting events that the region hosts and develops.

“Rockford’s history is steeped with inventors, dreamers and creators who have helped make everything from furniture and cars to airplanes and spaceships,” Groh said. “We also are known for making great athletes and helping to build champions through our first-class facilities and programs.”

Learn more about sports in the Rockford region and watch the video at [www.gorockford.com/sports](http://www.gorockford.com/sports).

*The mission of the RACVB is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development. [www.gorockford.com](http://www.gorockford.com)*

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